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Address: Moscow 117997, Nakhimovsky prospect, 32. ICCA RAS

E-mail: vietnamjournal@yandex.ru

Тел.: +7 (499) 124 08 33

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SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

INWARD POLITICAL PROCESSES AND FOREIGN POLICY

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ROLE OF VIETNAM IN EUROPE'S INDO-PACIFIC STRAGEDY: PRESENT AND PERSPECTIVE

Nguyen Thi Hanh¹, Vo Hoang Linh²

Abstract. The Indo-Pacific has partially replaced the term Asia – Pacific and emerged as a geo-economic and geostrategic concept over the last decade, with Japan, Australia, the United States and India each launching their own respective plan. As a long-time investor and development donor, the EU did grab the chance. The European Council reached agreement on an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in April 2021, and in September, it presented a Joint Communication providing further rationale for its strategy. This paves the way for the EU to join the other long-standing advocates of the Indo-Pacific strategy. As a member of ASEAN and an important geo-strategic and geo-economic position, Vietnam is considered a like-minded partner with the EU and expected to promote EU's stance in the region. The study will therefore clarify the role of Vietnam in EU and its members' strategies and how Hanoi views their engagement.

Key words: Indo-Pacific region, geopolitics, EU foreign policy, Vietnamese foreign policy, economic cooperation, foreign investment.

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¹ Nguyen Thi Hanh, PhD (International Relations), Lecturer, Directorvoh the Center for Cooperation and Franco-Asia Pacific studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. ORCID: 0000-0002-8021-2796. E-mail: hanhnt@dav.edu.vn

² Vo Hoang Linh, a junior editor, Journal of European Law and Economy. E-mail: vohoanglinh1998@gmail.com

Introduction

The EU has long been present as an economic actor in Asia and in the wider Indo – Pacific. As of 2020, neither has the EU recognize the idea of the Indo – Pacific nor determine its policy priorities for the region. It was not until such EU members as France, Germany, and the Netherlands accepted the Indo – Pacific concept and integrate the region into their security strategies that the EU began to use Indo – Pacific region as a strategic concept.

The EU has defined its own outlook for the region, which focuses on norms of international governance, environmental protection, freedom of the seas and trade and emphasizes the ASEAN centrality.

Important questions for guiding outcomes of Europe’s efforts would be how the strategies of the EU and its member states are viewed in the Indo-Pacific region and what are the expectations of countries in the region towards EU activities?

After three decades of rapid growth driven by economic reforms and active foreign policy, Vietnam has been one of the region’s emerging economies. Also, Vietnam has always been considered a prioritized cooperation partner when the EU is rolling out a range of initiatives towards the region. Given the country’s prominent role in ASEAN, its deep involvement in maritime security and delicate links with both regional powers China and the US, Vietnam was chosen as a case study to answer the above questions.

By adopting qualitative and comparative analysis, the study will examine (i) the role Vietnam in the EU and its members’ Indo – Pacific strategies, and (ii) Vietnam’s perspective of the strategy.

Role of Vietnam in Europe’s Indo – Pacific strategy

The Indo-Pacific region is increasingly becoming strategically important for the EU. The region’s growing economic, demographic, and political significance makes it a key player in shaping the international order and in addressing global challenges.

The EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo – Pacific was officially unveiled during a State of The Union by President von der Leyen in 15 September 2021. A Joint Communication on the EU’s Indo-Pacific Strategy was then presented by the Commission and the High Representative on 16 September 2021 [European Commission:15.09.2021].

Although the official communication does not specifically mention the cooperation with Vietnam, it is shown indirectly through EU emphasis on the centrality of ASEAN in which Vietnam plays a key role. Vietnam, to some extent, helps facilitate the presence of the EU and disseminate the EU strategy in the region.

In terms of security and defense, the EU commits to “step up activities with partners under the project Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia (ESIWA)”, including counter-terrorism, cyber security, maritime security and crisis management. Vietnam has been one of its partners within the project with EU military experts already in place, alongside India, Japan, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. The EU also concluded Framework Participation Agreements with Vietnam which enables Vietnam’s participation in Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, and support Vietnam’s peacekeeping capacity. This is of vital strategic and security significance given the growing pressure from sea disputes.

Both sides share grave concerns over the South China Sea where Vietnam is a major claimant state, and its views and actions can make remarkable impact on security there. In the context that China's growing naval power and assertiveness may endanger freedom of navigation, the EU's advocacy for Southeast Asia in maritime disputes clearly showed its resolute protection of a rule-based order in every waterway and an explosive seaborne trade with Asia. Since 40% of EU trade with the region is transferring through the South China Sea, they would want to prevent any disruption in maritime routes [European External Action Service: 03.06.2021].

Trade relationship with Vietnam has also been the EU's priority. According to Head of the EU Delegation to Vietnam Giorgio Aliberti in the prime-time show themed EU's Indo – Pacific strategy broadcasted on the national Vietnamese TV, Vietnam owns a very favorable position and potential to become the center of the region, which is the major trade crossroad [Doe 2022].

Since human security has been promoted in the strategy, the EU has provided unwavering support for Vietnam in health crisis management. Also, as Vietnam has been the bloc's largest trade partner in Southeast Asia, EU nations has an interest in accelerating the pandemic recovery in Vietnam [COVID: Why Is Europe Donating: 03.09.2021]. As of July 2021, the EU and its member states has donated 4.176.000 doses of Covid-19 vaccines, mainly through COVAX [Delegation of the European Union: 07.01.2021].

Notably, the strategy demonstrates the EU's further engagement in “hard” security, with initiatives and activities on regional maritime security. Despite the lack of a common defense policy, the EU are increasingly independent from its members in promoting their Indo – Pacific strategy. Vietnam is now the EU's 15th-largest trading partner and its largest in Southeast Asia, an area where Brussels is eager to gain economic and geopolitical foothold.

Role of Vietnam in France's Indo – Pacific strategy

Paris officially embrace the “Indo-Pacific” concept in May 2018, during President Macron's visit to Australia, making France the first EU country to adopt this notion [Ambassade de France: 08.01.202].

French ties with Vietnam have been bolstered since the initiation of the French Indo-Pacific strategy, expanding into the area of security. According to the official strategy, Vietnam was mentioned as France's main partner in ASEAN alongside Indonesia and Singapore. Needless to say, as France's former colony and current strategic partner, Vietnam facilitates a greater French presence in the region, especially freedom of navigation operations, while Hanoi views an improvement in relations with Paris as part of its foreign policy objective of engaging multiple major powers and diversifying strategic partnerships, particularly with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The Vietnam-France Defense Policy Dialogue was first held in November 2016 and followed by the second one in January 2018. Defense discussions gained fruitful results, with a new Joint Vision statement for 2018-2028 maritime cooperation and calls for open sea lanes and legal compliance [Scott 2019]. In subsequent ministerial-level meetings, Vietnam was regarded by French counterparts as “key partner for our interests in South-east Asia and in the Indo-Pacific region” [Déplacement du Premier ministre: 01.10.2021].

There have been more warship touring in the region since the signing of joint declaration. From May-June 2019, the anti-aircraft frigate Forbin conducted week-long visit to Vietnam where both countries' navy crews exchanged practice sessions [Nguyen Thanh: 28.05.2019]. In February 2021,

French minister of defense announced that a French nuclear attack submarine has completed a patrol in South China Sea. Following that, another French frigate docked at Cam Ranh port for helicopter repairs in March [Haver 2021]. The visits deliver an affirmative message in support of freedom of navigation in the air and at sea, which is long recognized in international law, and against any assertive behaviors in the region.

Other areas of cooperation have also achieved positive outcomes. Overall, bilateral trade has intensified with an average annual growth of 15 percent. Vietnam has been one of beneficiaries of the AFD's projects in South-East Asia [Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères 2021]. Recently, following the meeting between Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and President Macron on the sidelines of COP26, both sides signed 29 cooperation agreements between the two ministries, agencies, and businesses. Notably, French multinational company Thales and Vietnamese state-owned VNPT signed an MoU on technical collaboration in areas of telecommunication satellites, smart cities, digital identity and biometrics as well as 5G, IoT, and cybersecurity [Samuel: 11.11.2021; New Partnership: 09.11.2021]. The move shows France's attempt to seek market share and influence in the security sector in Vietnam.

Regarding Covid-19 response, as of November 2021, France donated over two million doses of Covid-19 vaccine to Vietnam through the COVAX mechanism, which is in line with the longstanding and successful cooperation between France and Vietnam in the medical field [969,930 Doses: 30.11.2021].

Besides, France – Vietnam relations since France's "pivot" to the Indo-Pacific have carried more security implications. As part of the Francophone community, with the potential to become a middle power, Vietnam helps expand France's influence and involvement in the region. Meanwhile, given France's naval superiority, its presence will exert considerable deterrence and pressure in conflict hotspots where Vietnam can enlist support in maritime disputes.

Vietnam specifically holds expectations and favorability for the French strategy and Franco – Vietnamese links. Unlike other EU members, France has its own sovereignty, citizens, military presence and broader interests at stake in the region. It also shares historical and long-standing ties with Vietnam.

Vietnam values France's colonial legacies since they provide a legal base for Vietnam's territorial sovereignty, and further support the establishment of codes of conduct and legal order in the region today. France's legal system and modern cartography provide an authentic basis for Vietnam to protect its sovereignty and the potential resolution of contemporary conflicts. As early as 1885, after the Sino-French war over Tonkin, the border with China has been precisely delimited by military topographers and ratified by bilateral agreements in 1886, thus rejecting the Chinese Empire's concept of the delineated border over the vaguer notion of unprecise margins [Journoud 2016]. When China seized the Paracels by force, the Vietnamese claims against China after 1974, using universally accepted concepts such as proximity, or actual and continuous occupation and valid evidence inherited from the French. Today's negotiations between China and Vietnam as well as with other claimants in the South China Sea still relied on the treaties signed by France at the end of the 19th century [Niquet 2018].

Vietnam is one of the beneficiaries of the multilateral and rules-based order promoted by France, as well as the presence of the French navy in regional hotspots. In accordance with historical insights from the colonial and immediate post-colonial period, France takes a rigid stance on territorial disputes in the South China Sea, which any settlement must adhere to international law and avoid the use of force

or unilateral decisions that may change the status quo. In an official document adopted by the French Ministry of defense in 2018, the Spratlys are described as “claimed” by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam while the Paracels are “occupied by China and claimed by Vietnam” [Ministère des Armées 2018], which reaffirms its own stance on maritime sovereignty in a region where France, as a former colonial power, played a major role in borders definition [Niquet 2018].

Role of Vietnam in Germany’s Indo – Pacific strategy

In September 2020, Germany published its own Indo-Pacific policy guidelines, entitled “Germany – Europe – Asia: shaping the 21st century together” and declared the region “a priority of German foreign policy”. This is mainly driven by the desire to “uphold global norms in regional structures, and strengthen its partnership in the region” [Amt Auswärtiges: 24.07.2022].

In initiatives proposed by the German, building a close bond with ASEAN members tops the list. As one of Germany’s prominent strategic partner, there is room for Vietnam to bolster ties in various fields and present itself as a reliable partner and a bridge connecting the Southeast Asia with the world. For example, Vietnam may give support for Germany’s seek of observer status at the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+).

In terms of security, although Berlin is reluctant to provide security to other parts of the world, it would also like to engage more as an active player and partner as a result of growing economic importance of the region and China’s increasing clout in the area. On 6 January 2022, the frigate “Bayern” entered the port of Nha Rong in Ho Chi Minh City as part of a seven-month training and presence cruise in the Indo – Pacific. The first-ever visit of a German Navy ship to Vietnam highlighted the importance Germany attaches to the partnership with Vietnam, and a concrete implementation of the German Indo-Pacific Guidelines of 2020 [Ibid.].

Trade and investment continue to be at the heart of bilateral relations with Vietnam being a favorable environment for German businesses. In 2020, Vietnam overtook Malaysia and Singapore to become Germany’s largest trading partner in Southeast Asia, while Germany has remained Vietnam’s largest trading partner in the EU. In terms of investment, the Vietnamese market has always been highly appreciated by Germany. Germany has also spent more than 2 billion USD worth of ODA for Vietnam, focusing on such important areas as renewable energy development, environmental protection, vocational training, making practical contributions to Vietnam’s socio-economic development [Nguyen Minh Vu 2021].

Ministerial level meetings have been held more frequently to further discuss particular cooperative orientation and actions. For example, the first meeting of the Vietnam-Germany Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation was held online on January 12, 2021 during which participants discussed the cooperation possibilities in industry and trade, manufacturing-processing, energy, and education-training. [Delegate of German Industry: 12.01.2021].

Other fields also witnessed a growth in German-Vietnamese cooperation. During the Covid-19 crisis, The German government donated to Vietnam a total of 3.35 million doses of vaccine and many medical equipment with a total value of about VND 20 billion. This is the largest amount of bilaterally aided vaccines Germany has ever given to a country outside the EU to date [Nguyen Minh Vu 2021]. It is also noted in the guideline that Germany will continuously support the Vietnamese – German University as a flagship project of German science diplomacy. This is not only a mere educational

cooperation but also creates a premise for security initiatives, and Vietnam might join Germany in improving the existing cooperative model.

To sum up, Germany places more emphasis on connectivity characterized by policies that facilitate open markets, free trade, wise investment. Neither does Germany seek an increasingly geopolitical influence nor commit towards traditional security issues. Therefore, Vietnam serves mainly as a bridge for German trade flow and economic prosperity in the region.

Role of Vietnam in the Netherlands' Indo – Pacific strategy

In November 2020, the Netherlands published a document entitled “Indo-Pacific: Guidelines for Strengthening Dutch and EU Cooperation with Partners in Asia, making it the third EU member state to issue a strategy on the Indo – Pacific after France and Germany [Government of the Netherlands: 13.11.2020]. The Dutch involvement in the region is not only an amplification of the EU policies but also reflects its evolving international outlook. Although its policy emphasis remains on Europe and Transatlantic links, the Netherlands has gradually expanded to the Indo – Pacific.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands was one of the first Western countries to establish diplomatic relations with Vietnam on April 9, 1973. It was not until April 2019 that both countries agreed to build up a comprehensive partnership.

Vietnam's position and role are specifically defined in the framework of cooperation with democratic and like-minded partners in Asia: “The Netherlands will deepen its partnerships with countries such as Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam through practical cooperation on issues where we share common interests, and through annual consultations.” [Ibid.]. This proves that the Netherlands attributes a special place to Vietnam in its vision of the Indo – Pacific.

Up to now, the Netherlands has been the EU's largest foreign investment (FDI) partner in Vietnam with nearly 400 projects and a total capital of about USD 11 billion, accounting for nearly 50% of the total investment capital of the EU in Vietnam. Vietnam has been given technical support from Boskalis Group, the Netherlands within the framework of cooperation between the Vietnam Administration of Seas and Islands and the Netherlands in an attempt to address coastal and riverbank erosion, and soil subsidence [Nguyen Muon and Ha Le 2022]. There are also a number of research projects in collaboration with the Dutch Embassy in Hanoi to assess the potential and solutions to circular economy transition (e.g. the Interceptor plastic waste collection system on rivers in Can Tho) [Chu An 2022].

Basically, the role of Vietnam in EU countries' Indo – Pacific strategy is characterized mainly in two dimensions: (i) Vietnam as a key member of ASEAN, and (ii) Vietnam as a bilateral partner.

Vietnam also owns the most comprehensive bilateral relationship with the EU in Southeast Asia. As an active member of ASEAN and the second country of the Association to sign a FTA with the EU, Vietnam is considered an important partner in the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy. Through the established relationship with Vietnam, European governments seek ways to such security frameworks built around ASEAN as the ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting Plus (ADMM+), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Vietnam was also the coordinator of the ASEAN-EU relations. At the annual ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) held online on July 8, 2021 Vietnam proposed the EU to continue supporting ASEAN's efforts in maintaining peace, security and safety in the South China Sea,

fully and effectively realizing the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties (DOC), and soon complete negotiations on an effective and efficient Code of Conduct (COC).

Vietnam's strategic position makes it natural partner for the EU especially when European countries want to play an increasing part in preserving the regional legal order regarding the law of the sea and maritime security. Along with other Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam is located on an important traffic axis of the most vibrant shipping and trade routes in Asia where there are strong and dynamic economies that provide logistical services to countries inside and outside the region. It is also in close proximity to China, and also a party involved in the South China Sea disputes.

Vietnam's perspective of Europe's Indo – Pacific strategy

Vietnam also appreciates the robust and constructive role of major EU powers in the region based on its support for the vital role of ASEAN and the promotion of rule of law and cooperation in the region. After the EU officially announced the Indo-Pacific strategy, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, Ms. Le Thi Thu Hang, at a regular press conference on the afternoon of September 23, 2021 said: “Vietnam highly appreciates the EU's role and positive contributions to peace, cooperation and development in the region. [...] On the basis of the comprehensive partnership and cooperation between Vietnam and the EU, Vietnam is willing to coordinate with the EU in implementing cooperation frameworks for mutual benefits, promoting ASEAN's centrality, the Asia-Europe partnership and the ASEAN-EU strategic partnership” [Thu Phuong and Hien Hanh 2021].

EU's approach is in line with Vietnam's expectations. Furthermore, the EU's emphasis on “normative aspects of a peaceful and rules-based order” could preserve stability and multilateralism from which Vietnam benefits. While how the EU manages to both cooperate and compete with China remains questionable, the presence of an EU strategy addressing these issues is highly appreciated from Vietnam's view. As the South China Sea dispute is currently the most serious national security challenge for Vietnam, maritime cooperation activities between the EU and Vietnam or EU states' freedom of navigation operations help curb China's aggression in the South China Sea. Vietnam has grounds to hope that, with the EU's concrete presence in the Indo – Pacific, territorial disputes will certainly be addressed at multilateral mechanisms and adherence to the rules of international law.

Furthermore, the EU's positive viewpoint of “non-confrontational cooperation” is welcomed by all partner countries that have been struggling with taking side in the US-China competition [European External Action Service: 03.06.2021]. For ASEAN countries in general and Vietnam in particular, any EU efforts to narrow the differences with potential rivals will help reduce tension between major powers.

Conclusion

Located at the heart of Southeast Asia, facing the South China Sea and encompassed by the Southeast Asian nations, Vietnam occupies an important geostrategic position. Vietnam, therefore, is considered a like-minded partner with the EU. The relationship between the EU and Vietnam has lasted for 31 years and has witnessed remarkable developments in recent years, especially the signing and ratification of European Union–Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) and The Investment Protection Agreement between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (EVIPA).

Vietnam is one of the most vocal countries in terms of maritime dispute and one of the most prominent advocate of the efforts that seek to contain an assertive China. Over the last few years, Hanoi

actively channeling its efforts towards broadening its links with countries of the Indo – Pacific. As the major player in the ASEAN, much expectations have been placed on the country for steering the grouping activities and enhancing its centrality as well as coordination in the security areas which seem limited due to the pandemic.

For Vietnam, the EU strategy will lay the foundation for the development of the existing partnership between the EU and Vietnam and carry more security benefits. The EU’s activities in the Indo – Pacific are expected to relieve Chinese aggression and Sino – American rivalry.

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STUDY ON THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN VIETNAM

Nguyen Trong Binh¹

Abstract. The article presents an analysis of the real participation of Vietnamese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in local government and their interaction with authorities. Particular attention is paid to such areas as access to information, political initiatives, public criticism, public control, self-government, volunteer movement, etc. In the course of the study, the author conducted a sociological survey, the results of which indicate the strengthening of the role of NGOs in local government. The article also notes shortcomings in the work of local authorities in cooperation with NGOs, gives recommendations for improving this activity in the conditions of the modern model of public administration.

Keywords: Vietnam, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local government, public control, self-government, volunteer movement, sociological survey.

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Introduction

Shifting from the traditional public administration model to a modern public governance model with the main feature emphasizing openness in government is the focus of government reform in countries worldwide today [Nguyễn Trọng Bình 2018]. In this context, promoting the participation of NGOs in public governance, both general local, is one of the indispensable strategies. Many researchers believe that cooperation between government and society, especially non-governmental organizations, is an indispensable mechanism of public governance [Frederickson 1980; Denhardt et al. 2003; Jun 1994; Perri et al. 2002; Giddens 2000; Maitland 2003; Ostrom 2001].

The implementation of the *Doi Moi* policy followed by the transformation of the socio-economic model, the model of government since 1986 in Vietnam, which has set an objective requirement for strengthening the involvement of NGOs in local governance, as promoting the participation of NGOs is not only an important condition for the implementation of “good governance”, but also a way to expand and realize social democracy. The questions that need to be answered here are (i) What is the current

¹ Nguyen Trong Binh, PhD (Public Administration), Senior Lecturer, Academy of Politics Region IV, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, Can Tho, Vietnam. ORCID: 0000-0001-6009-4983. Email: trongbinh1234z@gmail.com

status of NGOs in Vietnam? (ii) How effective is the participation of NGOs in local governance in Vietnam?

Overview of NGOs in Vietnam and some studies on NGOs in Vietnam

Overview of NGOs in Vietnam

Normally, NGOs are often called differently: non-profit organizations (to distinguish them from business); the third sector (to distinguish it from the first sector (the government) and the second sector (the market); tax-free areas; voluntary organizations; independent organizations. So, it can be said that NGOs are associations, professional associations, foundations existing outside the state, political parties and markets voluntarily established by citizens. Therefore, NGOs implements self-governance, are recognized by law, and operate independently and voluntarily, through many different ways to realise the interests of members and the public.

One can believe that a number of NGOs existed in Vietnam before the *Doi Moi* period (1986). However, NGOs in Vietnam have only grown strongly since *Doi Moi* introduction in Vietnam. The reasons of NGOs being thrived since Vietnam's *Doi Moi* are numerous: (i) the market economy has created an important socio-economic basis for the operation of NGOs; (ii) a rational settlement of the (reformed) relationship between government, market and society has created an important political basis for the emergence and development of non-profit organizations; (iii) the government's responsibility to ensure and deliver public services is increasing while the government's financial resources are limited. This requires the promotion of the NGOs' role in social governance; (iv) people's needs for various types of public services increase, requiring the promotion of NGOs role in providing diverse public services to the people; (v) the development of NGOs in Vietnam is also due to the necessity to improve the effectiveness of people's participation in social governance. In the opinion of Putnam [1993], the development of NGOs is beneficial to the development of social capital and improves the effectiveness of people's participation.

Therefore, during the *Doi Moi* period, NGOs in Vietnam have developed very quickly. Excluding international NGOs (now more than 900 international NGOs are operating in Vietnam), Vietnam currently has about 500 NGOs at the national level; 4000 NGOs at the provincial level; 10,000 NGOs at district and commune levels; 1,800 NGOs operating in the fields of science, environment, health care and education. There are 150 professional associations. Besides, there are more than 140,000 active community-based organizations (CBOs) [Nguyễn Đăng Long 2021].

Some studies on NGOs in Vietnam

Recently, many scientists have studied NGOs in Vietnam. Bui The Cuong [2005] has not given any definition of an NGO, but said that NGOs can also be called social organizations or non-profit organizations. Non-governmental organizations are not of the State; they are not profit-oriented but voluntary organizations. Nguyen Khac Mai [1996] classifies NGOs in Vietnam into (i) the people's organizations in the Vietnamese political system; (ii) mass associations. He also states that mass associations perform four common roles, such as participation in social protection and development, self-interest, self-education, and social regulation. Thang Van Phuc [2002] refers to three types of NGOs in Vietnam, including: (i) the people's organizations actively set up by the Communist Party of Vietnam to rally the masses, such as: Fatherland Front, Trade Union, Vietnam Farmers' Association etc.; (ii) socio-

political organizations such as the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations; (iii) NGOs emerged in the *Doi Moi* period. Phạm Van Duc [2018] said that NGOs are formed on the principle of voluntariness and self-management of employees, organized and operated according to the charter or regulations of the State, employees, etc. NGOs participate in state management, social management as well as in order to protect the legitimate interests of their members.

Nguyen Minh Phuong [2006] refers to the functions of NGOs in Vietnam, which are the following: they (i) act like a bridge and channel to transmit the people's voices and aspirations to the government; (ii) participate and coordinate in the planning of government policies, implementing and monitoring the policies; (iii) practise social criticism of policies and supervision of the quality and behavior of civil servants in order to combat bureaucracy and corruption, and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the government; and (iv) promote the resources, dynamism and initiatives of all classes of the population, participate in the provision of public service such as education, health, culture, science, environmental protection etc.

In general, studies on NGOs in Vietnam have addressed three main aspects: (i) elaboration of the NGO definition; (ii) classification of NGOs in Vietnam; (iii) investigation of the NGOs' function and role in national governance and in other areas of social life. However, it is conspicuous that there is still a lack of research-works on the participation of NGOs in local governance in Vietnam. So, in this article, we are going to survey and evaluate the participation of NGOs in local governance in Vietnam in 6 aspects, namely: (i) access to information; (ii) policy initiatives; (iii) social criticism; (iv) self-governance and social autonomy; (v) social supervision by NGOs; (vi) cooperation of local governments and NGOs in public service.

Methods and Data

In addition to the document research methods and normative methods to form the above-mentioned theoretical framework, this study uses the sociological investigation method to collect data to clarify the status of the participation of the NGOs in local governance in Vietnam. Particularly, this study has processed the data within the scope of the research (the six aspects mentioned above) into specific aspects that can be surveyed, evaluated and measured. In each aspect, the study tries to ask questions to collect information on the extent and form of the NGOs' participation in local governance. This survey was conducted in 2021; there were 6,000 respondents at the grassroots level, divided into two groups: (i) heads of NGOs (5000 votes) and (ii) grassroots people (1000 votes) in 15 provinces and cities of Vietnam.

The 15 provinces and cities of Vietnam under the survey are located in different regions, including: the Northern Midland and Mountainous region (surveys carried out in the provinces of Son La and Hoa Binh); the Red River Delta and Northeastern coastal areas (surveys carried out in Hanoi Capital and Thai Binh province); the North Central region (surveys carried out in the provinces of Thanh Hoa and Ha Tinh); the South Central Coast region (surveys carried out in the province of Ninh Thuan and Da Nang City); the Central Highland region (surveys carried out in the provinces of Lam Dong and Gia Lai); the Southeast region (surveys carried out in the province of Binh Duong and Ho Chi Minh City); the Southwest region (surveys carried out in the provinces of Dong Thap and Ca Mau, and Can Tho City). For each of the province or city, five districts were randomly selected to conduct the study. For each of the district, six communes and wards were randomly selected to conduct the survey. The total number of communes and wards randomly selected for the survey was 450.

There are two types of questionnaires for two different groups of respondents. With 5,000 questionnaires for leaders of NGOs at the grassroots level, there are 6 axes of content surveyed to assess the participation of NGOs in local governance in Vietnam including: (i) access to information; (ii) policy initiatives; (iii) social criticism; (iv) self-governance and social autonomy; (v) social supervision by NGOs; (vi) co-operation between local governments and NGOs in public service delivery. In each axis of the content, questions were designed to collect information mainly in two aspects of extent (expressed in the percentage) and form (for example, form of information access). For example, with the content axis of access to information, the questions were designed to examine aspects, such as access to information on local development strategies; access to information on major local policies, access to information on local development plans; access to information about local development projects; access to information on land planning; access to information on budget estimates. To examine the form of access to information, questions were designed to examine how NGOs access information, for instance, whether they access information by means of mass media or the local government portal. Similar to the policy initiatives axes, questions were designed to see whether the participating NGOs raised policy initiatives, and if they did, so in what areas and by what means they used. The same was applied for other content axes. With 1000 questionnaires for people at the grassroots, the questionnaires were designed mainly to see the level of participation in self-management groups of the people at the grassroots.

Results and discussion

Access to Information of NGOs

The level of access to information from the local governance is both a criterion for assessing the level of transparency of local governments and an important basis for the NGOs' participation in the local governance. That is, only with full access to information can NGOs perform well in functions such as policy initiative, social criticism and monitoring. On the other hand, the fact that NGOs have full access to information from the local government also helps these organizations to provide information to their members as well as carry out policy propaganda functions. The responses of the NGOs' leaders concerning the level of access to information and the methods for accessing information of NGOs are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Level of access to information and methods of access to information of NGOs

<i>Level of access to information, %</i>	
Access to information on local development strategies	78.03
Access to information on major local policies	86.01
Access to information on local development plans	87.06
Access to information on local development projects	30.00
Access to information on land planning	26.00
Access to information on budget estimates	25.00
<i>Forms of access to information, %</i>	
Access to information through mass media	40.00
Access to information from the Local Government Portal	20.00
Directly provided by local government	17.00
Other	23.00

Source: Author’s survey results in 2021

The above-mentioned results show that the level of access to information about local development strategies, major local policies and local development plans by NGOs is relatively good. However, the extent to which NGOs have access to information for development projects, land planning and budget estimates are not good, so far, with the corresponding rate of 30%; 26% and 25%. Regarding the method of accessing information, the government’s adoption of the portal and digital platforms to provide information to society, non-governmental organizations as well as directly provide information to organizations and NGOs has not been good enough. This means that the local government needs to attach more importance to building a digital government to provide better information to society.

Outlining of policy initiatives

Policy initiative is a form of participation of NGOs in the local governance. Policy initiatives mean that non-governmental organizations actively raise their initiatives to local governments about the issue of either new, or revised, or adjusted policies [Nguyễn Trọng Bình & Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Anh 2019]. NGOs are representative organizations of citizens; therefore, if NGOs value policy initiatives and the local government attaches great importance to receiving policy initiatives from NGOs, this will contribute to improving the accountability and responsiveness of the local government, as well as making the government more responsive. Local government policies and actions reflect the “will of the people”. The survey results on policy initiatives and policy initiatives methods by NGOs are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Policy initiatives of NGOs and methods of Policy initiatives

<i>Level of policy initiatives, %</i>	
Making policy initiatives, in which:	36.00
- Local development policy	60.00
- Local development project	20.03
- Order of priority in implementing local development projects	7.00
- Innovating public service delivery of local government	5.00
Policy initiatives have been absorbed by the local government	85.00
<i>Methods of stating policy initiatives, %</i>	
Directly in the written form to the local government	40.00
Via local government portal	10.00
Via email to local government agencies	15.00
Via conferences and dialogues with local government representatives	20.00
Others	15.00

Source: Author’s survey results in 2021

The results of the above study show that, although a high percentage (85%) of the respondents believe that the local government is receptive to policy initiatives raised by NGOs, however, a fairly large percentage (64%) of respondents (leaders of NGOs) said that NGOs did not raise policy initiatives. State policy initiatives of NGOs mainly focus on local development policies, while highlighting policy initiatives on development projects and the order of priority in implementing projects. The project on

development and renewal of public service provision by the local government has not been given due attention.

Social criticism of NGOs

Social criticism of NGOs means that non-governmental organizations based on theories, practice and people’s position to comment, evaluate, state their opinions, recommendations for draft local government policies. Social criticism demonstrates social constructivism in policy design, which is also an important requirement of democratic governance [Jun, 2007]. If NGOs value social criticism and local governments receive reasonable voices from NGOs, it will contribute to improving the quality of local government policies. The survey results on social criticism activities and methods of social criticism of NGOs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Social criticism of NGOs and methods of social criticism

<i>Level of social criticism, %</i>	
Social criticism, in which:	50.00
- Draft long-term and medium-term development policy	28.00
- Draft development plan	13.00
- Estimated annual budget	3.00
- Draft government performance report	51.00
- Lack of criticism	50.00
<i>Methods of social criticism, %</i>	
- Organizing a meeting of the NGOs’ leaders ()	50.00
- NGOs collect feedback from members of the organization	20.00
- NGOs collect feedback from external organizations and individuals	15.00
- Organizing direct dialogue between NGOs and local government	15.00

Source: Author’s survey results in 2021

The above survey results show that the social criticism activities of NGOs are still unsatisfactory while only 50% of the respondents believe that the organization they are in charge of has carried out social criticism. On the other hand, the social criticism of NGOs focuses mainly on policy drafts that are not really important (51%), while the criticism of important policy drafts, like drafts of long-term and medium-term development policies; draft development planning; the draft budget estimate has not been given due attention. As far as methods and forms of social criticism are concerned, such forms as collecting opinions of members of the organization; collecting feedback from external organizations and individuals and organizing direct dialogues between NGOs and local governments have not been given due attention.

Social Supervision of NGOs

Social supervision of NGOs means the monitoring, detection, review, evaluation and recommendations of these organizations in order to influence local governments and relevant public managers to the implementation of policies and laws. There are many categories of monitoring a local government, such as internal surveillance, supervision by elected bodies, supervision by judicial

authorities, monitoring of the political party, supervision by NGOs and citizens. Thus, surveillance by NGOs falls under the category of social supervision. In a variety of ways, oversight by NGOs is important in promoting government accountability [Rosenbloom et al. 2008]. The survey results on the performance of the monitoring function of NGOs are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Supervision of NGOs and methods of Supervision

<i>Supervision of NGOs, %</i>	
The implementation of development projects	30.00
Behavior of local government	31.00
The implementation of the regulation on democracy	26.00
New construction and repair works	41.11
Local government public spending	8.00
<i>Form of feedback to local government,</i>	
- Through the regular dialogue with local government	50.00
- A written petition to local government	40.00
- Other	10.00
<i>The government has responded satisfactorily to the recommendations of NGOs, %</i>	20.17

Source: Author's survey results in 2021

The results show that, in the monitoring contents of NGOs, the supervision of new construction and remodeling works is paid the most attention, while the monitoring of contents, such as the implementation of development projects, behavior and employment of the local government, the implementation of the regulation on democracy at the grassroots level, monitoring public expenditure by local government has not received enough attention from NGOs. The response of the local government to the opinions and recommendations of NGOs is also not good while but 20.17% of the respondents believe that the local government has responded satisfactorily to the opinions and recommendations of the NGOs.

Social autonomy and self-governance

A good government is not so much a government that meets all the needs of the citizens, but a government that creates the necessary conditions for the citizens to be able to do some work within the scope of their ability [Zhang Cheng Fu 2014]. Social self-governance is a form of governance centered on citizens and NGOs, where within certain organizations and regions, citizens and NGOs manage public affairs on their own. The social self-governance of NGOs in the local governance in Vietnam mainly shows itself in three basic aspects: (i) organizing voluntary movements and activities to contribute to solving social problems; (ii) propagating and educating members and union members of NGOs; (iii) self-governing organization in residential areas. The results of this survey are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Social autonomy and self-governance

<i>Organizing movements and volunteering activities, %</i>	
Organizing and implementing movements and volunteering activities	100.00

Percentage of members of NGOs participating in volunteer activities	45.00
<i>Propagating and educating members and union members, %</i>	
There is propaganda and education among members and union members	100.00
Members of NGOs accessing information provided by NGOs	40.00
<i>Self-governance in residential area, %</i>	
Establishing self-managed teams and groups at the grassroots	100.00
Percentage of members, union members participating in self-managed teams at the grassroots (%), in which:	54.00
- Self-managed team on security and order	38.00
- Self-managed team on environmental protection	11.30
- Self-managed team on grassroots mediation	18.00
- Self-managed team on legal education	12.70
- Self-managed team of public works	2.70
- Other self-managed teams	17.30

Source: Author's survey results in 2021

The results above show that it is a priority for all NGOs to organize voluntary movements, to carry out propaganda and education, as well as to establish self-governing teams and groups at the grassroots level. Score on social self-governance of NGOs in local governance. Compared with other forms of participation, this form of participation in the NGOs' local governance has many advantages. However, the quality of social self-governance of NGOs in local governance needs to be improved. Because the percentage of members and union members participating in voluntary movements and activities organized by NGOs; the percentage of members and union members accessing information provided by NGOs as well as the percentage of members and union members joining self-managed teams and groups are but average or below average.

Cooperation between the government and NGOs in public service delivery

According to the traditional view, citizens are merely users of public goods and services, passive recipients of government policy. The modern point of view is that citizens are both the object and subject of the local governance. Being an important aspect of public-private partnership, cooperation of local governments and NGOs is important. More specifically, through forms such as contracting, government subsidies to social organizations and procurement of public services from NGOs, cooperation of local governments and NGOs. NGOs that contribute to the lack of government resources; promote the strength of many parties to the quick and effective resolution of social problems, to reduction of public spending by local governments, to faster provision of public services, to reduction of the social task of government, promoting self-governance and self-government of society as well as improving the quality of public services [Nguyễn Trọng Bình 2021]. Implementing the policy of “maximum socialization” and “unnecessarily handing over government work to NGOs, shifting public service delivery directly to ordering” [Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam 2021], local authorities have initially attached great importance to cooperation with NGOs in public service provision. However, in this respect, the degree of cooperation

of the local government and the “pro-government” and other NGOs is different.² The results of the survey in this respect are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Cooperation of government and NGOs in public service delivery

<i>Local government contracts with NGOs, %</i>	
- Signed contracts with the “pro-government” NGOs)	25.00
- Signed contracts with other NGOs	18.00
- No contracts	57.00
<i>Local government subsidies for NGOs, %</i>	
- No contracts	
- Subsidies to the “pro-government” NGOs	100.00
- Subsidies to other NGOs	50.00
<i>Local government procurement of public services from NGOs, %</i>	
- Procurement of public services from NGOs “friendly” to the government	20.00
- Procurement of public services from other NGOs	10.00

Source: Author’s survey results in 2021

The survey results in the table above show that the local government has initially cooperated with NGOs in providing public services through forms such as signing contracts, subsidizing NGOs as well as procurement public services from NGOs. However, cooperation of the government and NGOs in public service delivery is still limited, especially when local governments sign contracts with NGOs as well as procure public services from NGOs. This shows that, between the policy of "maximum socialization" and the reality of cooperation of local governments and NGOs in public service provision, there is still a huge gap. Besides, the degree of cooperation of local governments and NGOs in public service delivery differs from that of “pro-government” NGOs and other NGOs. In particular, “pro-government” NGOs receive better subsidies from the local government than other NGOs.

The above-mentioned results show that NGOs have promoted a certain role in local governance in Vietnam, especially in terms of self-governance and social autonomy at the grassroots level. The advantages and results of the participation of NGOs in the local governance in Vietnam partly reflect the content and results of the transformation of the local governance model in Vietnam from the “management of the local government” to the model of “modern local governance”. However, there is still a lot of room to promote the participation of NGOs in local governance, especially in the aspects of public policy development, supervision and cooperation with the government in the

² “Pro-Government” NGOs are understood the author as NGOs belonging to the political system of Vietnam, having close relationships with the ruling Party and the State, performing the role of the political base of the ruling party and the government. Currently, there are six NGOs belonging to the political system of Vietnam, including the Vietnam Fatherland Front; Youth Union; Women’s Union; Farmers’ Union; Vietnam Trade Union and Veterans Association. Russian researchers classify these organizations, formed long before the reforms of the Renovation, not as the Western category of NGOs, but as traditional social movements characteristic of socialist countries [Mazyrin 2007]. In fact, they differ in terms of criteria and mission from Western-style NGOs. – *Editor's note.*

provision of the local governance. In other words, NGOs have not yet fully played their due role in policy initiatives; social feedback; supervision and provision of public services.

Conclusions and recommendations

Local government reform towards the formation of a “citizen-centered”, “pro-market”; “pro-social” government has been carried out by Vietnam operating during the past 35 years of *Doi Moi*. However, the room for reform and renewal of local government in Vietnam as introduced in the modern local governance model is still very large. Therefore, transforming the governance model from the traditional management model of the local government to the modern local governance model is the sole and exclusive subject in solving public problems. A modern approach with active and effective participation and cooperation of the local government, the market and society (the core are non-governmental organizations) is an important task of Vietnam in the present and future.

To promote the transformation of local governance model in Vietnam today, the basic and core orientation is through reform and innovation to establish an open local government model. Open local government needs basic categories including: information transparency, policy advice and criticism, participation of society, cooperative governance and self-governance, social autonomy. In the context of a digital society, building an open government cannot but refer to digital government transformation to form a digital government. Operating in the “administration” environment, leaders and managers in the public sector should “look outside”, thus knowing how to connect and implement widely spread interaction and information exchange with citizens, citizens’ organizations and taxpayers. In Smith’s view, this requires leaders and public sector managers to develop skills related to interactive activities, flexible exchange of relevant stakeholders, especially communication skills [Smith, 2004].

Similarly, in order to promote the participation of NGOs in local governance, it is necessary to strengthen the reform of the governance institutions of local governments in the direction of good publicity and transparency; institutional reform and effective implementation of institutions for NGOs to participate in public policy development (policy initiatives, policy advice, policy criticism etc.), to monitor the implementation of local government policies, cooperate with local governments in public service delivery and expand social self-governance. In particular, local governments need to create a favorable environment for the development and healthy operation of NGOs, as well as actively cooperate with NGOs. Also, NGOs themselves have their failures; moreover, as practice in some countries shows, if the rule of law is not guaranteed, the activities of some NGOs can have a negative impact. Therefore, developing and promoting the role of NGOs in local governance must be associated with a strong government as well as the government’s management role. Besides, NGOs themselves also need to improve their autonomy in their operations and perform their social responsibilities well.

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THE POSSIBILITIES OF RUSSIA-VIETNAM COOPERATION IN THE FUEL AND ENERGY SPHERE

A.A. Butko¹

Abstract: The author has made an attempt to show a great potential of Russia-Vietnam cooperation in the fuel and energy sphere basing on the identification of the emerging trends and needs of Vietnamese economy and Russian possibilities.

In particular, the article shows the state and perspectives of hydrocarbon and energy sectors of the Vietnam national economy. It demonstrates that: the decline in oil production due to the exhaustion of existing oil fields in Vietnam and the inability to meet the growing demand for gas on its own show the necessity of the increase in hydrocarbon import; instability and high cost of energy production relied on renewable energy sources want to increase the capacity of traditional types of energy. The obstacles are such factors as a significant growth of the world prices, and increasing dependance on LNG suppliers, as well as the climate agenda.

To settle the problems, Russia being the leader at the world energy and fuels can contribute significantly to Vietnam's energy security. Besides, Moscow maintaining leading positions in construction and exploitation of advanced NPPs could make for Hanoi's return to the national nuclear program. Enhancing cooperation in the hydrocarbon supplies sphere, the implementation of large-scale projects in the nuclear sphere meets both Russia's and Vietnam's national interests.

Keywords: Russian-Vietnamese economic cooperation, oil and gas sector, energy sector, nuclear energy, low-capacity NPPs, floating nuclear thermal power plant.

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¹ Butko Alexandr A., leading specialist of the Center for Scientific and Analytical Information, Institute of Oriental Studies of RAS. E-mail: alexanderbutko27@gmail.com

Introduction

Russia, along with China and India, is the state which has established the relations of comprehensive strategic partnership with Vietnam. The two countries closely cooperate in the political and military-technical spheres. However, the economic cooperation is still a troubled moment. In the opinion of Russian experts, large-scale strategic projects can promote its rise [Mazyrin 2021: 153]. The experience of bilateral relations, the nature of economic needs and possibilities permit to argue that Moscow-Hanoi cooperation in the fuel and energy sector has the best perspectives in terms of implementation of new large-scale initiatives.

Russia-Vietnam cooperation in this sphere has been the theme both of monographs and chapters in publications on the bilateral relations by V.M. Mazyrin [2020], E.V. Nikulina [2020], A.G. Makukhin [2019], Ya.V. Mishchenko [2018], Nguyen Thi Lan and E.F. Chernenko [2018] and other authors. The main content of their works was either the survey of the relationship development in the hydrocarbon and energy spheres, or the analysis of their current condition, or the identification of existing problems and restrictions. Here, the author has made an attempt to show a great potential of Russia-Vietnam cooperation in the fuel and energy sphere emerging from the trends and needs of Vietnamese economy and Russian possibilities.

The state and perspectives of Vietnam's hydrocarbon sector development

According to the data of the ASEAN Center for Energy, Vietnam is the first among the ten SEA countries in oil reserves and the fourth in oil production [ASEAN Center: 05.08.2022]. However, due to the exhaustion of the main oil fields, the decline of oil production has not been compensated with the development of the proper quantity of new ones; the problem of meeting demand for the natural oil owing to internal capabilities appears clearer.

In 2021 PetroVietnam produced nearly 10.97 mln t of crude oil (9.1 mln t in the country and 1.87 mln t abroad), i.e., 0.5 mln t less than in 2020. This shows the tendency of the decline of oil production on Vietnam's continental shelf; every year the production decreases by nearly 1 mln t. Thus, since 2016 the volume of oil production has been 6.26 mln t less, the internal production being 6.1 mln t less [Hoài Thu: 13.05.22]. Also, negative tendencies in the hydrocarbon sector are seen when comparing the last five-year period (2016–2020) with the prior one (2011–2015). Thus, the quantity of new oil fields has decreased from twenty-four to seven, while the number of the signed contracts in the sphere has been reduced from twenty-one to three. The average annual volume of investments into prospecting and exploring of fields has decreased by nearly USD 950 mln in 2011–2015 and by USD 280 mln in 2016–2019 [Luong Bàng: 21.03.2022].

The limited reserves of newly discovered fields need to pay attention to deep-water areas off the shore. The task needs great investments, qualified specialists and proper technologies. Besides, territorial disputes in the South China Sea are a negative factor. Thus, the oil import to Vietnam will grow to meet the internal needs.

Gas production is somewhat better, Vietnam being the third among the ASEAN countries with its proven gas reserves. But even planning nearly double growth of the gas production volumes cannot totally meet the growing needs of the national economy, which is confirmed with the plans to begin and consistently increase LNG import [Kumagai: 14.09.2021].

The average annual gas production from 2015 to 2019 (five years prior to Coronavirus pandemic) was about 10 billion cu. m [International Energy: 05.08.2022]. The greatest part of it is used for gas turbine power plants, their capacity now being up to 7,1 GW [Nguyễn Thái Sơn: 26.01.2022]. In the future, due to the development of new fields, the planning growth of annual gas

production volumes is up to 13–19 billion cu. m in 2021–2025 and up to 17–21 billion cu. m in 2026–2035, which means the increase of the total natural gas-based energy capacity by more as 7,5 GW [Quy hoạch tổng thể: 18.01.2017; Quy hoạch điện: 11.08.2022].

Nevertheless, this is not sufficient to meet energy needs of the country, while up to 2030 their growth has been predicted at the level of 10–12 % annually [International Trade: 15.09.2021]. Against this background, Vietnam is planning to develop imported-based LNG projects. However, lately Vietnamese experts have been concerned both with the increasing dependence of the country on external supplies and the rise of the world energy prices.

The possibilities of Russia-Vietnam cooperation in the hydrocarbon sphere

For a long time, our countries have efficiently cooperated in the hydrocarbon sphere. Within this framework, Russian “Zarubezhneft”, “Gazprom” and “Novatek” companies cooperate with the Vietnamese PetroVietnam. On the territories of the two countries there have been established such oil and gas joint ventures like “Vietsovpetro” (Fig. 1), “Rusvietpetro”. “Vietgazprom” and “Gazpromviet”.



Fig. 1. The joint venture “Vietsovpetro”. *Source:* <https://www.vietsov.com.vn>

Being one of the main directions of bilateral relations, energy issues were actively discussed both at the meeting of the Presidents of Russia and Vietnam in Moscow (30 November, 2021), and in the course of the session (held after the meeting) of the intergovernmental Commission on trade-economic and scientific-technical cooperation [Alifirova: 02.12.2021].

Owing to the decline of oil production due to the exhaustion of the existing fields and inability to meet growing gas needs Vietnam faces the necessity to increase the hydrocarbon import. Against the backdrop of rising world oil and gas prices it will have a negative impact on the country’s economic development.

In its turn, the Russian Federation is the world’s largest energy exporter. According to the data of the International Energy Agency, in 2020 the country was first in the world in terms of the exported natural gas volume and won second and third places in terms of oil and gas supplies [International Energy 2020]. The sanctions pressure, unprecedented in Russian history, which followed the conflict having been provoked in Ukraine by the West, increased the interest of the Russian energy suppliers to Asian markets.

The issues of Russian energy export to the SRV were addressed during the visit of President Nguyen Xuan Phuc to Moscow in 2021, as well as at the St. Petersburg international economic forum held in June, 2021. In the course of the visit, the Russian “Novatek” company and the Vietnamese PetroVietnam signed a cooperation agreement on the projects in the LNG sphere. In future Russia

will probably supply this energy to the Vietnamese market. During SPIEF-2022 the parties discussed the issue of oil and gas products export to Vietnam [Russia: 17.06.2022]. Currently, the Russian share of the total crude oil supplies into Vietnam is less than 1%.

Thus, in the sphere of hydrocarbon supplies there are possibilities for more intensive Russia-Vietnam cooperation, its perspectives mostly depend on Hanoi's maintaining of independent policy. This meets both "Russia's turn to the East", where Vietnam takes a historically special place, and Vietnam's foreign policy balancing in the relations with the world centers of power.

The state and perspectives of Vietnam's energy sphere development

The main part in energy security of Vietnam is still performed with coal power and hydroelectricity sharing in 2021 32% and 28% of the total installed capacity of the national power system, as well as 46% and 30% of the total volume of produced electricity [Nguyễn Thái Sơn: 26.01.2022]. According to the assumed obligations to reduce the use of coal electric generation and the inability to significantly increase the use of hydroelectricity due to the exhaustion of the latter's potential, Vietnam faces the problem to meet growing energy needs.

Contradictions between growing energy needs and reductions connected with both the climate agenda and the rise of the world's energy prices create difficulties for planning the sector's development. Against this background one of the main subjects of debates at the expert and government levels is the return to the development of the national nuclear power. Particularly, at the Spring session 2022 of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Hong Dien, Minister of Industry and Trade, mentioned the inevitability of "once paying attention to nuclear energy" [Phan Trang: 30.05.2021].

The possibilities of Russia-Vietnam cooperation in the nuclear energy sector

Currently, the SRV has seen the resurgence of interest in the development of nuclear energy. Beside the last discussion in the Parliament, the issues of returning to the national nuclear program were mentioned at lower levels, such as the Vietnam Business Forum 2022 (VBF-22) in February; the government discussions of the Eighth Energy Plan of the Republic; the second Vietnam Clean Energy Forum in April.

In particular, at VBF-22 the Deputy Chief of Office of the Ministry of Industry and Trade spoke on the government plans to consider a possibility to use nuclear energy after 2035 [Lê Chi: 23.02.2022]. Later, in mid-March, the Ministry of Industry and Trade presented the draft of the Eighth Energy Plan to the government; the draft plan provided for "developing of small-scale nuclear energy" after 2030 [Đức Dũng; 03.06.2022]. In the course of the second Vietnam Clean Energy Forum held in April, the former Chief of VINATOM expressed the opinion that if the country launches nuclear energy after 2030, it can reach the assumed obligations of carbon neutrality by 2050. Also, the current Head of VINATOM spoke in support of the speedy return to the national nuclear program, having mentioned that the implementation of NPP projects (from the design to energy supply) takes no less than 15–20 years. In his opinion, the basis of the Vietnam nuclear program development must be the technologies of advanced light water reactors, or, rather, of small modular reactors [Trần Chí Thành: 13.05.2022].

The latter ones attract still more attention in Vietnam. Vietnamese experts mention that small modular reactors can serve not only to supply energy to power-intensive industrial enterprises or small remote settlements, but also, can be used to generate hydrogen and thermal energy and to

desalinate sea water. It is supposed that such plants will operate in power systems with a great share of renewable power sources [Pham Nhu Viet Ha et al.: 01.09.2021].

The interaction in the sphere of peaceful use of nuclear energy could become a new pillar of Russia-Vietnam relations. The vision of developing relations of comprehensive strategic partnership between the RF and SRV for the period up to 2030, articulated by the leaders of the two countries at their meeting in Moscow at the end of 2021, mentions that in the case of Vietnam's return to the plans of establishing national nuclear power Russia will be considered a priority partner in this sphere. There are good reasons for this.

The countries have already had the experience of cooperation in the sphere of nuclear power. In 2010 Moscow and Hanoi agreed to construct "Ninh Thuan – 1" NPP in Vietnam (Fig. 2.). Despite a temporary interruption of the project, more than 400 Vietnamese nuclear sciences students were educated in Russia from 2010 to 2015, 150 Vietnamese engineers worked on probation at Rostov NPP [Nguyễn Dịu: 11.04.2016] Now, the spotlight is the project to create the Center for Nuclear Science and Technology in Vietnam which may become the starting point in the cooperation of the two countries in the nuclear sphere.



Fig. 2. "Ninh Thuan – 1" NPP Project. *Source:* <https://www.atomic-energy.ru>

It is obvious that the US and their allies, who used to actively sabotage the Russian "Ninh Thuan – 1" NPP Project in Vietnam, will hamper Russia-Vietnam cooperation in the nuclear sphere. However, the RF great experience in the sphere of nuclear energy, Russia's leadership in constructing NPPs abroad and a good foundation laid for the implementation of the NPP project in Vietnam could permit Hanoi to return to the national nuclear program in the shortest time, which means the opportunity to choose Moscow as a priority partner.

Russia sees the projects of low-power NPPs in Vietnam the most perspective ones. As Vietnam is interested in nuclear energy development based on small modular reactors, Russia can obtain additional benefits at Vietnam's market. In 2020 "Rosatom" put into operation the floating nuclear thermal power plant "Akademik Lomonosov" (the unique in the world), its capacity being 70 MW (Fig. 3.), in Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. The plant has unique advantages; it can supply electricity to inaccessible areas, can be relocated, shows minimum requirements for necessary ground infrastructure, etc.



Fig. 3. The floating nuclear thermal power plant “Akademik Lomonosov”.

Source: <https://www.rosatom.ru>

Currently, “Rosatom” is implementing the project of the land-based low-power NPP (the first in the world) in Yakutia; it is expected to be completed in 2028 (Fig. 4.).



Fig. 4. The project of the land-based low-power NPP.

Source: <https://www.rosatom.ru>

Russia shows itself to be the priority partner of Vietnam in the development of nuclear energy based on low-power NPPs; it has extensive experience in the development and exploitation of the reactors having been used in the Russia’s nuclear icebreaker fleet for more than sixty years.

Conclusion

Summing up, let it be said that Moscow and Hanoi possess a great potential in the fuel and energy sphere. Russia, with its leading positions at the world energy market, can contribute significantly to energy security of Vietnam, when the country has difficulties in meeting the needs of its growing economy in the conditions of undertaken obligations in the sphere of climate changes and

the rise of the world hydrocarbon prices. In its turn, the re-orientation of oil and gas export to the Vietnamese and other Asian markets meets Russia's interests.

A new pillar of the two countries cooperation may be nuclear energy. Both the increasing interest of Vietnam's government and experts and the leading positions of Russia constructing and exploiting advanced NPPs, the low-power ones and floating NPPs among them, are in favor for this cooperation.

The above-said could greatly contribute to fill the bilateral relations with the economic content, necessary to increase their resistance to outside challenges. The joint implementation of strategic projects can make Russia-Vietnam cooperation more balanced and meet a higher level of the comprehensive strategic partnership.

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OVERSEAS VIETNAMESE IN RUSSIA AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROMOTION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS¹

S.V. Ryazantsev², Le Duc Anh³, Phung Huy Hoang⁴, E.M. Moiseeva⁵

Abstract. This article is devoted to the formation, current position, and development prospects of the overseas Vietnamese community in Russia. The purpose of the study was to critically review the directions of work of the authorities in the interests of the Diaspora and in order to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries in the socio-economic, cultural, scientific, technical and political spheres. The authors relied on empirical data, including official statistics on migration from Vietnam to Russia, the main indicators of the socio-economic situation in Vietnam as the major factor of emigration, as well as research publications on the history of the Vietnamese communities' formation in Russia. As the result of its analysis, we identified the main areas of cooperation between Vietnam and Russia where the Vietnamese diaspora makes a significant contribution. Accordingly, the paper proposes evidence-based policy recommendations for the government and authorities of Vietnam, which outlined several areas of work with the diaspora in Russia, namely: promoting intercultural dialogue, providing information support and legal assistance for legal migration, developing cooperation in the economy, trade, and labor, as well as joint scientific research and technology transfer.

Keywords: overseas Vietnamese, diaspora, Russia – Vietnam relations, migration, migrant adaptation and integration, labor market.

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² Ryazantsev Sergey V., Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Economics, Professor, Director, Institute for Demographic Research FCTAS RAS, Moscow, Russia. ORCID: 0000-0001-5306-8875. E-mail: riazan@mail.ru

³ Lê Đức Anh, Master’s student, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam. ORCID: 0000-0001-9152-0076. E-mail: ducanhle.cit@gmail.com

⁴ Phùng Huy Hoang, PhD candidate, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam. E-mail: phunghuyhoang6969@gmail.com

⁵ Moiseeva Evgeniya M., Junior Research Fellow, Institute for Demographic Research FCTAS RAS, Moscow, Russia. ORCID: 0000-0001-7571-2369. E-mail: evgeniyamoiseeva@mail.ru

Introduction

It is evident that since migration has become a widespread social and economic phenomenon around the world, a great deal of theoretical and country-specific reports and papers have been written on this issue. Based on economic globalization and the deepening of social and cultural ties between peoples on a worldwide scale, there is not a single social community in the world that has not been drawn into, with many or little significant migration, both domestically and internationally. Many people around the world migrate in search of better jobs, more educational opportunities, out of poverty, and even as tourists. Migration also affects non-migrants as population movement transforms the socio-economic development of cities and villages.

In the 20th century, Russia and Vietnam had a lot of common interests and migration was one of them. Vietnam benefited from military support, industrial technology, and investment capital from Russia, while Russia (and later the USSR) noticed a friendly and loyal political regime in South-East Asia that was ready to export some goods (food and apparel) and even more important – the labor force. It is clear that the obligation of strategic cooperation requires an enhancement of the reciprocal migratory exchange between the two countries.

However, up to the present, there are only a few scholarly books or research on the overseas Vietnamese and their role in the promotion of bilateral relations. Some research on this issue is being developed, in particular, by scientists from the Russian Institute of Oriental Studies RAS, the Institute for Demographic Research FCTAS RAS, as well as Vietnamese researchers, including those living in Russia. In particular, we should note the works by A. A. Sokolov, devoted mainly to the history of the Vietnamese diaspora and its socio-cultural integration [Sokolov 2011; 2016]; S. V. Ryazantsev and others, that consider mainly the economic aspects of the life of the Vietnamese diaspora and its contribution to the socio-economic development of Russia and Vietnam [Manshin et al. 2010; Ryazantsev, Khramova 2020]; V. M. Mazyrin, where the problems of adaptation and the position of the Vietnamese in the Russian labor market are analyzed [Mazyrin 2004; 2015]; as well as the works by Vietnamese scientists [Lan Anh Hoang 2020] and young researchers who studied at Russian universities [Dinh Ha Mi 2015; Sedelnikova, Nguyen Thi Hong Bac Lien 2015, etc.], that discuss the factors of Vietnamese immigration to Russia and the trends in the Vietnamese diaspora formation.

This article aims to highlight the main milestones of the history of Vietnamese emigration to Russia in order to trace how the Vietnamese diaspora in Russia was formed. Then the authors make an outline of the contemporary position of the Vietnamese community in the country and conclude with marking some unresolved problems and potential opportunities for using its potential to ensure the mutual benefit of both states.

The history of Vietnamese emigration to Russia

The history of Vietnamese migration to Russia is inextricably related to the Cold War geopolitics, beginning in the mid-1950s with sending a limited number of students, largely war orphans and children of communist cadres, to Russia for getting a higher education and vocational training. Student migration increased gradually in the 1960s and 1970s, but no significant increase in the Vietnamese population residing in Russia occurred until the early 1980s, when war-torn and debt-ridden Vietnam began to export labor, first to the former Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, then to other Eastern European countries, in order to meet its obligations to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Vietnamese labor export to Europe peaked in 1989, with 167,503 employees sent

[Chesnokov 2011]. According to official data, a total of 217,183 Vietnamese was employed in the USSR and Eastern European countries. According to official figures, between 1981 and 1990, a total of 217,183 Vietnamese citizens were engaged as contract laborers in the European socialist bloc, with 42% (or 92,000) females.

Approximately 100,000 Vietnamese laborers were in Russia just before the Soviet Union's demise in 1991. They were largely employed in construction, mechanics, textile and garment manufacturing, agriculture, health care, and education. Labor migration to Eastern Europe was regarded as a privilege reserved for people from 'priority' backgrounds, such as family members of war veterans, war martyrs, war invalids, former service members, ethnic minorities, and workers and cadres with excellent work histories, in the context of widespread hunger and poverty in post-war Vietnam. Because there was no publicly stated recruiting mechanism, persons obtained abroad positions mostly through informal social networks and bribery.

When the socialist block in Eastern Europe fell apart in the late 1980s and early 1990s, labor imports from Vietnam came to a halt. Political upheaval, unemployment, and heightened nationalist emotions (which occasionally erupted into xenophobic and racial backlash), as well as official repatriation programs, pushed a substantial number of Vietnamese workers home. By the end of 1991, almost 80% of laborers had fled Eastern Europe, while many returned when confronted with the hard realities of the then-struggling Vietnamese economy. Students and workers who opted to stay created the foundation of Vietnamese diasporic networks in Eastern Europe, which have grown steadily till 2010s. New migrants frequently enter the country on student or tourist visas obtained through sophisticated brokerage networks. Since a significant amount of migration to post-Soviet Russia is clandestine, it is hard to reliably quantify the number of Vietnamese communities in the nation, and estimates vary greatly. According to the report of International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2008, there were around 69,076 Vietnamese people in Russia [IOM 2008]. This figure, however, does not include irregular migrants, whether in transit or permanently residing in Russia, as well as shuttle and seasonal traders.

According to Russia's Federal Ministry of Labor, Vietnam, along with the Caucasus, Central Asian nations, and China, is one of the biggest sources of illegal migration to Russia. As of 2007, the Vietnamese government believed that there were 80,000 to 100,000 Vietnamese nationals in Russia. According to other estimates, there might be over 150,000 Vietnamese immigrants in Russia at the beginning of the 2000s [Mazyrin 2004: 364]. If this data is accurate, Vietnamese nationals in Russia at that time accounted for half of the Vietnamese population in the former Eastern European socialist counties. Despite the decline in the number of Vietnamese citizens arriving in Russia over the past decade, their illegal immigration continues. The Russian government's new legal and institutional impediments to dissuade irregular immigration do not deter individuals from arriving; they only make it more expensive.

The high migration potential of Vietnam is explained, first of all, by its continued labor surplus. Under- and unemployment problems remain especially serious in the areas of Vietnam where high population pressure on limited arable land has long rendered subsistence farming unviable. Underemployment is common, with 62.7% of the population residing in rural regions in 2020 and 37.2% of the labor force engaged in the agricultural industry in 2019⁶. As in many other developing countries, informal employment remains high in Vietnam, that is, there is a big number of self-employed, individual farmers, unpaid household workers. While official figures show that Vietnam

⁶ World Bank Open Data. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://data.worldbank.org>.

has one of the world's lowest jobless rates – 2.4% in 2020 — the figure is grossly misleading owing to questionable statistical procedures. The General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO) defines an unemployed individual as someone who did not work at all in the week preceding the survey, which means that even one hour of labor during that week qualifies one as employed [Lan Anh Hoang 2020].

Vietnamese in Russia today

Population flows from Vietnam to Russia call into question the popular perception of international migration as unidirectional flows from the periphery (i. e., poor nations) to the center (i. e., the developed world or 'global cities' [Haas 2010]). Transnational movements within the peripheral accounted for one-third of international migration in 2010 and were nearly equivalent to the periphery-center migration pattern. Since 2000, the yearly migrant stock in distant areas has grown faster than in established cities (2.3% and 2.1%, respectively, during the period from 2000 to 2013). According to the research on migration to Eastern and Central Europe, several peripheral and semi-peripheral regions have become preferred destinations for considerable proportions of migrants from the developing world [Török 2017]. What is often considered a problem and a barrier to economic growth elsewhere (for instance, a loosely regulated market, weak law enforcement, widespread corruption, and an underdeveloped entrepreneurial culture) creates an especially favorable economic environment for opportunistic investors and traders looking to 'make a quick buck.' In transitional civilizations, ethnic enclaves emerge quickly in response to not just the desire for self-sufficiency, but also the uncertainties created by the turbulent social, economic, and political environment.

Overseas Vietnamese in Russia, like their compatriots in Central and Eastern Europe, were mostly involved in market commerce till the 2010s. The high proportion of Vietnamese migrants in market trading today was primarily determined by a restrictive and discriminatory migration rule that prevented them from obtaining official work prospects. However, it was initially motivated by the inability of the redistributive system to create and deliver goods – a typical feature of Eastern European state-planned economies. Consumer goods scarcity grew even more acute in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution, as light industry crumbled, and official foreign trade and commerce routes were not formed, therefore, a demand for small deliveries and sales of goods from Vietnam arose. Today, in a market economy, the sale of Vietnamese goods in Russia continues to be profitable due to the low cost of their production, including due to comparative cheap labor in Vietnam (Fig.1).

Vietnamese migrants' lives are quite unpredictable, marked by cyclical booms and busts in market trading, which are mainly generated by knee-jerk policy changes by the federal and Moscow governments, and anti-immigrant campaigns and legal acts. With no other options for social mobility outside of the shadow economy, Vietnamese migrants are confined to wholesale marketplaces, further entrenching their social marginalization and vulnerability [Mazyrin 2015].

Large-scale quantitative studies of Chinese migrant merchants confirm this, with many difficulties linked with expensive rentals, a high cost of living, excessive taxes, an unpredictable economy, and the terrible image of Chinese items [Chang, Rucker-Chang 2011]. The majority of these issues are directly or indirectly related to widespread corruption in state bureaucracies, which manifests itself in a variety of ways, ranging from police harassment and protection racketeering to a slew of migration-related procedures and costs, as well as graft and bribery among tax and customs officials. Migrants' social life in the shadow economy is severely restricted by exploitative market regimes and opportunistic criminals who enjoy a sense of impunity due to the migrants' irregular status. Vietnamese migrants have been spreading into various economic sectors in Russia's rural and

border areas in recent years. Reports of Vietnamese laborers employed on construction projects and farms in Siberia and the Russian Far East have begun to emerge [Khramova 2020]. Nonetheless, a shortage of language skills and apprehension about racial assaults remain key impediments to their aspirations to expand outside market commerce and metropolitan areas.



Fig.1. Vietnamese goods on the Moscow market. *Photo from open sources*

Because transnational migration was a comparatively recent trend in Vietnam, most Vietnamese migrants in Russia, unlike the Chinese, do not originate from locations with a so-called ‘culture of movement.’ There is no question, however, that informal social networks play an important role in Vietnamese spontaneous migration. Because before the 1990s, the chance to go overseas to work or study was regarded as a reward for allegiance to the communist leadership, the Vietnamese in today’s Russia are largely from Northern and North Central Vietnam. Families of war martyrs, war veterans, and state employees were the primary beneficiaries of labor export schemes in these regions. Since the start of Renovation, Northern and North Central Vietnam have been afflicted by acute under- and unemployment. During the Renovation period (between 1991 and 2000), Vietnam rose from one of the world’s 40 poorest and least-developed countries to the world’s second-largest rice exporter, with an average annual growth rate of 6–7%. Hunger was significantly decreased, and the poverty rate was cut by 10 times, from 60% in 1990 to 6% in 2020⁷.

Vietnamese migrant workers have distinct characteristics in terms of their distribution on the territory of Russia and the scope of employment. Regarding the distribution of territory, in 2005 the majority of Vietnamese workers worked in exchange and trade activities in Moscow city and the territory of Moscow (76.6%), Bashkortostan (3.75%). Primorsky Territory (2.82 %), Khabarovsk Region (1.65%), Voronezh Region (1.44%), Ulyanovsk Region (1.12 %), Tatarstan (1.06%) and

⁷ ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2010. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2010. 244 p.; ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2021. 265 p.

St. Petersburg (1.06%) [Chesnokov 2011]. As of 2020, Vietnamese laborers accounted for 17.4% of the total legal foreign workforce in Russia⁸. The majority of Vietnamese labor migrants still concentrate in the metropolitan Moscow Region and Moscow City, Leningrad Region and St. Petersburg, as well as Tula, Vladimir, Kaluga, and Ryazan Regions in Central Russia, and Khabarovsk and Primorsky Regions in the Russian Far East [Riazantsev, Khramova 2020]. Many Vietnamese today are employed in businesses established by their compatriots. According to the Ministry of Labor of the Russian Federation, for 2022, a total of 13,753 places were allocated across the country to attract workers from Vietnam. Most of them are in manufacturing (11,442), especially in clothing (9,524) and food (1,489). Also, a significant number of Vietnamese received a work permit in the construction industry (1,093). Wholesale and retail trade were in third place (410 permits)⁹. The reason for the change in the sectoral structure of the employment of Vietnamese in Russia was the introduction of quotas for foreign workers in the field of trade since 2007¹⁰.

Currently, the Vietnamese community in the Russian Federation is divided into different groups according to the characteristics of the field of activity and living.

- *Group 1.* Members, PhD students, trainees at Russian universities. Although the number is not large, this is a successful part of the Vietnamese community in Russia. In particular, specialists in the field of natural and engineering sciences numbered almost 1,000 people at the end of 2016 and accounted for about 8% of all Vietnamese citizens who had a valid work permit in Russia¹¹.

- *Group 2.* Those who do business, trade freely, or provide services related to the Vietnamese community in Russia. A great number in this group trades all kinds of items such as garments, shoes, etc. Goods are not only sold to locals but also sold and retailed to people from other cities. According to expert estimates, they may still make up to 75% of the Vietnamese diaspora in Russia, since the restrictions on employment in trade do not apply to persons with a temporary residence permit in the Russian Federation, as well as to the service sector, catering or small-scale industries.

- *Group 3.* Those who invest in building manufactures, default goods, hotel or restaurant businesses. Many Vietnamese own businesses in Russia. At the end of 2016, 2.4 thousand Vietnamese citizens had permission to work in the country as heads of various enterprises and organizations¹².

- *Group 4.* Workers and employees working in factories, tents, restaurants, and hotels usually owned by Vietnamese people (Fig.2). In 2022, almost 14,000 temporary labor migrants from Vietnam received work permits (see above).

⁸ Labor and Employment in Russia. 2021: Statistical Handbook. M.: Rosstat. 177 p. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/210/document/13210>. (In Russian)

⁹ Order of the Ministry of Labor of Russia No. 10 dated January 13, 2022. Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://mintrud.gov.ru/docs/mintrud/orders/2226>. (In Russian)

¹⁰ Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of November 15, 2006 No. 683 “On the establishment for 2007 of the permissible share of foreign workers used by business entities operating in the field of retail trade in the territory of the Russian Federation”. Legal reference system “Garant”. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://base.garant.ru/12150529/?ysclid=17nbzcf2b3321698012>. (In Russian)

¹¹ Labor and employment in Russia. 2017: Statistical book. M.: Rosstat. 261 p.

¹² Ibid.



Fig. 2. Vietnamese cafe. Photos from open sources

- *Group 5.* Those who are studying in Russian universities on a scholarship or self-sufficient basis. As of 2021, there were about 3,100 Vietnamese students in Russia, and another 1,000 students were admitted¹³.

Contributions of Vietnamese overseas in Russia to the promotion of bilateral relations

- *First,* the Vietnamese community contributes to casual labor force supplement.

The clarity in labor cooperation and expansion of the Vietnamese diaspora in Russia began with the Agreement between the Governments of the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on sending Vietnamese citizens for professional training and employment in the USSR and the acceptance to join economic organizations and agencies in the USSR was signed on April 2, 1981. The outcome of this agreement was in favor of both the USSR and Vietnam for two reasons. The first cause was economic – the lack of a labor force in industries in many regions of the Soviet Union on the one hand, and labor surplus in Vietnam on the other hand. The other reason was social and political – the citizens of Vietnam got an access to better education and foreign work experience, while the USSR, strengthened cooperation with its Asian partner through export of education and the exchange of experience in production.

After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia reconfirmed its policy towards Vietnam as a labor exporting country in the new Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on basic elements. The document of sending Vietnamese citizens to work and work in the Russian Federation and the consent of enterprises, organizations, and associations in the Russian Federation was signed on September 29, 1992. Although the new agreement is based on the old text, compared with the 1981 agreement, the new text has some changes in the provisions. For example, the length of stay of Vietnamese workers is reduced to 3 years. At the same time, the new agreement stipulates that export workers must be between 18 and 50 years old. The agreement also obliges that Vietnamese workers are only allowed

¹³ Russian Statistical Yearbook. 2021: Statistical Handbook. Moscow, 2021. 692 p.

to enter Russia through concentrated migration and only after the contract is signed between the sending organization in Vietnam and the receiving organization in Russia. Any provisions relating to workers' spouses as well as the ability for Vietnamese students to graduate from Russian universities to work in this country have been excluded from the Agreement. Furthermore, there have been changes in government oversight bodies on both sides: in Russia, the supervisory function has been transferred to the Ministry of Labor and in Vietnam to the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs. On August 14, 2003 the governments of the two states signed an Agreement on the temporary employment of citizens of the Russian Federation in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and citizens of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the Russian Federation¹⁴. It contributed to the legalization of a significant part of migrants from Vietnam who arrived under the agreement of April 2, 1981 recognizing their stay in Russia as legal, subject to the execution of all necessary documents. Another important point of the agreement was granting to the citizens of Vietnam the right to choose independently their employment in the Russian Federation. However, all agreements in the field of labor migration provide for work permits for no more than one year with the possibility of annual renewal, which creates a great obstacle for the documentation of Vietnamese workers, since the cost of moving to Russia is extremely high for them, which makes short-term stay in the country unprofitable and forces them to stay illegally [Ryazantsev, Kuznetsov 2011].

- *Second*, Vietnamese people in Russia promote people-to-people diplomacy with the Russian.

Vietnamese people in Russia also promote cultural exchange activities, contributing to promoting the image of the country and its people not only to their home country but also to international friends living in Russia. Cultural exchange activities also help connect a large number of expatriates in Russia with their homeland and country. The Vietnamese Embassy in Russia, in collaboration with Vietnamese ministries, branches and localities, organizes numerous cultural and diplomatic activities, that are attended by embassy staff and a large number of local people. Such events have made important contributions to paving the way for socio-economic connection between a number of provinces, cities and localities of the two countries towards signing local twinning agreements. (Hanoi – Moscow, Ho Chi Minh City – St. Petersburg, Nghe An – Ulianovsk, etc.) and in large investment projects of Vietnam in the Russian Federation (oil and gas exploitation in Siberia, Complex cultural and commercial functions Hanoi – Moscow, TH True Milk Group, etc.) (Fig.3).

To summarize, through many positive activities, the Embassy of Vietnam in Russia has gradually improved the ability of cultural integration, effectively receiving the cultural and artistic values of the Russian Federation as well as promoting the beauty of Vietnamese culture to the Russian people.

- *Third*, Vietnamese overseas in Russia deeply integrate into the local community.

As a rule, the Russians see the Vietnamese as industrious and less demanding workers. The Vietnamese aspire to a long or permanent stay in the country. 7% of Vietnamese immigrants marry Russians, and 30% of Vietnamese in Vietnamese-Russian families want their children to live in Russia [Lan Anh Hoang 2020].

¹⁴ Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of August 14, 2003 No. 496. Official website of the Government of the Russian Federation. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <http://government.ru/docs/all/46262>. (In Russian)



Fig. 3. Festival of Vietnamese street food in the cultural and shopping center "Hanoi – Moscow".

Photos from open sources

- *Fourth*, Vietnamese intellectuals in Russia contribute their expertise in different fields.

Many Vietnamese residing in Russia have the ability and the desire of learning. Many of them graduated from Russian universities and did well in Russia. Different specializations allow them to work in all industries in Russia, although most of them prefer to work in the retail sector. Many of them are well versed and experienced in the field of foreign and domestic trade because they have experience in retail and wholesale in many markets in Russia [Kozhevnikova 2018].

Opportunities to fulfil the potential of the Vietnamese diaspora in Russia

The development of the Vietnamese community abroad is closely related to the development of the Vietnamese nation. If the Vietnamese community is well integrated in the host society, this contributes to the effective development of Vietnam. The Vietnamese government should provide assistance and protection to the Vietnamese community in Russia, stabilizing their life, providing opportunities to study and work, and also legalizing the residence of Vietnamese in the country. In this regard, the intensification of the dialogue between the Government of Vietnam, the Government of Russia and local authorities on a policy to protect the rights of the Vietnamese community abroad plays a crucial role.

- *Supporting communication and cross-cultural interaction.*

In order to unite the Vietnamese and form a close bond with their homeland, it is important to maintain the national cultural identity of the Vietnamese abroad. With the help of embassies and consulates, the Vietnamese Government encourages overseas communities to preserve their national language, traditions and customs. However, the Government is still to develop a comprehensive program to help the overseas Vietnamese maintain their identity and national culture, on the one hand, and integrate into host countries, on the other hand.

Active Vietnamese intellectuals encouraged by the state could play a key role in uniting the Vietnamese community and preserving its traditional culture. Institutions such as the State Committee

for Vietnamese Abroad Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training are engaged in supporting the cultural traditions of the Vietnamese. But it is also necessary to coordinate the efforts of experts in the field of studying the Vietnamese diaspora and support the cultural education of the Vietnamese abroad, attracting researchers and enthusiasts in the host country who could teach the Vietnamese language and culture to the second and third generations of the Vietnamese living abroad.

- *Providing information and assistance.*

It is crucial for overseas communities to receive up-to-date information about Vietnamese government policy and the socio-economic situation in the country. Embassies of Vietnam and associations of Vietnamese communities in Eastern European countries develop their websites and make professional publications. But great potential remains for the live interaction of the Vietnamese intellectuals in the host country, which can be carried out on the basis of the cultural departments at the embassies. The Embassy can not only successfully fulfill its political, but also cultural and economic tasks abroad being a bridge between overseas Vietnamese intellectuals and their homeland. If the Embassy effectively fulfills these goals, then unnecessary costs can be avoided. Its role is especially important during economic turmoil and crises when overseas Vietnamese face increased risks. In addition, providing legal assistance to migrants by Vietnamese governmental bodies for their full legalization in their country of residence could improve the quality of Vietnamese communities abroad by maintaining control over migration and increasing migrants' access to social benefits in the country of residence.

- *Developing trade, economic, and labor cooperation.*

Committees for Overseas Vietnamese, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Vietnam Trade Missions, Diplomatic Offices organize trade and investment promotion conferences¹⁵. Thanks to these conferences, it is possible to advertise Vietnamese goods, services, and specialists, thereby contributing to the creation of joint ventures, the development of relations between entrepreneurs in Russia and Vietnam. The information about these events should be widely published on the websites of these organizations so that Vietnamese living abroad could actively participate in them.

It is necessary to create a regular mechanism to support the investment by intellectual entrepreneurs who have Vietnamese citizenship and live in Russia. These investments can be considered as the investment of Vietnamese entrepreneurs abroad. Banks and financial institutions should take care to help the Vietnamese legalize their income in Russia and invest it in the host country. In addition to cooperation in trade and investment, it is necessary to promote financial cooperation, support exports, build a network of trade branches where export goods are sold, establish joint ventures, production and consumption chains, and promote brand development for traditional products from Vietnam.

- *Promoting cooperation in science and technology transfer.*

It is important to expand joint scientific research in technological and social sciences and the humanities, to implement projects with the participation of Russian research institutions and Vietnamese living in the country. The results of such projects and studies should be published in two

¹⁵ Ex., Conference on the Promotion of Investments, Trade and Tourism of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Retrieved on 20.04.2022 from URL: <https://moscow.tpprf.ru/ru/news/316845>. (In Russian)

languages and widely disseminated in two countries.

Also, it is beneficial to promote cooperation in such potentially important areas as environmental economics, combating global climate change, transfer of environmentally friendly technologies to small and medium-sized enterprises. To reach this goal, it is essential to develop cooperation in the field of investment, expansion of modern management models, encourage large Russian and Vietnamese companies in Russia to invest to Vietnam and establish their research departments in the country.

It is necessary to develop a system of contracts (community of practice) that will allow overseas Vietnamese intellectuals to participate in research and teaching in cooperation with Vietnamese organizations, including those that are partially or fully funded by the state budget. Entrepreneurs should invest more actively in training human resources and participate in the construction of universities in the country and foreign branches.

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CHAMPA CULTURAL IMPRINTS IN NORTHERN VIETNAM THROUGH HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Dinh Duc Tien¹

Abstract. Champa is remembered today through a system of temple architecture and sculpture art as a brilliant civilization that once existed in Central Vietnam. Champa had always maintained political and economic ties with the Đại Việt dynasties throughout its history. The article focuses on Champa cultural imprints found in northern Vietnam, specifically sculptures from the Lý and Trần dynasties (1009-1400). The newly discovered artifacts in Northern Vietnam were compared to Champa sculptures of the same period (11th-14th centuries), demonstrating strong Champa cultural influences in North Vietnam. The article also uses written sources and records on the migration and settlement of the Champa people in North Vietnam to demonstrate the cultural imprints that have remained to this day.

Keywords: Đại Việt, Champa (Chiêm Thành), history of relations, cultural imprints of Champa, cultural exchange.

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Introduction

Geographic proximity, political relations, and trade were historically driving factors in the relationship between the Đại Việt and Champa. Cultural exchanges between the two kingdoms were formed as a result, and they had mutual effects in many areas: political, economic, military, social, and cultural. The influence of Champa culture on Đại Việt, in particular, created new cultural values. For more than a century, scholars have been interested in studying Champa cultural imprints in Northern Vietnam [Madrolle 1912; Phạm Quỳnh 1932; Trần Văn Giáp 1935; Dương Kỳ 1943; Cao Xuân Phổ 1970; Nguyễn Hồng Kiên 2000; Lê Đình Phụng 2015; Bùi Xuân Đính 2021, etc.]. Those studies, however, are disintegrated, detail heavy and have not been able to provide a complete and consistent set of research topic. This article, within the framework of the project at Hanoi National

¹ Dinh Duc Tien, PhD (History), Lecturer, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University. E-mail: tiendinhduc@ussh.edu.vn

University (code: QG.18.49), aims to clarify the relationship between Đại Việt and Champa through archaeological sources from Northern Vietnam, in order to contribute better insights into the identification and re-evaluation of the Vietnamese nation's historical process.

The following research methods were used in the article: (i) the historical studies method, which included using written sources (official history), evaluating, analyzing, connecting, and describing the periods in relationship between Đại Việt and Champa; (ii) method of doing fieldwork, field survey to identify artifacts (circular statues, reliefs, decorative plaques), combined with in-depth interviews with local people, collection of relevant written documents such as: inscriptions, genealogies, ordinations, etc.; (iii) the iconographic analysis method, which was used to compare and analyze Champa sculptures in North Vietnam with archetypes in Champa in Central Vietnam. This comparison was made with specimens from the same epoch and sculptural style.

Reenactment through written history

After over 1000 years of Northern dominance, the Vietnamese in Giao Chau escaped Chinese dynastic power. After the fight on the Bach Dang River in 938, the Han people were compelled to retreat to the north. The state of Đại Việt was founded on the Chinese monarchy model and was heavily influenced by Han culture (East Asia). As a result, Đại Việt dynasties such as Đinh, Pre-Lê, Lý, and Trần have long sought a strategy to limit assimilation and reliance on China. In 1057, King Lý Thánh Tông built the Thiên Phúc and Thiên Thọ pagodas. Two golden sculptures of Brahma and Indra were cast for worship [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-1:272]. Trần Cao and his companions named Phan At (a Champa person, also called Đồng Lợi) rebelled in Thuy Duong and Đông Triều in 1516 during the Lê sơ era (Hải Dương town). Trần Cao claims to be *Đế thích* (Indra) and wears a black robe... [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-3: 75].

Many distinct ways and methods were used to bring Indian culture (South Asia) into Đại Việt: 1. directly from India by sea and imported into Đại Việt; 2. through China (Northern), from there into Dai Viet; and 3. through Champa (South), then spread into Đại Việt. The direct approach was only followed in the first centuries AD, when Indian Buddhist monks launched the mission and built the Luy Lau center (Bắc Ninh). Because the path through China was hampered by the powerful Sinicization process, Indian culture lost much of its individuality and distinctiveness. Although the path through Champa has been more or less localized, the Indian identity (South Asia) is still clearly apparent, and the originality on the political, ideological-religious model, architectural works, sculptures, rituals, and divine systems remains boldly present. As a result, Đại Việt adopted Indian culture through Champa, which has had a significant impact on Vietnamese culture (especially in the 11th-14th centuries). For several centuries, migrant movements brought Champa culture (which affected and absorbed Indian culture) to Đại Việt. Champa prisoners were brought to North Vietnam after the battles (from the 10th to the 15th centuries). They were dispersed throughout Đại Việt, forming villages and hamlets.

In 982 (Pre-Lê Dynasty: 980–1009), King Lê Hoàn captured many soldiers, hundreds of prostitutes in the Champa king's palace and a monk teacher Thiên Trúc/India monk brought back to Hoa Lư capital [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-1: 168]. During the Lý Dynasty (1009–1225), in 1044, King Lý Thái Tông attacked Champa and more than 5000 Cham people were in imprisonment. These Cham

people were later brought by King Lý to settle in towns from Vĩnh Khang² to Châu Đăng³, establishing new villages but still named after the title of Champa [Ibid.: 222-223]. In 1069, the King of Lý Dynasty captured King Chế Củ (Rudravarman III) and 50,000 Cham people [Ibid.: 223].

Until the Trần Dynasty, (1226–1400), the post-war migrations continued, in which emerged the event in 1252 when King Trần Thái Tông attacked Champa, captured Champa's mandarins, concubines and commoners to bring back to Thăng Long [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-2: 25]. Then, in the Lê sơ Dynasty (1428-1527), King Lê Nhân Tông organized large-scale battle in 1446, destroyed Vijaya citadel, captured King Bí Cai (Maha Vijaya), his concubines and subordinates [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-3: 36]. In particular, the battle of Lê Thánh Tông in Champa in 1471, capturing the Champa king Trà Toàn and many prisoners [Ibid.: 237].

The Champa people moved to Dai Viet, where there was a significant process of acculturation and cultural influence in various areas. Dai Viet received a great amount of Indian culture thanks to the Champa people. Records in Đại Việt's official history show that Champa culture left its imprint on a new land. King Lý Thái Tông constructed a separate palace⁴ for Champa concubines in 1046 [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-1: 225]. He "released the music and beat of Champa's drums to make the musicians sing" in 1060 [Ibid.: 298]. In 1202, "Autumn, August, ordering the musician to compose the Zhancheng music episode which having clear voice, mournful and miserable, and the listeners are moved to tears" [Ibid.]. Aside from the artists (dancers, musicians) who influenced royal life, there were also Champa generals and intellectuals whose roles influenced the political situation as well as social life in Đại Việt. In 1229, Đại Việt history records events relating to Nguyễn Nộn employ a Champa military advisor: "The servant named Phạm Ma Lô secretly rode away, not knowing where he was going. Ma Lô is a Chiêm Thành citizen who went to trade in Ai Lao and Nộn received him as a slave. Ma Lô anticipated the enemy's intention to defeat him and was a very talented combatant" [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-2: 10].

Another person is Bồ Đông, who was linked to an event in 1396, and then was used as a military general by Hồ Quý Ly to defend the citadel against the Ming (Chinese) army's invasion of Đại Việt. The written source reveals: "Trần Tùng went to fight Champa, captured the general of that country, Bồ Đông, brought him back, gave him the name Kim Trung Liệt, and took care of the Tiger army (Hổ Bôn). After the Year of the Dog, build Đa Bang citadel, ordering troops to the border to fight, preventing the enemy from entering the realm... But the generals did not follow. Bồ Đông fell ill and died" [Ibid.: 213].

Additionally, social and cultural life has changed as a result of the presence of Champa people in Dai Viet. Showing the influence of Champa people and culture on Dai Viet through a number of formal court orders. During the Trần Dynasty, in 1374, King Trần Duệ Tông forbade people from wearing Northern clothes and imitating the voices of Cham and Laos people [Ibid.: 184]. In 1499, King Lê Hiến Tông issued a ban applied from the prince to the people, saying, "You are not allowed to take Champa's women and girls as wives, so that the customs are domesticated" [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-4: 17].

²Vĩnh Khang is located in present-day Nghệ An province.

³Châu Đăng [Dang district] is located in the northern mountainous provinces of Vietnam, including the provinces of Tuyên Quang, Yên Bái, and Lào Cai.

⁴ This palace is named Ngân Hán.

Material Findings

One of the Champa sculptures is now on display at the Bạch Sam pagoda in Vĩng La village, Vĩng La commune, Đông Anh district, Hà Nội. The Bạch Sam pagoda, known as Chải pagoda, was designated a national relic by the Vietnamese government in 1996. The pagoda was built in the 17th century based on architectural traces and an inscription system and has undergone numerous restorations/repairs. However, in addition to the existing architecture, there is also a stone incense pedestal, carved with a lotus image, dating back to the 14th century, suggesting that the pagoda was built at that time. Across the Hồng/Red River from Bạch Sam pagoda is the area of Phú Thượng (Tây Hồ district), Nhật Tảo, and Chèm Vẽ (Bắc Từ Liêm district) where Champa prisoners were housed from the 11th century to the 15th century. The Shiva relief was a convincing physical evidence for the process of cultural interference between Đại Việt and Champa in the center of Hồng river delta when archaeologists discovered it in 2004 [Nguyễn Tiến Đông 2005: 807].



Fig. 1a. Image of Shiva, Bạch Sam Pagoda, Hanoi. *Photo:* Nguyen Hoai Nam



Fig. 1b. Image of Shiva, pagoda Phú Hưng, Prov. Quảng Nam. *Photo:* Nguyen Huu Manh

The Shiva statue is carved in the form of a relief on a sandstone slab with a height of 51 cm, a base of 25 cm, and a thickness of 7.5 cm (Fig. 1a). Scholars believe this Shiva statue dates from the 11th century to the 13th century based on its iconography features [Nguyễn Tiến Đông 2005: 807]. Shiva in Bạch Sam is in the Padmasana pose, holding a cylindrical instrument (linga?) in one hand, the other hand face down on the knee. The decorative patterns or textures of the costumes, as well as the facial structures on the statue, are similar to the Shiva reliefs in Phú Hưng and Mỹ Sơn (Quảng Nam province) which dated to the 11th century (Fig. 1b).

Along with the Shiva statue, there is also a Poh Naga statue at Bạch Sam pagoda (Mother of the Land of Thiên Ya Na). This statue is adorned with many patterns and sculptures in the Champa style on a large tympan. The Poh Naga statue at Bạch Sam pagoda is 70 cm high, 46.5 cm wide, and 42 cm thick; it is divided into two parts: statue and decoration. Part of the statue sits cross-legged (Full lotus position), with 10 arms radiating around it. It is distinguished by the lowering of the two

main arms, with the hands resting on the knees (left hand facing up; right hand raised in the Abhaya/Fearless posture) [Đào Uyển 2006: 29]. The remaining hands are holding tools such as: a short sword, a ring, an arrow, and a mace (right); a bell, a plate, a bow, and a horn (left) (Fig. 2a). There are decorative patterns on the statue's neck, chest, and the body of the arms (like jewelry). The artifacts of Kala⁵ and Makara⁶ are depicted in the bas-relief. This statue was made between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. The artifact details, costume texture, artifact pattern, number of hands, tools on hand, Kala face or head Makara, and sitting posture are all similar to the Poh Naga statue in Tháp Bà (Nha Trang, Khánh Hòa province)⁷ (Fig. 2b).



Fig. 2a. Poh Naga statue at Bạch Sam pagoda, Hanoi. *Photo:* Nguyen Hoai Nam



Fig. 2b. Poh Naga statue in Khánh Hòa province. *Photo:* Nguyen Huu Manh

Based on the origin and appearance of the two statues mentioned above, two hypotheses can be made: first, these two statues were brought directly by Champa "prisoners" after the wars with Đại Việt. The God statue is always carried by the Champa people, on the one hand, so that they do not fall into the hands of the invaders or are protected from destruction, and on the other hand, so that worship and beliefs are maintained in the new land. Secondly, these two statues are the rewards of war brought back by Vietnamese generals. However, unlike other trophies, the two statues are intrinsically linked to religion and belief, and thus cannot be brought home or considered ordinary objects by ordinary Viet people due to their fear of demons. Thus, the best solution is to send these statues to Vietnamese temples, particularly those located in Champa communities in northern Vietnam⁸. Because Champa's architectural works (citadel, palaces, houses, and even temples) were

⁵ Kala is the god of time and death, a reincarnation of Shiva, the god of destruction.

⁶ Makara is the ocean's sea monster and the mount of the sea god Varuna.

⁷ According to research sources, the Poh Naga statue (Poh Inu Naga) in Tháp Bà/Po Nagar Temple in Nha Trang city, Khánh Hòa province, is a: Statue of goddess Po Nagar dating back to the 11th century, made of stone material in the full lotus position, with 5 pairs of hands holding different tools, the body is slim, the chest is wide, the neck is 3 lines high, and the face is benevolent. Along with that, there is the Kala face decoration project in the center, and the Makara face on both sides. [Đào Thái Hanh 1997: 177-180], [Nguyễn Minh San 2001: 253-270].

⁸ Đại Việt's capture of treasures after each war with Champa included not only prisoners, weapons, elephants and horses, gold and silver, and so on, but also temple-related god sets (statues, metal kosa). "In 982, the king (Lê Hoàn, the first king of the Pre-Lê dynasty, Đại Cồ Việt kingdom) attacked Champa, captured the soldiers and concubines, reclaimed the precious things, collecting thousands of thousands of gold and silver treasures; leveled the citadel, destroyed the royal temples..." [Ngô Sĩ Liên, 1993-1: 168-169]. Madrolle also described how temple materials brought from Champa in the

frequently destroyed during the war. Large statues are not a priority for them to carry, but small, lightweight statues or sacred objects, such as the two Shiva statues in Vĩng La, are feasible and easy to transport. However, it is a possibility that these two statues could have been chiseled by Champa artisans in Thăng Long, given the large number of workers sent to Đại Việt after the war. Nevertheless there is no evidence to support this claim, and sandstone for making statues is not as common in the North as it is in Central Vietnam.

Today, Bà Già village is known as Phú Gia, Phú Thượng, Tây Hồ district in Hà Nội. There are still two clans of Champa prisoners in the village of Phú Gia, Phú Thượng (in the Thiên Niên prefecture) namely Công and Hy. According to the Công family genealogy in Phú Gia village, the current two surnames Công and Hy are derived from the Champa's Ông and Bó surnames⁹. The historical records have recorded events that general Trần Nhật Duật in the 13th century often visited the Cham village here [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993-2: 127]

Furthermore, in the past, the areas of Phú Thượng (Tây Hồ district) and Hải Bối, Vĩng La (Đông Anh district) had the custom of "Kết chạ"¹⁰ forming close social relations, especially up to the present time. Furthermore, not only the Phú Thượng area, but also the areas of Xuân La, Xuân Đĩnh, and Nhật Tảo (Tây Hồ district, Hà Nội) and Chèm Vĩ (Bắc Từ Liêm district, Hà Nội), where King Lê Thánh Tông granted land to Phan Thị Ngọc Đô¹¹ to establish the Thiên Niên prefecture (15th century). It was confirmed that the two statues of Shiva and Poh Naga in Bạch Sam were brought back based on the arrangement of prisoners and the establishment of hamlets and villages from the Lý, Trần, and Lê Sơ dynasties.

Other sources of material and artifacts have emerged as the research area was expanded to the Bắc Ninh province. The first are Champa-style sculptures in Bắc Ninh, a province located in the north of Hà Nội. Bắc Ninh was the first Buddhist center in Vietnam's north. According to research, Dâu Pagoda (Luy Lâu, Thuận Thành, Bắc Ninh) was Giao Châu's first Buddhist center¹² [Nguyễn Lang 2000: 25-26]. There is still a black round cylindrical stone block with traces of artifact and carving in the square box at Dâu pagoda, known locally as Thạch Quang Phật. Thạch Quang Phật is a stone Linga (19cm high, 11.5cm bottom diameter, 10cm head engraving). Actually, Thạch Quang-Linga is not in the position mentioned above, but "he" used to have his own place, which is the lower palace directly behind the main upper hall of Dâu pagoda. Lord Thạch Quang (Linga) is a manifestation of

10th-15th centuries were reused to build a Chinese temple. "When the temple was demolished in 1886-1888, the carved stones in the palm-leaf door ledges were also recovered," the traces revealed. Unfortunately, the inscription stele was destroyed or converted into a doorway, and finally, two luth-playing female statues with human heads and bird bodies (kinara/kinari) were discovered. [Madrolle, 1912: 14].

⁹ According to elders in Phú Gia village, during the reign of King Minh Mạng (1820-1841), a local official saw such a thing and added two commas to the character Bó (布) to form the character Hy (希) and omitted the Vũ character (羽) in Ông (翁) to form Công (公). Since then, people from the Ông and Bó families have switched to Công and Hy and have been using them until now.

¹⁰Kết chạ is a traditional Vietnamese village custom in the north of Vietnam in which two villages become close/associated in all aspects of social life, such as: supporting each other in difficult times, protecting each other in times of trouble, marital relations, sharing resources in agricultural, forestry, and fishery production.

¹¹Phan Thị Ngọc Đô is said to be King Trà Toàn's (1460-1471) concubine, who was captured and secured by King Lê Thánh Tông (1442-1497) after the battle in 1471. King Lê Thánh Tông planned to bring her to the Forbidden City as a concubine, but the great mandarins intervened because she was the concubine of the king of Champa, and therefore no longer pure according to Confucianism's moral standards. The king gave her and her 24 maids land to build the Thiên Niên Village. She learned to weave linen and then taught it to her maids. Later, these maids married and spread the profession to the people of Bưởi village, which is located on the outskirts of Thăng Long citadel. Following her death, the people of the Bưởi area (Tây Hồ, Hà Nội) crowned her the queen of linen weaving. [Bùi Văn Nguyên, Vũ Tuấn Sán, 1975:42-43].

¹²During the Northern domination, the northern Vietnam called Giao Châu by Chinese

Shiva, one of the powerful Hindu trinity in the post-Veda era. An important Skati of Shiva is the black "Lati", the master of time and death. This is where the dark skin on the Four Dharma statues comes from. So we can say that Hinduism, specifically Shaivism, exists at Dâu pagoda. As a result, we will go one step further and confirm that the "monk" Già La ĐỀ Lê is a Shaivism disciple. Shaivism at Dâu pagoda, however, is no longer like in its original land, but has been Vietnamized in the names like Bà Dâu, Bà Đậu, Bà Tướng, Bà Dàn¹³. Thus, Hinduism was deeply ingrained in the Vietnamese people's ancient religious life [Trần Quốc Vượng 1994: 181-182].

It is still unknown where Thạch Quang Phật in Dâu Pagoda originated. The hypothesis that it can be brought directly from Champa after the wars (possibly from the time when the Chinese ruled Giao Châu to the periods of Đại Việt's autonomy) is still only speculation. Because, like the two statues in Bạch Sam and Võng La, the god statue is small, light, and prioritized for carrying for the purpose stated above. The Champa people who brought their god statue to the new land could have been the ordinary people, or the clergy, the monks¹⁴. It was also made on the spot by Champa residents living in Đại Việt.



Fig. 3. Kinara statue from Phật Tích Pagoda, Prov. Bắc Ninh. State Historical Museum.

Photo from open sources

¹³Bà Dâu (Pháp Vân, God of Clouds); Bà Đậu (Pháp Vũ, God of Rain); Bà Tướng (Pháp Lôi, God of Thunder); and Bà Dàn (Pháp Điện, God of Lightning) are other ways Vietnamese people worship natural phenomena.

¹⁴The capture of Indian monks or Zen masters such as Ma Ha, Master of Đàm Khí, was recorded in ancient annals such as *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* and *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh*. Đàm Khí from Champa were brought to Đại Việt following the wars [Đình Đức Tiến, Nguyễn Duy Hùng 2013:16–20].

Archaeologists discovered three kinara/ri statues holding a drum in front of the chest at Phật Tích Pagoda, a Champa originated artifacts¹⁵. Kinara/ri is the embodiment of music gods who produce clear melodies that captivate people. Kinara/ri is incarnated as a god who specializes in singing in Hinduism, with a drum on chest. All three are made of sandstone in various sizes. The Vietnam National Museum of History currently has two statues on display, the first of which is 26 cm high, 19cm wide, and 22 cm long. The second statue measures 23 cm tall, 17cm wide, and 21 cm long. The crest of the bird's tail is broken, the bird's wings are chipped, and the front is broken, exposing the abdomen and legs (Fig. 3). The book *Annam Chí lược* summarizes a type of drum known as *phan sĩ* (drum), which is a Champa musical instrument¹⁶ with a long round shape, grinding rice, covering both ends, and producing a clear sound when clapping in the middle of the face. It is only used for King and royal ceremonies, along with trumpet pipes, bamboo towers, sapor, and big drums (formerly known as *Đại Nhạc*) [Lê Tấn 2009: 69]. Other musical instruments, such as the lute and the flute, are depicted alongside the image of the kinnara/ri holding the drum. In Phật Tích, the image of the god Kinnara/ri has been Vietnamized, particularly the feminine face, which has many pure Vietnamese features.

Despite its Indian origins, Kinara/ri influenced not only Champa but also China. Champa and China's cultures then have influenced Đại Việt. This is also why there have been discussions among researchers about these sculptural objects. However, I believe that Kinnara/ri in Phật Tích were made by Champa artisans, or at least under their supervision and instruction, and that artifacts were made directly at the pagoda during construction. However, because this process was overseen by Vietnamese mandarins, the image of Kinnara/ri was heavily Vietnamized or influenced by Chinese culture, which was deeply ingrained in Đại Việt's court life. As a result, it is difficult to find Kinnara/ri in Đại Việt that is identical to Kinnara/ri in Champa and China. The style, artifact lines, and some instruments on Kinnara/ri in Đại Việt show that they absorbed more strongly from Champa than from China.

Furthermore, the Phật Tích pagoda still has a stone base decorating with lotus flower¹⁷ dating from the 11th to the 12th centuries, height: 30 cm, side length: 55 cm. Carved decorative strips of dancers, musicians, and angels in dancing postures and playing musical instruments such as drums, erhu (like Kanhi)¹⁸, flute, trumpet (like saranai)¹⁹, 4 chord lute, and zither. Another relic is the Chương Sơn pagoda in Ý Yên district, Nam Định province, which bears the Champa sculpture mark. It's a door step railing²⁰ that's 60 cm tall and 250 cm long. King Lý Nhân Tông (1066-1127) began construction on Chương Sơn pagoda in 1108 and finished it in 1117. According to Đại Việt history, in 1117, "the king came to Chương Sơn mountain in March to inaugurate the Vạn Phong Hành Thiện stupa." [Ngô Sĩ Liên 1993 vol 1: 287]. The decorative content on the balustrade of Chương Sơn pagoda's door step is carved with Apsara and Ghandava figures dancing and offering flowers. The Apsara and Ghandava decoration project at the foot of Phật Tích pagoda and the door railing of Chương Sơn pagoda has a layout and features similar to the sculpture strip of 10 dancers (Apsara) on the Trà Kiệu altar (Fig. 4) in terms of iconography, Bình Định dancers in the Twin Towers (Tháp

¹⁵Kinnara/ri, which originated from India, is associated with Brahmanism and Buddhism; The process of importing this animal image to China was Sinicized with the name Kalavinca or Cà Lãng Tàn Già.

¹⁶Chiêm Thành is a way of writing in Chinese and Đại Việt historical documents when referring to Champa.

¹⁷Currently, this lotus flower stone base is being kept in the gallery of Phật Tích Pagoda.

¹⁸A type of lute (string set) in the traditional musical instrument of Champa

¹⁹The type of instrument (wind kit) in the traditional musical instrument set of Champa

²⁰This artifact is being placed at the Nam Định Provincial Museum

Đôi). The Trà Kiệu altar is made of sandstone and dates from the 7th - 8th centuries, while the dancers in Bình Định date from the 11th - 12th centuries and are both on display at Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham sculpture.

The images of Apsara and Ghandava on the lotus stone pedestal at Phật Tích pagoda (Bắc Ninh) or the door railing at Chương Sơn pagoda (Nam Định) were made on site during construction, similar to Kinnara/ri in Phật Tích pagoda. Both temples were constructed during the Lý Dynasty (11th-12th centuries). Knowledge of Champa artisans were used to carry out or direct the process of creating these artistic details, but they were managed and supervised by Vietnamese mandarins. When compared to Champa artifacts, there are many similarities, but there are also some differences. Especially when compared to the decorative apsaras on Trà Kiệu's altar or the Tháp Đôi dancers (Bình Định). The distinction can be seen in the following details: 1. The sculptural motif on the sides of the Trà Kiệu altar recreates a scene from the epic Ramayana; however, the image on the Stone base of the Phật Tích pagoda and the handrail of Chương Sơn do not. 2. When compared to female dancers of Trà Kiệu and Tháp Đôi, Đại Việt's Apsara and Ghandava poses have many variations: hand movements, foot shrunken, head rotation, and face. 3. The difference in Apsara and Ghandava's costume structure and facial structure in Phật Tích, Chương Sơn has been Vietnameseized. Despite these differences, Apsara and Ghandava in Phật Tích, Chương Sơn were heavily influenced by the imprints, styles, decorative motifs, and charisma of Champa sculpture.



Fig. 4. Apsaras and Gandavas on the Trà Kiệu's altar. Museum of Cham culture in Da Nang.
Author's photo

Conclusion

Champa material culture imprints can still be found in the rich and diverse in North Vietnam. However, there are few remaining Champa artifacts; so far, only two statues of Shiva and Poh Naga have been discovered at Bạch Sam pagoda, Vĩng La, Đông Anh, Hà Nội. These two sculptures could be trophies obtained by Đại Việt generals or brought out by Champa "prisoners" after the wars that lasted from the 11th to the 15th centuries. Aside from Champa sculptures, there are also sculptures or archaeological artifacts that have been hybridized with other artifact styles or stripped of Champa

lines (Vietnamization) to suit contemporary Đại Việt consciousness, viewpoints, and ideas. The Thạch Quang Phật painting at Dầu pagoda (Luy Lâu, Thuận Thành, Bắc Ninh) is a Linga or a variation of a Linga, for example. Many sculptures or artifacts only have Champa's direction and style, such as the image of Kinnara/ri holding musical instruments (rice drum, flute, lute) in front of her chest with a face bearing the structure of a Vietnamese woman: small eyes, thin eyebrows, small nose wings, thin lips. The details of this statue are different from Champa, usually face structure as following: big round eyes, thick eyebrows, wide nose wings, thick lips. Or the image of Apsara dancer, Ghandava musician in Đại Việt also has many changes in artifact compared to Champa. Specifically, Apsara's breasts are not rounded as in the art of Champa sculpture. What we rarely see in statues or reliefs of the same type in the ruins of Champa temples.

Archaeological artifacts or sculptures (round statues, reliefs) of Champa or Champa imprints in North Vietnam have been important evidence for the centuries-long relationship between the two Đại Việt and Champa kingdoms. On the one hand, it supplements the gaps in written records. On the other hand, the cultural and material cultural imprints of Champa in North Vietnam are also the result of the migration process that followed the two countries' relationship in terms of diplomacy and battlefield clashes. It is the process of migration (both voluntary and forced), from Champa to Đại Việt that has formed the process of cultural interference between two groups of Cham - Vietnamese residents in a space other than central Vietnam.

The diplomatic imprints of Champa left in North Vietnam are not as profound as the military clashes between the two countries. Because of the missions sent by the King of Champa to Đại Việt, the number of members was small, the length of stay was short, and the scope of activities was limited to the scribe/national capital. As a result, the Champa factors primarily influenced political life, the court, and the upper classes in society, with little impact on the lives of ordinary people. Meanwhile, following each war, tens of thousands of Champa "prisoners" were brought to Đại Việt and placed in various regions, where they established villages and became a part of this land. They not only participated in construction and contributed wisdom and effort to the various works of the Đại Việt dynasties in the new land²¹, but they were also the "mixed blood" between the two races of Cham Viet, contributing to the transmission of Champa

Although not extensive and in-depth, the written documents included in the official history of Đại Việt provide significant and convincing evidence of the process of cultural encroachment between Champa and Đại Việt. Written records also support physical records, as well. From there, the cultural remnants of the Champa were preserved by amicable blending and assimilated into Đại Việt culture. Vietnamese residents of Vietnam's north also absorb Champa culture voluntarily and with an open mind. As a result, the Champa culture, which was affected by Indian culture, not only adds to the diversity of Đại Việt culture (in the North of Vietnam), but also helps to establish new ideals, enabling Đại Việt to distinguish their culture from that of China by being autonomous and self-sufficient.

²¹ Ancient historical texts read: "Báo Thiên Tower: in the past, Lý Thánh Vương fought against Champa, captured a skilled craftsman to build a tower thirteen stories high, named Thiên Tu Vạn Thọ Tower, and then cast bronze the Đao Lợi Thiên" [Lê Tấn 2009: 65]. General Bồ Đông was from Champa, and was sent by Hồ Quý Li to build Đa Bang citadel to protect the west of Nhị Hà River (Red River). He proposed coming to the border to fight rather than allowing the enemy to go to the plain but was rejected by the other Vietnamese generals. The country failed and regretted not following Bồ Đông's strategy [Lê Quý Đôn 1977: 34-35].

The Champa cultural imprint in North Vietnam is another open research direction for scholars to pursue, particularly archaeological artifacts or sculptures. Northern Vietnam was naturally penetrated by many centuries (particularly during the Lý and Trần dynasties) and became part of Đại Việt culture. The appearance of Champa culture in North Vietnam demonstrated that Đại Việt did not only receive purely Chinese cultural elements, but also other cultural elements such as Champa culture (which had suffered influence of Indian culture). There are also physical cultural imprints bearing the mark of Champa in northern Vietnam that have yet to be discovered; this is also a gap that requires more specific research in the future.

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THE VIETNAMESE MEMORY HERITAGE OF THE WAR AND THE SPIRIT OF COMPASSION

Le Thi Thanh Tam¹, Nguyen Dong Trieu²

Abstract. Sino-Nom Funeral Orations are both a functional literary genre and one with high artistic and ideological value. It is a genre reserved for people who passed away and is associated with Vietnam's history and society, as well as the patriotic wars and a way of life that includes gratitude. Thus, the Vietnamese Sino-Nom funeral orations are a treasured legacy. War and benevolence are prominent themes of these orations that make the genre highly moving. The article focuses on introducing, analysing, hypothesising, and confirming that the Vietnamese Sino-Nom funeral orations carry historical value in the country's medieval and modern periods, as well as present a precious heritage of war and the compassionate spirit of the Vietnamese nation.

Keywords: history of Vietnam, Vietnamese literature, literary genre, funeral orations, national cultural heritage, wars of liberation.

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Introduction

The concept of “văn tế” – a funeral oration – usually refers to the type of literature used in sacrifices to gods and spirits. Originally, the funeral orations were a functional genre that was read during general sacrifices, including those to heaven and earth, gods, saints, crops, the deceased (or in some cases, even living people), historical figures, and sacrificial offerings for relics. Later on, the form of an eulogy developed into a special division of Vietnamese literature with outstanding quantity, beyond the scope of a functional genre, reaching new heights of content, art, and ideological values.

The Sino-Nom funeral orations are a type of oration that originates from the classical Chinese literature. In Vietnam, it became one of the outstanding literary genres with many achievements. It is a genre that is very suitable for those fond of the Vietnamese culture. Further, the Vietnamese funeral orations have reached many achievements as the genre discusses the pain of war in the bloody historical periods of the nation.

The introduction of the genre of Sino-Nom funeral orations in Vietnamese literature has been an interest of many scholars since the beginning of the 20th century, as shown through works like

¹ Le Thi Thanh Tam, PhD (Philology), Dean of the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies and Language, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. E-mail: tamltt.tiengviet@gmail.com

² Nguyen Dong Chieu, PhD (Philology), Head of the Chair of Han Nom, Faculty of Literature, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City. E-mail: nguyendongtrieu1976ussh@gmail.com

“Arrangement of the first four ceremonies” (“*Dọn lễ bốn đầu*”) by Hoang (Huynh) Tinh Paulus Cua [1904] and newspapers such as *Nam Phong*, *Phu nu Tan Van*, and *Nong Co Min Dam*. In 1918, Phan Ke Binh released “*Viet Han Van Khao*” to discuss Chinese literature written in Chinese characters, and Vietnamese and Chinese philosophy, as well as the content, purpose, and style of literary culture. By 1939, Duong Quang Ham’s “Vietnamese Literature” (Ministry of Education’s textbook) also presented more details on literary styles and practices in the style of Tang poetry [Duong Quang Ham 1939: 63-66].

Since the 1990s, a number of other works on Sino-Nom literature and Vietnamese literature, including on funeral orations, were published. These works included “Vietnamese Poetry – Form and Genre” by Bui Van Nguyen and Ha Minh Duc [1971]; “The Basis of Sino-Nom Philology” by Le Tri Vien and a group of editors [1983], etc.

The article “Genre characteristics of literary funeral orations” [1998] by Ngo Gia Vo mentions the literary culture including the objectives, basic content, methods, expressions, style, and literary value of these orations. The author presented an important genre feature, which “is in the consciousness and purpose of composition of the literary author think about Vietnamese literature in the Middle Ages” [Phạm Tuấn Vũ 2007]. In “Characteristics of the genre system of patriotic literature in the second half of the 19th century in Vietnam” [2008], Nguyen Van The commented on the importance of the contemporary literature period from the end of the 18th century to the end of the 19th century. The works also asserts the position of Nguyen Dinh Chieu and his contributions to patriotic literature.

Materials of the research

We have compiled a list of 257 literary Sino-Nom texts from various sources, including undergraduate literature textbooks; collections and anthologies of poetry and literature by different authors; research books, newspapers, and magazines before and after 1975; field collection materials; and Sino-Nom documents of the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies (Ha Noi). In particular, the newspapers we use are such as *Nam Phong*, *Phu Nu Tan Van*, *Nong Co Min Dam*, *Dong Nai Van Tap*, and so on. Some major works from the library of the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies were also used for research.

In addition, sources collected from fieldtrips include:

1) An anthology of poems and texts handwritten at Nguyen Tong Mau, including 14 Sino-Nom texts.

2) The ritual practice, an anonymous and undated Sino-Nom book, consisting of many works of literary, collected in the Mekong Delta, including 52 literary texts that contain 30 articles in Nom script and 22 articles in Chinese.

3) Literature in Binh Dinh, an annotated collection translated by Loc Xuyen Dang, published by the Ethnic Culture Publishing House in 2008. A total of 32 cultural articles are divided into three parts. Part one consists of five articles in Chinese. Part two includes 23 essays on Nom and Quoc Ngu scripts. Part three includes four articles on Buddhist philosophy.

So, the research questions posed are:

Why does Vietnamese feneral oration appear most in the painful period of the nation?

Why does Vietnamese feneral oration represent the Vietnamese tradition of patriotism and compassion?

Research methods

Analyzing texts of Sino-Nom literature. The article uses many literary works that have been translated, introduced, and published in previous research and translation works. Regarding works with multiple translations, we compare them before deciding which version to use. We appreciate the efforts

of the translators and, hopefully, can use those clear translations. In case we feel dissatisfied with a translation, we translate it ourselves.

Historical and social research. Literature research is done in relation to history and society because the literature genre connects with political perspectives and people's daily life.

Our analytical and problem-solving approach is based on the **multi-system theory** and interdisciplinary research methods in cultural and literary studies. The topic of literature is related to religion, culture, and heritage conservation, and the article also shows the intersection of thinking systems within literary genres.

Discussion and results

Sino-Nom funeral orations for heroes and soldiers who died in patriotic wars

Patriotism is a core value that makes up Vietnamese traditions and dignity. That value is shown in a special way in literature where the writer has room to express many aspects of patriotism. The impressionism and interpretation of war in literature is an important highlight in the history of this genre.

The patriotic literature originates from history and is associated with major historical figures and events of the era. Such literature is both associated with sacrifices and achievements in battle, both tragic and heroic, and is associated with the living of intense lives. The patriotic culture was born in association with foreign invasions and the arduous fights of Vietnam's army and people. During the Ming invasion, patriotic literature bore remnants of the Later Tran dynasty. This form of literature appeared with Nguyen Bieu's works. In the Tay Son Dynasty, after defeating the Qing army, Vu Huy Tan (1749–1800) followed King Quang Trung's orders and wrote a liturgy for the death of the Qing Dynasty's generals and soldiers that died in battle. In local folklore, there is also a tradition of *Van Te Thien Trieu* (funeral orations for the Chinese dynasty) with the same theme as Vu Huy Tan's essay.

The above works often express mourning for the patriots and praise their spirit. Patriotic literature appeared more and reached a new height from the second half of the 19th century to the resistance war against the French (1945–1954) and showed multiple effects. The patriotic literature of this period strongly called on all classes of people to fight against the enemy and be a direct voice against the enemy. During this period, there were many excellent works of the typical authors, such as Le Khac Can with *Literature of the Generals* who fought against the French and were killed in battle; *Van Te Ong Cai Tri* (anonymous), and *Dieu Ton That Thuyet* (funeral oration for Mr. Ton That Thuyet) by Nguyen Thuong Hien (1868-1925). Especially noteworthy is the Nom literary cluster of the Southern author Nguyen Dinh Chieu, who composed the famous funeral orations. Nguyen Dinh Chieu once praised those who sacrificed themselves for the cause, condemning betraying the country: "It is better to die for loyalty and follow the ancestors in an honourable way, than to surrender to the French and painfully live with barbarians" [Nguyễn Đình Chiểu 1998: 78].

Patriotic literature also upholds the role of farmers, who both work and fight. History shows that the Vietnamese people both produced and fought the enemy, built the country and defended it, and were good in every aspect, but it was not until Nguyen Dinh Chieu that the role of the farmer was placed on a historical stature. In Nguyen Dinh Chieu's literary work, the peasantry was at least twice the main subject. The first time through the Can Giuoc philanthropist: Faced with the weakness and compromise of the Hue Court, the peasants strongly rose up against the French, truly mastering the struggle against aggression.

Generals Truong Dinh (1820–1864), Nguyen Huu Huan (1830–1875) were willing to give up their lives on the battlefield, proving to the enemy that the country in their hearts came first. They are gone forever, but the glorious victory remains. Even if the enemy slashed his stomach open, he would also consider it as a way of expressing his heart to contemporary and posterity. Their hearts were given to the

people and the country are appreciated and handed down forever. These two epic consciousnesses make the image of the general exude magnanimity, they are an important factor that enhances the tenacious and rebellious spirit of the “golden hearts”, brightening up the “pure of heart”.

At the beginning of the French colonial period, the spirit of reverence for the army was expressed in internal affairs through its characteristics associated with human rule and the teaching role of the court. Nguyen Dinh has repeatedly mentioned “God’s grace” in his literature: “An inch of land is grateful to God, and wealth for our country” [Nguyễn Đình Chiểu 1952: 75]. Through it, the author both praises the loyalty of the people and praises the teaching grace of the holy king. Human rule has brought people a satisfying life both materially and spiritually. Mandarins, soldiers, and other classes of people wholeheartedly served the court and strictly obeyed the law. Everyone at home, had at heart the desire to save the country, not to be afraid to sacrifice, and remain ready to rise up to fight the enemy to regain every inch of their homeland.

According to Nguyen Dinh Chieu, although the righteous people were considered by the court as an enemy, because they went against the policy of the court and were at fault with the French, but he believed that what the insurgents did was right in their hearts to support the king and help the country. It shows that he still respected the army and did not change his mind.

Honoring the martyrs from all times who “sacrifice for nation”

The spirit of compassion of Vietnamese is expressed first of all in their compassion for the scenes of frost, wind, earth and sky, arrows flying, bullets, and horse skin covering the corpses of soldiers in battle: “I have to throw myself away and early and late your liver is angry; your body must be exposed to cold weather, and my heart is sad” [Nguyễn Đình Chiểu 1998: 16]. The author spoke on behalf of the king to speak of the soldier's loyalty and patriotism, thereby affirming the king's understanding of the war and loyalty. That understanding as felt directly is the ladder of compassion.

The most moving are the words expressing pity in Nguyen Van Thanh’s sacrifices of martyrs. This sacrificial essay, in addition to its literary and historical value, also speaks to the reality of scenes of suffering and loss caused by wars, expressing the author's sympathy and compassion for the deaths of those who died in the war. soldier. The above sacrifice shows many emotions of Nguyen Van Thanh. It is not only the feeling of compassion of the living for the dead, but also the deep gratitude of the person who benefits from the blood sacrifice of the generals. It is not only the favor of a marshal for his subordinates, but also a loving heart like brothers and sisters in the same family.

The benevolence of the Vietnamese people through Vietnamese Sino-Nom funeral orations

Funeral Oration is a means by which the author expresses his love for the dead, not only for his loved ones but also for everyone. Therefore, the humanitarian spirit in literature is borderless; it is directed to all classes of people, regardless of ethnicity, caste or faction, spreading love to even melancholy souls.

Mercy on the victims of war

This is the scene of a good people suffering a disaster, which is depicted briefly and fully through literature of Nguyen Dinh Chieu: “Our people are on fire; The enemy presses the grease with all his might” [Nguyễn Đình Chiểu 1952: 85].

Relatives of the martyrs were also victims of the invasion: “It's sad that two old, sweet people rely on your hand to help, the deep love has not escaped the royal realm; thanks to the scene instead of the innocent, considerate children raised by the wife, fortunately, the dandelion tree sprouted again” [Nguyễn Văn Hầu 2012]. More poignant than the scene in Funeral Oration for Can Giuoc’s heroes: “In pain, the

old mother cried and cried, the lamp flickered in the tent late at night; frustrated instead of a weak wife running to find her husband, the shadow drifted in front of the alley” [Nguyễn Đình Chiểu 1998: 78].

Phan Boi Chau ever affirmed the naturalness of patriotism: “Patriotism comes from the heart of heaven, who is unlucky; The love of the race still counts humans, so what's wrong with that?” [Phan Boi Chau 1990: 315]. Patriotism is human nature, resisting the enemy is not a crime. The colonialists and their henchmen oppressing patriots was a sin that cannot be forgiven by heaven and earth.

An author has clearly stated his attitude about wars: “Although grateful to the country, dying for national affairs, the servant has no regrets; But children are separated from their father, wives must be separated from husbands, and the war is inherent in hell” (The death sacrifice of the late General Thi Van, 2b, Investor). Every person who goes to war is a family that has to suffer separation. Sadness and anticipation, anxiety and worry weigh heavily on the hearts of fathers, mothers, wives and children.

Mercy on the victims of accidents, natural disasters or muder cases

The subject of literature has many people who are victims of deaths due to accidents or natural disasters or muder cases. The first are those who were harmed by the killer. Regarding the murders and robbers in Da Gia Thuong mentioned above, “*Kham Dinh Viet su Thong Giam Cuong Muc*” (“The Imperially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Viet”) of the National History Department of the Nguyen Dynasty recorded the following: “The summer of May (the year of Chinh Hoa 15, 1694) was arrested killing 52 wicked people in Da Gia Thuong commune”. Da Gia Thuong commune is narrow and dangerous, with many caves and holes. The people of that commune set up separate contracts with each other, set up sentries to welcome passersby, or stayed in the commune. At night, they captured them, killed them, threw their bodies from the cliff, and plundered their possessions. This went on for more than 20 years; white bones piled up.

Someone wrote funeral oration for the lonely souls in Da Gia Thuong to comfort the soul in the cold. The sacrifice said, the number of people killed was up to 318 people. After the incident was discovered, the court directly punished the villains. But unjust deaths still make people unable to hold back their compassion. There are mournful lines for the victims: “No wonder Da Gia Thuong has many villains, daring in the middle of a peaceful day to cause serious crimes. Robbing in the middle of the road, killing at the door, no less brutal than a sailor; Thrown into the water, thrown into the mountains, crueller than tigers (...) Disappeared in the guest house, who knows where; Desperately cold land her soul, who begs for the island. What injustice does the ghost spend time; Embrace it when it's all over.” [Nguyen Ta Nhi 2005: 15] At the same time, sympathize with their parents, brothers, spouses and children because of the sudden loss of a loved one: “Your parents, brothers and sisters are suffering, constantly dreaming about their faces; Your wife and children are tired of looking at them, panicking in front of the lights, thinking they are shadows.” [Ibid.].

People died because of storms and floods. Phan Boi Chau was an author of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who contributed to the literary body with the largest number of works, and his content was also among the richest. In humanitarian content, he has a number of works documenting the reality of miserable life, covering man-made and natural disasters that people had to endure. During 1929-1931, the central region was continuously hit by floods and storms. One year, it was Nghe An and Ha Tinh, and the next year Binh Dinh and Phu Yen. Phan Boi Chau wrote several orations to sympathise with the people affected by the natural disasters in those regions.

In addition to the previously mentioned victims, people suffering from other accidents in life were also sympathised by the writer with genuine compassion. We have recorded a number of works and orations to the dead of such accidents, such as when a boat sunk at Hue [Phan Bội Châu 1990: 349] and

people died because the city fell in Thuong Tu and others who died in a train accident at Da Bac [Ibid.: 366].

Mercy on the Chinese soldiers who died in Vietnam

Have pity on the victims of Chinese soldiers and soldiers who died in Vietnam. The humanitarian spirit in literature has a very noble expression of compassion for the Chinese soldiers who died in the invasion of our country. This case only appeared in two sacrifices published after the resistance war against the Qing army was completely victorious.

In 1788, at the request of Le Chieu Thong, the Qing army used the pretext of "supporting Le to destroy the Tay Son" massively to invade our country. King Nguyen Hue proclaimed himself emperor, set the date of Quang Trung, ordered his army to go out and directly confront the enemy army. The spirit of Tay Son was extremely strong, and soon defeated the invaders in the battles of Ngoc Hoi and Dong Da. The Ngoc Hoi – Dong Da campaign ended successfully, Tay Son entered to liberate Thang Long. Quang Trung King ordered subjects to establish security, distribute food and clothing to tens of thousands of soldiers who surrendered. The soldiers were brought back to the North, an altar was set up Vu Huy Tan was ordered to write a letter to express compassion and comfort for the dead soldiers of the Qing Dynasty battle.

The two liturgies above represent the two aspects of the public. The common point about the tactics of the two authors is to recreate the scene of the enemy's defeat to praise our troops. The images of "sea of blood and mountains of bones", "body built into a messy corner", "buried body of the Red River choking" in the Funeral Oration for Qing Dynasty's soldiers who died in battle or the act of "strangling" and "suicide" not only shows the tragic defeat of the enemy, but through it also shows the heroic spirit and determination to fight to the final victory of Vietnamese army.

The funeral oration of Chinese Dynasty has a very special feature: "I feel sorry for you, uncles!" In the first sentence, the author uses the word "uncle" to call the Qing generals who died in battle. Many sentences after this pronoun are repeated over and over again when referring to them. The author wants to show sincere compassion when considering them as relatives, like brothers and sisters. This also demonstrates our kindness and loving peace to the Northern neighbor.

The place where the invaders tried to aggressively kill became their own graves. From the king to the people with great tolerance and compassion, they all pity those who had to leave their bodies in a foreign land and become helpless souls, so they set up an altar to comfort them. The Chinese military officer who died in battle clearly stated the gesture of King Quang Trung: "My heart is generous with the people of the North, leaving the storehouse to cover the broken bones; Do not wander about the South sky, leave the foreign land, hurry back to the old country" [Mai Quốc Liên 1985: 139].

Mercy on the homeless and helpless souls

In medieval Vietnamese literature, the humanitarian spirit was not limited to humans. Even the hungry and destitute souls are objects of pity. A number of medieval and modern writers such as Ngo Thi Nham, Nguyen Ba Xuyen, Nguyen Du, Phan Boi Chau, Tran Dinh Tan... all wrote about the soul. Considering the specific object, the ghost mentioned in the literature is also a refugee, but in terms of content and meaning, the humanitarian spirit of the authors, especially Nguyen Du and Nguyen Ba Xuyen, is for the soul. The soul transcends personal grief, reaching out to a much broader range of thought.

According to the Buddhist concept, people after death will depend on the good and bad karma of their lives to lead them to the corresponding good and bad realms in which they will receive results. While we are still alive, what we receive now is the result of the *karma* we did in the past or in a previous life.

After death, only sentient beings with extremely good karma will be reborn immediately, beings with extremely bad karma will be reincarnated in the realm of suffering or be sent to hell without interruption, and for those who create bad karma, other must have a life of their soul. Thus, the lonely souls become also a living being of suffering.

Funeral oration for lonely soul has two forms. A form of spirit sacrifice in a narrow scope such as the Sang Dong fox sacrificed her soul in the soul of Ngo Thi Nham's farm in the Sang Dong camp, and the sacrifice of sentient beings by Nguyen Ba Xuyen in the Hoai Duc palace where the author had just arrived. A common form of sacrifice for all kinds of ghosts such as Van Sacrifice of Ten Kinds of Beings by Nguyen Du, Van Sacrifice of Souls by Tran Dinh Tan.

Among the medieval writers who wrote literary texts, Nguyen Du wrote little, but his work is considered outstanding and unprecedented. Nguyen Du's writing of the soul has a particularly important and typical content value. If it is said that the literary culture in medieval Vietnamese literature contains the great humanitarian spirit of the Vietnamese people towards all kinds of people, then Nguyen Du's funeral oration alone can cover all of that content. Through poorest funeral oration, Nguyen Du clearly shows that he is a person who always has a lot of love for his fellow human beings, for all people who are in trouble and lonely, regardless of their life time, they were rich and poor.

In particular, in our opinion, Nguyen Du's humanitarian spirit is not simply expressed with an altar, with mournful cries or invocations of the Buddha's compassionate power to save her soul, but it in two layers of deeper, more intrinsic content. The first layer of content: Emphasizing the element of equality among all people, all classes in society. Whether it is a supremely powerful king, a general "screaming loudly", a vizier "with a high hat" or a poor wanderer "laying on the ground" in the end all have the same end: death. Once dead, "who is better off and who is cowardly, and who is good and who is stupid" [Hoàng Xuân Hãn 1977: 128]. This content is meant to direct people to a more equal treatment and love for each other, just like the heart and desire of the author himself. The second layer of content shows the causes of suffering to avoid. The ghosts who are "lost in their species", "lost along the way" in the "inner area of the field", "in the countryside along the bush" are just situations that the author has selectively envisioned for us to see which is the suffering realm of the underworld. That realm is seen as a form of "reality" in the world.

Conclusion

Funeral orations in Vietnamese medieval literature are a great heritage, valuable in both thought and art. This genre is used to express the feelings and emotions of the authors and, at the same time, to express many ideological contents with different levels. As a literary genre composed through spiritual conception, orations express philosophical thoughts of the Three Teachings, especially Buddhism. The literary genre in medieval Vietnamese literature has unique features that help it not lose its value over time. Thanks to this unique identity, literature has created an imprint that cannot be confused with other literary genres and contributes to creating a multi-tonal and nuanced literature.

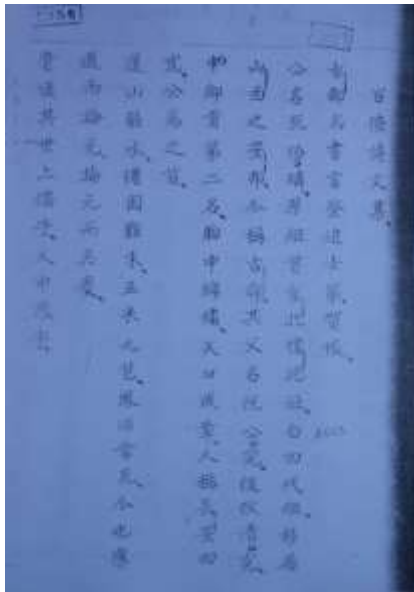
Throughout its history, Vietnamese literature has been associated with writings about the war from many different angles. Funeral orations are a special genre capable of deeply touching the pain of war and the compassion in the hearts of the Vietnamese. The theme of war and human love in Vietnamese Han-Nom orations shows the unique value of this genre in both modern and modern literature in particular, in the process of literary integration of Vietnam with the East Asian world as well as Western culture. The painful and tragic cry of many generations of Vietnamese writers has found a worthy genre, becoming the Vietnamese legacy of painful and heroic history pages, about the compassionate heart that always turns to lonely souls and longing for deliverance.

Reference

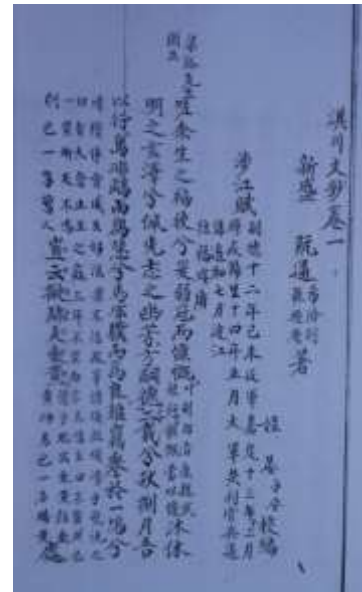
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APPENDIX

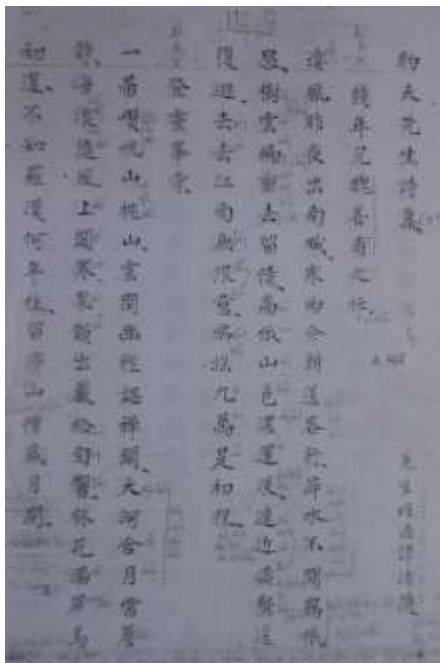
First page of some collections



Bách Liêu thi văn tập



Kỳ Xuyên văn sao quyển nhất



Ước Phu tiên sinh thi tập



Danh bút tùng thư

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SOME FEATURES OF THE “EDUCATED – UNEDUCATED” OPPOSITION IN STORIES BY NGUYEN HUY THIEP

T.N. Filimonova¹

Abstract. A specific artistic feature of stories by Nguen Huy Thiep (1950–2021) is the opposition “town – village”, which often attaches to the opposition “educated – uneducated”, or “intellectuals – common people”. However, the opposition of educated people and uneducated one has a number of peculiarities. Thus, in the stories of the present time we find the opposition “intellectuals – common people”, but in historical stories uneducated common people are opposed by Confucians (*nhà nho*), representatives of educated class typical of traditional Vietnam. At the same time, in a number of stories the “educated – uneducated” opposition has been transformed into the “public person (*con người xã hội*) – natural person” (*con người tự nhiên*) opposition. Once again this confirms the conclusion that hostility to educated people is one of obvious ideological dominants being the conceptual base of the writer’s work.

Keywords: Nguyen Huy Thiep, town and village in stories by Nguyen Huy Thiep, “educated – uneducated” opposition.

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¹ Filimonova Tatiana N., PhD. (Philology), Assistant Professor, Institute of Asian and African Countries at Lomonosov Moscow State University. ORCID: 0000-0001-7136-3173. E-mail: glasha.48@mail.ru

Introduction

One of specific artistic features of stories by Nguyen Hui Thiep (1950–2021), perhaps, the greatest Vietnamese writer of the last quarter of the 20th century, is the “town – village” opposition. My article “Town and Village in stories by Nguyen Huy Thiep” [Filimonova 2018: 184–195] discusses this opposition. The article shows that this opposition often attaches to the “educated – uneducated” one, or to the opposition of “intellectuals – common people”. I pronounced the idea of the “educated – uneducated” opposition in Nguyen Huy Thiep’s work as long ago as 1996, in my article “The Meaning of “My Last Blood” Story by Nguyen Huy Thiep” [Filimonova 1996: 286–294]. It appears that nobody has examined the writer’s work in this aspect, at least either in Russia or in Vietnam.

Both the oppositions and their linkage are clearly seen in such stories on Vietnam of the late 20th century as “Rural Lessons” (“*Những bài học nông thôn*”), “The Memories of the Native Fields” (“*Thương nhớ đồng quê*”), “A River Nymph” (“*Con gái thủy thần*”), “With no King” (“*Không có vua*”), “The General Retired” (“*Tướng về hưu*”). It is obvious that the writer dislikes town, but he sincerely sympathizes with village. The same to be said about educated and uneducated people; the writer is in antipathy with educated persons and in sympathy with uneducated ones, as the former are spoiled, hypocritical and profit-seeking, while the latter are ordinary, sincere and humane. There are some more examples of this. In the story “Woodcutters” (“*Những người thợ xẻ*”) Ngoc, the protagonist, who tells the story, is a student of a pedagogical institute. He failed at his final examination due to his unhappy love affair and had to wait for the examination a year later. On the invitation of his cousin Buong, who had been imprisoned for theft and continued to earn a living like a rogue, Ngoc went to mountains to cut wood.

The essence of the story is his adventure. The story begins with Ngoc’s words: “I have many brothers and sisters. My parents have given birth to nine children altogether. All my brothers and sisters work on land and they are decent folk, but I am not like my family” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 136]. He means that he went to town to learn at an institute. This is not only his self-esteem, but also the attitude of his milieu to him. His father seems to dislike his son, and Buong reproaches him now and then for his belonging to intellectuals, and calls him “a riff-raff intellectual”, while an intellectual is a rascal and a cheat for him.

The protagonist in the story “To make hay, to graze buffalos” (“*Chăn trâu cắt cỏ*”) is Nang, a young 18-years old peasant; he is in accord with his existence, with his simple, though hard, life in the village. His mother asks him, if he is going to town to enter an institute, and he answers: “Give it up, Mummy. I fear to learn. And I don’t want to leave you” [Ibid.: 539]. His “I fear” may be understood that Nang instinctively fears to leave the village for town, because having got high education he will lose the peace of mind and the “Buddhist” serenity of his life. When Nang’s mother says: “Enter life, learn about life!”, his father interrupts her: “Damn that learning! Let him be a peasant. Leave him alone” [Ibid.] The attitude to education is well shown in the discourse of Hoi, the teacher, another character of the story. In his conversation with the prior of a local pagoda he says that if he were Ngoc, he would not read books and newspapers, because “they are drugs”. Visiting Nang’s house for a while, and being a little drunk he tells that while talking to the prior he shuddered at the thought that for many years he “taught nonsense to children” and that is why he will for sure go to hell. So, the next day he will give up teaching and come back to peasant labor.

In his story “At the Crossing” (“*Sang song*”) Nguyen Huy Thiep reduces the “educated – uneducated” opposition to the extremity. The characters of the story, a Buddhist monk, a poet, a teacher, two antique dealers, a woman and a child, a loving couple and, as one can see, a robber, meet by chance at a river crossing. The action of the story develops on a ferry while crossing from one bank to the other. The antique dealers are carrying an expensive old Chinese vase, most likely a stolen one. While the intellectuals, the poet, the teacher and the Buddhist monk, are busy with serious discourse on literature, Buddhism, history, the small boy being curious, puts his hand into the neck of the vase, and his hand is stuck in it. The dealers begin to threaten his mother with cutting off the child’s hand. Everybody is confused, but the robber breaks the vase with nunchucks saying “Stop it. Children are our future! Also, kindness is the chief thing in every business!” [Ibid.: 248]. Everybody is heaving a sigh of relief. So, it turns out that in the critical situation the only man who was able to do this decisive, noble and dangerous act was a robber, the worst among them. It was he who gained a victory over the intellectuals, his fellow-travelers. The end of the story is as follows: the monk who was also helpless and useless, whispers a Buddhist mantra: «Gate Gate Paragate Para Parasamgate» [Ibid.: 251].

Nguyen Huy Thiep does not decipher the mantra, but this is a citation of a mantra from “The Heart Sutra”, one of the most famous sutras of the Buddhist Mahayana, pronounced by Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, who once during a deep meditation “got rid of all the sufferings, having crossed to the other bank”, i.e., to Nirvana [Torchinov: 01.04.2007]. It is to propose that the mantra is the key to the story. The full text of the mantra is “Gate Gate Paragate, Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha”. The book of prophetic works («Finding Peace») by Nhat Hanh, a famous Buddhist teacher, gives the text of the mantra from the following English translation: “Gone gone, gone beyond, gone utterly beyond. Enlightenment hail!” [Thich Nhat Hanh 1993: 265]. In other words, this is the appeal to enlightenment. But at the same time the mantra may be interpreted as the appeal to overcome oneself morally, to become better, more perfect. In the story “the moral river” only was crossed by a robber, who made a good act. Neither the intellectuals nor the Buddhist monk (he knows this) could make such an act.

Some features of the “educated – uneducated” opposition

The opposition of educated and uneducated is obvious, but at the same time one can see that it is somewhat different from the “town – village” opposition. Nguyen Huy Thiep uses the “educated – uneducated” opposition not only in his stories of the present time, but also in those of the past. However, in the latter this opposition is transformed: in the stories of the present time there is the “intellectuals – common people” opposition, while in historical stories there is the “common people – Confucians” (*nhà nho*) opposition; Confucians being representatives of the educated class typical of traditional Vietnam. It is well known that the mass of educated people consisted mainly of them in traditional Vietnam, that is, up to the early 20th century. Their education was the ability to read and write Chinese and the knowledge of the Four Books and Five Classics. Then, having passed one of the three grades of competitive examinations they could aspire to the official career. In other words, educated persons were executives along the feudal power vertical who, unlike uneducated persons, were vouched not only for a higher social status, but also for a sheltered life depending on the occupied position. Thus, in medieval Vietnam education was a kind of a springboard which allowed any person (even of humble origin) every chance of a high rise.

This is very well shown with the following episode from “My Last Blood” (“*Giọt máu*”) story. Its action takes place in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. A simple peasant Da, the father of a boy, who wants his son to get an education has the following conversation with a famous teacher. The teacher asks why the father wants his son to be educated. The father answers:

“I believe, there is something of Truth in the education. That is why I want my son to be your pupil”.

“But there are many kinds of education – those to serve and earn one’s living; those to improve oneself, those to conceal oneself from the life, to avoid labor. And there are those to sow discord”.

“I see. I am a butcher. I know that there is fillet, head, fat, or breast. But it is meat, all the same”.

“Yes. But what education do you want your son to get?”

“I think, breast is good enough. It is well sold, never lies long. Is there any education like that? That would be a proper education for my son”.

“I see. So, to serve”.

Da clapped his hands.

“Exactly!” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 369-370].

When the boy had finished school, and passed his competitive examinations, he was appointed head of a rich district and began living in accordance with the principle his teacher had taught: “Official service is a profession to get money. It is foolish not to take bribes!” [Ibid.: 372]. It is noteworthy, that in the story “Rural Lessons” about the village at the end of the 20th century, i.e., nearly a hundred years later, the protagonist’s educated urban mother says: “Education makes life easier, sonny” [Ibid.: 170].

Belonging to the educated class of Confucians assumed a special, moreover, strict enough “code of honor” which ought to be formally conformed. The perfect Confucian, so called “gentleman” (Chinese *junzi*, Vietnamese *quân tử*) ought to possess such merits as humaneness, loyalty etc.

In Confucianism the way to perfection, to the ideal, to becoming “a gentleman” led through learning. So, it is noteworthy, that in the story “Gold and Fire” (“*Vàng lửa*”), its action taking place in Vietnam at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, Perrier, a French adventurer, writes about Emperor Gia Long (1762–1820), who ruled at the very beginning of the subjugation of Vietnam by French: “He did not believe that learning could improve the nation” [Ibid.: 214]. Emperor Gia Long is especially hostile to educated persons. In the story “The Sharp Sword” (“*Kiếm sắc*”) he says to one of his subjects: “I hate but the educated class. But you are a soldier and you must not fear anything. And those are rotten stuff, dung-beetles, clever, shrewd phrasemongers. But I am not afraid of them. They are all degenerates, nothingness” [Ibid.: 204].

The three-part story “Xuan Huong’s Shadow” (“*Chút thoáng Xuân Hương*”) is dedicated to Ho Xuan Huong, one of Vietnam’s greatest classical poets, who lived at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, but the facts of her life are difficult to verify. In “Story One” the protagonist, her husband, head of a *tong* (an administrative unit in old Vietnam), nicknamed Toad, is a real historical figure. One of her poems, “Mourning over Toad, Head of a Tong”, was dedicated to him [Ho Xuan Huong

1968: 48]. Nguyen Huy Thiep describes him so: “His carriage was never refined. Never. By nature, he was rude, clumsy and unattractive. He was funny in his own way, and in his own way was he noble. Toad was hostile to clean persons. He could not stand them. He preferred powerful onslaught to real, true life.

He knew that he is low-educated <...> Those learned Confucians, those officials’ sons and scribblers frightened him very much. They trapped him into respectability, weakening his natural cold rationality” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 408].

Thus, here also we see the theme of “educated”, i.e., “learned Confucian gentlemen, officials’ sons and scribblers” who, in the opinion of the tong’s head, hide themselves behind high words of ethics, kindness and honesty, but in reality, they are far from those qualities. But the tong’s head with his natural imperfection shows himself humane and kind, when he had mercy for a rural whore, who “had to support her parents but had no smallest plot of land” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 411].

The statement of moral superiority of uneducated people over the educated class is the crucial idea of Nguyen Huy Thiep’s story “My Last Blood” having already been mentioned². This is a story of a Vietnamese family during about a hundred years. Its characters are the elder representatives of four generations of the family through the male line. They are: Pham Ngoc Lien, Pham Ngoc Da, Pham Ngoc Tieu and Pham Ngoc Phong. The story begins with the biography of Pham Ngoc Lien, who left this world on December 24, 1840, and ends with the death of Pham Ngoc Phong on March 13, 1940. After him Phong left his second son, not the first one, especially precious son according to Vietnamese tradition, “the last blood” of the Phams.

The story opens with an episode from Pham Ngoc Lien’s life, which serves the opening, or “the question”, which the story “answers”: “In the first half of last century in a tiny place of Noi of Tu Liem district there lived a well-to-do peasant Pham Ngoc Lien. He desired to build a house at the outskirts of the village, on an even plot of land measuring 3 *saos* and 2 *thuocs*. Once a passer-by said:

“This is a fine place, like a feather; it means the disposition to learning and literature. Thus, due to the shortage of water, plants will fade; also, sons will be few”.

Having heard this, Lien seized the passer-by by his sleeve and said:

“I am born a simple ploughman, but I want my children and grandchildren to be somewhat more educated and make their ways in the world. It does not matter, if the children are few; they must be good and respected by everybody”.

“Does education mean repletion?” the passer-by asked.

“No”.

“Then why do you need education?”

“Well, to be educated is better than to plough land”.

“And is an educated person always a good one?”

“Sure”.

² In details see: [Filimonova 1996].

The passer-by laughed; he did not answer any questions more, waved the skirt of his clothes and went away. Lien got angry and said: “A crazy man!” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 365–366].

The passer-by asks the key-question of the story: “Is an educated person always a good one?” In the original “good” means “moral (có đức)”. In other words, the question may be formulated in this way: does education mean ethics?

The analysis of the story shows that Pham Ngoc Lien’s desire to see his sons educated and making their ways in the world is the beginning of his family’s moral degradation. In the story, he, an uneducated peasant, as well as his elder son Da, are moral men blessed by God, as it is approved with the fact that they have sons, their successors. Moral degradation begins with Tieu, a son of Da, and goes on till the last years of Phong’s life. Both, everyone in one’s own way and in one’s own time get education and through it make their ways in the world: the father learned Chinese, passed Confucian examinations, became a state official and sinned as used to do many representatives of the service class in traditional Vietnam; the son having got new colonial education, is both a journalist and a smuggler sinning as a representative of the new colonial Vietnam. Thus, the education in the Pham family leads to amorality and is the cause of their dying down.

When returning to the significant episode opening the story, the author’s answer to the question of correlation of education and ethics is obvious: education does not suppose ethics, but is contrary to it.

The “educated – uneducated” opposition finds a curious development in the historical and literary story “The Vietnamese Lesson” (“*Bài học tiếng Việt*”). It narrates of one evening and one night in the life of Vu Trong Phung (1912–1939), a famous Vietnamese writer. At the opening of the story the writer goes from Hanoi suburbs to the center of the city, when a friend of his invited him to a house-warming party, and ends in the morning, when he comes back home and begins to write his new story “The Vietnamese Lesson”. The sequence of events in the story is very simple: a tram ride, the party, where the protagonist gets acquainted with the guests, speaks with his friend’s wife and her sister and having left on his way home drops in an opium den. That is why the story contains mainly Vu Trong Phung’s thoughts and conversations. Both the characters’ conversations and the writer’s thoughts always turn on several themes, such as the role of literature and the essence of the writer’s labor, the writer’s place in Vietnamese society, the Vietnamese language, women and soul, but at the same time the concepts of “honesty” (*luong thiện*), “a natural person” (*con người tự nhiên*) and “a public person” (*con người xã hội*).

As it follows from the story, it was honesty that Vu Trong Phung sought in literature when he started his way as a writer: “At that time he was an innocent and clean youth. He thought that literature is fraught with honesty and also with something elevated, supernatural, capable to help people. He became delighted with the beauty of words, with the beauty of the Vietnamese language. His soul was overfilled with plenty of sounds. Sometimes they were clear, sometimes indistinct, but always clean and honest” [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2003: 698].

But what is the meaning of “being honest” to him? It means to concentrate not on the external, but on the internal: “We pay too much attention to the external and prefer to turn to the public person, not to the natural one. Being “educated”, “experienced”, brought up with false ethics, we take pains to close our eyes to the fact that the natural person is the most sincere and honest, though at the same time, the most stubborn and rebellious” [Ibid.: 692].

However, following Vu's thoughts, society tries to suppress the natural person with "moral regulations, domestic restrictions, various rules and duties", but they only show "the feebleness of education in front of the wild essence of the natural person. The natural person is without ethics, he is free" [Ibid.: 694].

In the story Vu Trong Phung was like that. At the party his behavior was scandalous, but he explained his conduct in this way: "I just wanted to say that nature has its own reasons, unlike ours" [Ibid.: 703].

However, such people are alien to so called "polite society", having different, often incompatible desires. Thence, Vu Trong Phung felt being misunderstood and out of place at the party. The opposition the writer – the milieu is double: he – the host and he – the guests. Vu knew his host Hoang since school years, and though their paths have diverged, they are still friends. Hoang, intelligent by nature, learned in France, married well, and got rich, due (according to rumors) to drugs and weapons smuggle; in a word, he has success in life. Comparing himself and his friend, Vu mentions that his friend used to be more sociable; a man of the world, he knew "the rules of the game". So, he asks: "Is he stronger or dirtier than I?" [Ibid.: 695]. When the guests (officials of high rank, rich men, distinguished artists) express their false delight to the author, who had been introduced as a Vietnamese Victor Hugo, and say that "compared with us your profession is much nobler" [Ibid.: 700], he feels hurt, a laughing stock, because that idle society has different interests, such as the prices of gold, a new cottage, education abroad etc. And he thinks: "They are people of action, full of enthusiasm, active and vain... They are in the eternal whirl... Life is fight... Life is theatre... One is either a hammer or an anvil in it...<...> Or are they right? And am I wrong?" [Ibid.].

The concepts of "the natural person", i.e., unspoiled with education, sincere and honest by nature, and "the public man" brought up by "civilized" society and embedded in it, take a definite place in the work of Nguyen Huy Thiep. Thus, in a small narrative, which the writer called a novel, "Marks in Exchange for Love" ("*Gạ tình lấy điểm*"), the protagonist Do Thu Cong, an ordinary teacher of a provincial technical college, and a kind of a philosopher, talks about the animality of a human being and about negative influence of principles of civilization on him: "The man is an animal by nature and will be such forever. The animal is natural; it is outside ethics, training but its intuition, not intellect. It is the desire "to become a man" that makes a human being unhappy, urges him on perfidy and every recklessness. Human society becomes still more severe; the most natural human feelings are despised, criticized, brutally nipped in the bud. Those human beings who preserve their human essence are few and pass for weirdos and crazies. We live in the rational world, with hundreds of rules which bind us, define our duties and boundaries. People knew no rules a thousand years ago, and yet they used to live and die" [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2007: 69].

The writer's thoughts of "the natural person" and "the public man" can be found in his publications in journals and newspapers collected in his book "To Set Nets, to Catch Birds" ("*Giăng lưới bắt chim*"). Thus, the text of his speech at an exhibition opening entitled "Back to Nature" ("*Trở lại tự nhiên*") reads: "We are reassured with the thought that we are educated, too much educated: by our family, laws, religion, art. <...> We are real public people. But where is the natural person? I do not see him. But meanwhile in art "back to nature" means nothing else but the true description of attraction to the opposite gender, joy, weariness or trouble and numerous transformations of these conditions" [Nguyễn Huy Thiệp 2010: 260].

To some degree, everything also approves Nguyen Huy Thiep's "educated – uneducated" opposition and his preference for the latter. To tell the truth, there are rare exclusions, such as Trieu, the teacher from "Rural Lessons" story, an educated urban dweller from a decent educated family; Chi, the teacher from the story "It is very Easy to Live" ("*Sống dễ lắm*"), whose life, in fact, was very hard in some uncultured backwater; or a married couple from "Woodcutters" story, where the husband was a doctor, and the wife was a teacher. But the thing is that those people, intellectuals by social status, left town for village and therefore, they share all the hardships of common peasants' life.

Conclusion

Summing up, since early times Vietnam experienced a strong influence of Confucianism. Historically, the cult of education and educated individuals is typical of the country, Therefore, the obvious anti-intellectualism in Nguyen Huy Thiep's stories expressed as dislike for educated people, the statement of moral superiority of uneducated people are striking. This requires their further comprehension in the context of Vietnamese literature as a whole.

It cannot be said that prior to Nguyen Huy Thiep Vietnamese literature was free of such an attitude. Ho Xuan Huong derided Confucians in her poems. In "The Lucky Man" ("*Số đờ*", 1936), a well-known satirical novel by Vu Trong Phung, devoted to colonial Vietnam of the 1930-es, the protagonist, an illiterate rootless orphan and scoundrel, is the most moral in comparison with the other characters, the representatives of so called "polite society". Nguyen Viet Ha touches the problem of ethics in his novel "The Time of God" ("*Cơ hội của Chúa*", 1999), describing the changes in Vietnamese society at the turn of the 1980-es and 1990-es, in the early period of the Renovation policy. And so on. However, it is hardly possible to argue that these opinions serve a conceptual foundation prior to Nguyen Huy Thiep of those authors' work. But antipathy to educated people in stories by Nguyen Huy Thiep is one of obvious ideological dominants.

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SCIENTIFIC LIFE

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“VIETNAMESE STUDIES IN RUSSIA: HISTORY AND MODERNITY”, THE MONOGRAPH BEING PREPARED BY THE ICCA RAS CENTER FOR VIETNAM AND ASEAN STUDIES

E.V. Nikulina¹

Abstract. The article discusses the monograph “Vietnamese Studies in Russia: History and Modernity”, a fundamental publishing project of the RAS Institute of China and Contemporary Asia. The author describes its structure, main contents and the planned stages of the work at the book.

Keywords: Vietnam, Russia, humanities, Vietnamese studies, history, fundamental publishing project.

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Russian Oriental studies have a long glorious history and occupy one of the first places in the world. One of their essential components are Vietnamese studies: the study of Vietnam’s policy and economy, history and culture, ethnography and language. Dozens of books and monographs, hundreds of articles have been written in Russia. There exists a well-known Russian scientific school of Vietnam’s history studies organized by Professor D.V. Deopik (the Institute of Asian and African countries at Moscow Lomonosov University). One of the remarkable achievements of this school is the Russian edition (translation and commentaries) of “Dai Viet su ky toan thu” (Complete Annals of Dai Viet), the official national chronicle of the Vietnamese state. The first translation of the chronicle into the foreign language took twenty years and has been finished this year.

Russian Vietnamese studies are full of glorious names of researchers of the elder generation. Many of them passed away. But new names appear less and less, though every year Russian universities produce a lot of young specialists for the Vietnamese language, history, economy and culture. For various reasons, practical work is more attractive for modern youth, than science.

It is high time to record everything what had been created by the previous generations of Vietnamists, to write the history of Russian Vietnamese studies. Anatoly Sokolov, a famous researcher of Vietnam’s history and culture, is the first to suggest this idea. Vladimir Mazyrin, Head

¹ Nikulina Elena V., Researcher, Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies, ICCA RAS. ORCID: 0000-0003-2640-6634. E-mail: elenavtn@mail.ru

of the Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies (CVAS) of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies (now the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, ICCA), has taken up the idea and presented it to the Institute Directorate. The idea has been approved and the monograph “Vietnamese Studies in Russia: History and Modernity” has obtained the status of the fundamental publishing project of ICCA. It is to be issued in 2024 as a volume of 600 or 700 pages. Head of the project is Professor Vladimir Mazyrin, the coordinator being Elena Nikulina, the research-worker of the Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies.

The structure of the book

The monograph will consist of four parts. The first part will tell of the sources of Vietnamese studies in Russia, their origins and the centers of their forming and development. At the end of the 19th century Russian travelers were the first to have written about French Indochina. Anatoly Sokolov has introduced this information into scientific circulation and it will be included into the book. Then the next stage of the 1920–1930s will be described: early studies of Vietnam in such educational and scientific institutions established in the Soviet Union as the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, the International Lenin School, the Scientific Institute of National and Colonial Issues, Moscow Narimanov Institute of Oriental Studies, the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Further, this will be followed with the survey of the Soviet/Russian schools of Vietnamese studies. Readers will go into the work of researchers and teachers of such scientific institutions as the Institute of Economics of the World Social System of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the RAS Institute of Oriental Studies, the RAS Institute for Far Eastern Studies, and a number of educational institutes where students could and can study Vietnam and learn the Vietnamese language, the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Moscow Lomonosov University, and Moscow State Institute of International Relations, RGGU and HSE University, Moscow State Linguistic University and the Military University of the Ministry of Defense of the RF, as well as the Faculty of Oriental Studies at SPbU and HSE University campus in St. Petersburg, FEFU Oriental Institute – School of Regional and International Studies, Kursk State University and Kazan Federal University.

The second part of the monograph will focus on the main directions of scientific research, such as history, historiography and archeology, domestic and foreign policies, economics and demography, culture and art, religion and folk beliefs, ethnography and philology, including the compilation of dictionaries.

A special attention will be paid to the collaboration of scientific institutions of the USSR/Russia and DRV/SRV in the sphere of humanities and natural sciences. The vivid examples of the collaboration are as follows: the compilation of the New Big Vietnamese-Russian Dictionary, linguistic expeditions to study unwritten languages of Vietnam’s ethnic minorities, and the activity of the unique Russian-Vietnamese Tropical Research and Technological Center.

The third part of the monograph will discuss other types of popularization and study of Vietnam in Russia, such as joint translations and publications of fiction, training Vietnamese personnel in civil and military universities of the USSR and Russia, Vietnamese radio broadcasting from Moscow, activities of the USSR/Russia Friendship Association.

The fourth part of the book (biograms of lead Soviet and Russian Vietnamists) will be of great value. Each biogram will be supplemented with a list of main works of a researcher or a teacher, emphasizing the contribution of the individual to studies of Vietnam in Russia.

The Conclusion will describe the contribution of Russian Vietnamese studies to the world science.

The work at the monograph

About forty research-workers and teachers contribute to the monograph. Some parts of the book have already been worked up in published articles, but still there are many “white spots”. Therefore, it is necessary to work in archives and libraries, to meet relations and colleagues of the researchers, who passed away.

Some appendices are being planned. Beside a traditional alphabet name index, literature and glossary, there will be another important appendix, namely, interviews and memoirs, so called “live history”. They may be not only printed ones, but also audio and video. These materials will be placed separately on the site of ICCA, and easy to be found on the link in the book. Also, on the site of the Institute it is being planned to put references to all the books and articles by all the researchers, whose biograms are published in the book, or to their digital texts.

The biographical part is to be finished at the end of 2022. The preparatory work at the other three parts of the book will be developed in 2023, while editing and preparation for printing will continue throughout 2024. The monograph will be illustrated with numerous photos from the archives of the researchers.

The work at the book has already begun; biograms and the mentioned parts are being written, and materials collected. There is a big, complicated and responsible work ahead. When the book is ready, it will definitely find its place not only in the libraries of Vietnamists, but also of everyone, who is interested in Vietnam and loves this wonderful country.

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**“THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE FOR BEGINNERS”. A NEW
TEXTBOOK: TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS**

E.R. Zubtsova¹

Abstract. The article presents a new textbook of the Vietnamese language for beginners, published in MSLU ("Vietnamese language for beginners: a textbook." In 3 parts). It meets the new requirements that the fundamental changes taking place in Vietnam, Russia and around the world put before teachers of the Vietnamese language. The article reveals the structure of the textbook and the basic principles of teaching on it.

Keywords: MSLU, Vietnamese language, teaching foreign languages, textbook, phonetics, grammar, Vietnamese vocabulary, succession.

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In September 2022 Moscow State Linguistic University (MSLU) issued “The Vietnamese Language for Beginners” (Fig. 1). The new textbook appeared several months after the first group of young Vietnamists had been graduated from the University.

MSLU, one of the leading linguistic universities in Russia, the successor of famous Maurice Thorez Moscow State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages has for ninety years been producing highly qualified translators and interpreters, specialists in Oriental languages among them (in 2020 the Chair of Oriental languages celebrated its 30th anniversary), addressed the Vietnamese language in 2017, on RF President Vladimir Putin’s recommendation. Then the first Vietnamese group was assembled for the faculty of translation and interpretation.

¹ Zubtsova Elena Robertovna, PhD (Philology), Assoc. Prof., Chair of Oriental languages MSLU of Oriental Languages, Moscow State Linguistic University. ORCID 0000-0002-7162-0069. E-mail: e-zub@mail.ru



Fig.1. Vietnamese language textbook for beginners. In 3 parts. *Author's photo*

One of the main problems the Vietnamese teachers in MSLU faced was the absence of current educational and methodical literature on the Vietnamese language and Vietnam in general, which could assist to produce specialists meeting the requirements of the labor market in the third decade of the 21st century. Methodologically excellent Vietnamese textbooks made by previous generations of Vietnamists thirty or forty years ago, do not correspond to the requirements of the current reality. In particular, the last decades have seen great changes in life (and so, in language) being connected with technological progress, perturbations in different life spheres, which could not help reflecting both the vocabulary and grammar of the target language.

Crucial changes in Vietnam, Russia and worldwide impose new requirements for Vietnamese teachers. In particular, it is high time to make a new, current, textbook for beginners instead of the excellent one by the team of authors of the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Moscow Lomonosov State University [Shiltova, Ngo Nhu Binh, Norova 1989], which during more as thirty years has been helping to produce Vietnamists. At the beginning of 2020, a team of authors (E.R. Zubtsova, Hoang Thi Hong Hoa, A.V. Nazimova) began working at a new textbook for beginners. MSLU Directorate decided to assemble a new Vietnamese group for the first course in 2020/21 academic year to test the manual at the lessons and at the same time to correct it taking into account the new problems. The practice has showed that future Vietnamists not only enjoyed the new textbook, but also helped the authors with pieces of good advice. Thus, a first-year student proposed to insert linguistic and geographical commentaries with pictures in the textbook, which help students to get acquainted with new realities of Vietnamese way of life and culture.

Working at the textbook the authors have carefully preserved all the methodological principles of their predecessors, the best ones for the training of many generations of Vietnamists, but they have filled it with a new content, which meets new requirements of today and possibly of tomorrow.

The main changes affected teaching phonetics. In the opinion of many teachers, its explanation in the previous textbooks was too complicated. Phonetics exposed mainly for linguists, with the transcription of all the sounds, was not clear for the majority of students, because usually (with rare exceptions) in Russian universities the Vietnamese language was and is taught as an applied discipline for the further use in various spheres of activity. Students who learned complicated phonetics of tonal Vietnamese, had from the very beginning to rely only upon their ears and abilities to imitate.

Proceeding from practical tasks of teaching I.E. Alyoshina, Associated Professor of MGIMO, developed her universal system of teaching phonetics on the ground of the principle of articulation of every sound, i.e., the teacher articulates sounds and at the same time explains them. The system was so efficient that most first-year students picked up relatively correct pronunciation, later improved during internships and work in Vietnam. Later I.E. Alyoshina transferred her methodology to her successors (E.R. Zubtsova, S.E. Glazunova), who, in their turn, produced several generations of Vietnamists. Many of them achieved great heights in their fields (like A.G. Kovtun, the former Ambassador of Russia in Vietnam).

“Alyoshina’s” system of teaching phonetics has been adopted in the new textbook of MSLU, meant for training of professional translators and interpreters. Phonetical exercises use the principle “from simple to complex”, i.e., sounds and tones are being practiced gradually. For example, first an even tone is being practiced on the sounds simple for the Europeans:

ma-ma-ma-ma, va-va-va-va etc.

Then more complex alveolar sounds l, t, n, đ and a falling tone are introduced:

la-la-la-là, na-na-na-nà etc. in ascending complexity.

Thus, during the first training month students learn the phonetic structure of the language and pick up the pronunciation practicing a lot of various phonetic exercises from an audio carrier read by a Vietnamese speaker. At the same time, they begin to learn vocabulary and grammar.

The new textbook consists of the Introductory lesson, Introductory phonetic course of 10 lessons, and Basic course of 17 lessons.

The Introductory lesson not only acquaints students with peculiarities of the Vietnamese language and writing, but also gives an idea of the country, as well as prepare students for the training materials both of the Introductory phonetic course and the Basic one.

The Introductory phonetic course explains and practices the articulation of all the sounds of the Vietnamese language, describes and practices tones, introduces Latinized writing *quoc ngu* and the rules of spelling. The articulation of sounds and tones is practiced via phonetic exercises, developed like “vocalization” built on the principle “from simple to complex”. At the same time, the material of vocabulary and grammar is introduced, which allows to improve phonetic skills both with separate words and with simple sentences and dialogues. The training tasks and exercises assist not only to improve the skills got at the lesson, but also to repeat the material covered. Thus, having learned the Introductory phonetic course students possess the initial language base, which makes for the success with the material of the Basic course.

The Basic course gives the systematic study of the normative grammar and basic vocabulary of the Vietnamese language, makes for skills development of written and oral speech. The structure of each lesson is as follows: first, a new grammar material is introduced (the base for all the tasks and exercises), it is followed with a text/texts and dialogues for a given topic with the introduction of the new vocabulary and at last, tasks and exercises which improve the new grammar mostly with the use of passed words and expressions. Beside the new vocabulary and grammar many lessons have linguistic and geographical commentaries and pictures, which permit students to get acquainted with culture and history of Vietnam. The last lessons consist of exercises which permit to repeat the passed grammar.

The Basic course of 17 lessons contains various topics necessary for both the communication during the first internship in Vietnam (MSLU students get it from the fourth semester), and the mastering of the further program. Beside everyday topics (“Introductions”, “Shopping and Service Sector”, “At the Doctor’s”) there are also topics on both Vietnam and Russia (“Holidays in Vietnam

and Russia”, “Physical and Economic Geography of Vietnam” (with dialogues on the geography of Russia) “Political and Economic Order of Vietnam”, “History of Vietnam”, “Russia is my Motherland”, “Moscow is the Capital of Russia”, “Hanoi is the Capital of Vietnam, etc.).

Beside phonetics, the new textbook gives the full scope of grammar, but not in separate fragments as was usually done in previous textbooks for beginners (for example, *càng ngày càng* was given in one lesson, *càng...càng...* - in another, and *lại càng* was not explained at all). A grammar theme is improved with exercises in its entirety, even if the texts and dialogues have but its fragments.

Every text and dialogue are provided with the list of new words and phrases. Vocabularies (words and phrases in bold) are mostly meant for active learning; the rest ones serve either for understanding (in passive) or as a kind of reference material. The general volume of the introduced vocabulary is about 2000 words and phrases. On having completed the material of the textbook, students acquire knowledge and skills to converse freely and translate texts both on everyday topics and some socio-political and geographical ones. Further, it will facilitate learning the material of textbooks for senior courses.

At the end of every lesson there are communicative exercises (to answer questions to the text or dialogues, to use the learnt material in dialogues of their own, to get ready for a conversation on a given topic, etc.). Texts and dialogues, exercises to improve the use of vocabulary and grammar, as well as the audio course supplemented to the textbook assist the teacher to model different communicative situations, making for the development of oral speech.

Designing the lessons of the Basic course the authors made almost no changes into the manual of the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Moscow Lomonosov State University, but they filled it with a new content proper for the realities of the third decade of the 21st century. Thus, the topic “At the Post-Office” has been substituted for “Means of Communication” including the text and dialogues with necessary situational vocabulary of current means of communication (Internet, social networks, messengers, e-mail, etc.).

The texts and dialogues of the basic course have been designed by Hoang Thi Hong Hoa, a native speaker, graduate of the School of international journalism of MGIMO, PhD (History), experienced journalist and translator. The exercises of the introductory phonetic course have been compiled by A.V. Nazimova, then still a talented fourth-year student, now a graduate of MSLU.

The new textbook for beginners is designed for the first, second and early third semesters of the five-year program of the MSLU specialty. The study of its themes creates the lexico-grammatical base for further learning by using the manual for advanced [Glebova, Sandakova, Tyumeneva 2014] during the third, fourth and fifth semesters. At the end of the third course and the early fourth course (the sixth and seventh semesters) “The General Translation” [Alyoshina, Kruglikov 1998] is used as the basic textbook. The training is finished with the textbook for senior courses [Tyumeneva, Glazunova 2014]. Beside basic textbooks students of senior courses use articles and analytical materials from Vietnamese media on different aspects of translation, as well as records of Vietnamese TV and radio broadcasting.

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DISSERTATION DEFENSE

The defense of the dissertation for obtaining the scientific degree of candidate of economics by Chu Thi Que [Saint Petersburg Mining University] with the theme “Formation and Assessment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Coal Industry Development Scenarios”

The defense of the theses on specialty 08.00.05 – Economy and management of national economy (economy, organization and management of enterprises, branches, complexes – industry) was held on 21.09.2022 at the Dissertation Council session GU 212.224.05 based on Saint Petersburg Mining University.

The author suggests a flexible four-scenario approach to the development of national coal industry of SRV. Its use is grounded on the factors that do not give in to state regulation, such as the exhaustion of easily accessible supplies, increasing volume of coal imports when the situation in the market is uncertain, Vietnam’s energy dependence on coal resources, the necessity to fulfil obligations to meet the sustainable development goal (SDG), complex mining and geological conditions. The author mentions that underdeveloped structure of domestic alternative energy does not allow to fully replace traditional coal by other energy sources in middle- and long-term perspectives. The shortage of own coal resources causes the necessity to compensate it with the import of coal. Therefore, fuel and energy complex of the country becomes dependent on the price environment in external markets and the main consumers behavior. Scenario 1 provides for an increase in coal consumption in the energy sector in accordance with the Energy Master Plan 2021; scenario 2 takes into account the slower growth of the Vietnamese economy (due to the consequences of COVID-2019) and the unpredictability of the situation in the energy markets caused by the difficult political environment; scenario 3 provides for a reduction in the growth rate of coal consumption due to an accelerated transition to alternative energy sources; scenario 4 takes into account the possibility of reducing coal consumption in the energy sector due to lower growth rates of electricity production with an accelerated transition to alternative sources.

The introduction of the given, more flexible approach, unlike current ones, will allow a more efficient orientation in the given situation, supporting actual high rates of SRV industrial growth, the important role of the state in economy, the course to use own natural resources. In fact, the sphere of its use will be national corporations “Vinacomin” and “Dongbak”, their share in the SRV entire mining amounts to nearly 98 %.

Supervisor: Nevskaya Marina Anatol’evna, PhD (Economics), Associate Professor of the Chair of Economics, Organization and Management of the Faculty of Economics, St. Petersburg Mining University.

Leading organization: The National University of Science and Technology MISiS, Moscow.

Opponents:

Kaplan Alexey Vladimirovich, DSc (Economics), Leading Researcher, Research Institute for the Efficiency and Safety of Mining Production;

Plotnikov Vladimir Alexandrovich, DSc (Economics), Professor of the Chair of General Economic Theory and History of Economic Thought, Saint Petersburg State University of Economics Department

Main publications

1. Reyshakhrit, E.I., Nevskaya, M.A., Que, C.T. (2021) Analiz sostoyaniya, perspektiv i problem ugol'noy otrasli V'etnama [The Analysis of Condition, Perspectives and Problems of Vietnam's Coal Industry]. *Vestnik evraziyskoy nauki*, 13 (1): 34.

2. Nevskaya, M.A., Thi, Q.C. (2021) Predposylki primeneniya stsenarnogo podkhoda k otraslevomu planirovaniyu (na primere ugol'noy otrasli V'etnama) [Prerequisites of the Scenario Approach Use to Sectoral Planning (the case of Vietnam's coal industry)]. *Ekonomika i predprinimatel'stvo*, 12 (137): 136–141.

3. Nevskaya, M.A., Thi, Q.C., Vu, T.D. (2022) Formirovanie i otsenka stsenariiev razvitiya ugol'noy otrasli V'etnama [The Formation and Assessment of the Scenarios of Vietnam's Coal Industry Development]. *Ekonomika i predprinimatel'stvo*, 3 (140): 557–563.

The publication in the edition of Scopus, belonging to the international database and citation systems:

4. Nevskaya, M., Marinina. O., Que, C.T. (2021) Coal Mines in Vietnam: Geological Conditions and their Influence on Production Sustainability Indicators. *Sustainability*, 13 (21): 15.

BOOKSHELF

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MILITARY HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL VIETNAM AS A SUBJECT OF SPECIAL RESEARCH

A.L. Fedorin¹



Vetyukov A.V. *Mech, sokryty v glubine vod (voennaya traditsiya srednevekovogo Vietnama)* [The Sword Hidden in the Depth of Waters: The Military Tradition of Medieval Vietnam]. SPb.: Evrazija, 2018. 320 P. ISBN 978-5-8071-0386-4.

Abstract. The article is a review of the book V.A. Vetyukov. “The Sword Hidden in the Depth of Waters: The Military Tradition of Medieval Vietnam”. The author has summarized the results of his long-term research-work on the traditional Vietnamese army in the Later Le period (1428–1787). The base of the research are Vietnamese sources; first of all, “Records of military establishments” “A classified description of the establishments of past dynasties” (the part “A classified description of the establishments of past dynasties” by Phan Huy Chu (1782–1840); research literature and the author’s field research during his stay in Vietnam and the neighboring countries. In its comprehensive coverage and detailed description, the book is superior to all the works that had been published on the topic not only in Russian and Western, but also in Vietnamese historiography (first of all, the last two parts of the book). At the same time, some conclusions deserve discussions, in particular those on the army structure and its history. In any case, the book is very useful and can serve the base for further research-work, educational literature and lecture series.

Keywords: military history, medieval Vietnam, army structure, folk martial arts, the Later Le dynasty.

¹ Fedorin Andrey L., DSc (History), Researcher, Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies, Institute of China and Contemporary Asia RAS. ORCID: 0000-0003-0336-0055. E-mail: ffeedd@list.ru

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The book by Vladimir Alexandrovich Vetyukov is the result of his long-term hard work which he began when still a student. Every moment its reader feels clearly that the work is not a mere attempt to throw light on an understudied issue with great possibilities of presentation of the new matter, but also the result of the author's own interest and personal dedication, being a significant part of his life. Being a specialist in the same period of Vietnam's history as V.A. Vetyukov (the Later Le Dynasty), I have never seen the works (also, by Vietnamese authors) where the addressed issues were considered so thoroughly and deeply. First of all, it concerns the fourth and fifth parts of the book, which are dedicated to weapons, tactics and strategy, branches of service and their interaction, the description of some battles (to confirm the conclusions), martial arts of Vietnam. In fact, nearly all the data are either new or understudied, but they are described quite systematically and in detail.

The importance of the work is its ability to give rise to many additional questions, the desire to discuss, to make some theses clearer or to question them. I will try to do this (as far as the first three parts are concerned).

The author mainly used one part of the Vietnamese historical encyclopedia which was written by Pham Huy Chu in the 19th century. The references show that he rarely addresses texts of chronicles. At the same time, the descriptions of military actions and the situation in the army belong to the most favorite subjects of medieval historiographers, and they could give a lot of information either to supplement or sometimes to refute the author's opinion. But he follows Phan Huy Chu, who bases nearly solely on regulatory documents of that time and believes that the matters should have stood in strict accordance with the governors' orders.

One of the author's key theses is as follows: Vietnam's governors always desired to create the united national army, but in difficult times some military leaders used to part it into detachments thus significantly decreasing its defense potential. I cannot agree with him. In my opinion, on the contrary, through the most part of the country's history the Vietnamese army essentially consisted of modest professional armed forces of local military leaders (Phan Huy Chu writes too little about them), which were, in fact, enforced and supplemented with the militia of ordinary community members (this Vietnamese historian writes a lot about them). There was Duong Dinh Nghe (931) with his numerous "adopted children" (*con nuôi*), twelve *sứ quân* (965–967), who mostly retained their armies under the Dinh dynasty (968–980), Le Dai Hanh (980–1005), who with this purpose distributed his lands between his numerous sons, the Tran dynasty and so called "residents of Quoc Oai" or «residents of Khoai Chau» under the Later Li dynasty (1009–1225). The leaders of such detachments possessed large territories and could maintain a private army with their support. Mostly, they were not slaves, after war they returned to agriculture, as the author writes (p. 33). They were true professionals free of taxes and duties, who constantly engaged in military training, made and improved weapons, cared for elephants and warhorses. A special case of such army units was the metropolitan troops (Guards) under the country's governors. Usually, the troops were recruited from the ruler's locals (in the place of origin of the dynasty or the ruling house) and had every advantage and worthy content. These were the frameworks for training future junior and senior commanders. They were a significant military

force, being well coordinated and united. They had something to lose; therefore, they could not leave the battlefield and fought to the end. In terms of quantity, they were not many, but sufficient enough to fulfil all the usual tasks of the armed forces (fight against the rebels, criminals, pirates, to repulse raids of the neighbors, Cham among them, and to restrain mountaineers). In cases of huge military actions (resistance to the Chinese in the north, campaigns to the south, first against Cham, then the Nguyen) those army units were replenished by community members liable for call-up. They were divided into unequal groups and went over as subordinates to the same professional detachments, where they performed either an auxiliary role or were a mere cannon-fodder during assaults of enemies' fortifications and positions.

The system of private military units got the greatest development under the Tran dynasty (1226–1400), when the significant part of the Red (Hong) River Delta was divided into the domains of military leaders, who were the relations of the dynasty. In the end, due to high combat readiness of the army Dai Viet managed to overcome the Mongol invasion and to stop the victorious march of the Yuan army to the south. Numerous participants of those battles (members of those units) are called slaves in the documents, but they were real wise military leaders who are still revered in Vietnam. Some streets in Hanoi bear their names.

After the revolt of 1400 guided by Le Quy Ly, when military leaders-relations had been mostly killed the country's army consisted of separate regional units of professionals ceased to exist. The new governor of the country decided to establish quite a new army based on overall recruitment of a part of community members according to all the Neo-Confucian principles. Such an army had been created, but its combat readiness could not be compared with the combat readiness of the prior army. The events of 1407 showed that during six months the country had been conquered by the troops of the Ming dynasty and became a Chinese province.

Le Loi, the founder of the Later Le dynasty, took the sad experience of his predecessor into consideration, and his troops which in the end, in 1427, forced the Ming to leave Vietnam, were formed on the base of separate regional units, like under the Tran dynasty. Under him there appeared the army regionalism within the country: since then, military professionals at all the levels were almost exclusively natives of the southern provinces of Thanh Hoa and Nghe An. This situation was quite natural. Chinese fortresses were conquered by soldiers from the south, but there was a significant number of soldiers from the north among their defenders. During twenty years the latter had adapted to the Chinese governance and did not want to change anything in their life. Indeed, a relatively small number of the Chinese left Dai Viet after the truce, to a great surprise of Xuanzong (1425–1436), a Ming emperor. This mutual mistrust of the southerners and northerners lasted for many years. In the end, military professionals could be only southerners, but northerners could be recruited as a militia in large campaigns. In fact, there were no military leaders of middle and high level among them. Besides, this situation was also justified from the economic point of view. The south was poor of cultivated lands and abundant of population. In the conditions of the after-war depopulation the South was more advantageous to use for recruiting, leaving the role of the chief supplier of taxes and duties to the Red River Delta. In compensation the population of Thanh Hoa and Nghe An were exempt from poll-tax and from a significant part of ground-rent (one *mau* of land in the south was thrice as much as one *mau* of land in the north, but the rent was equal). Here, without much damage to state economy it was allowed to create landlords' estates, the practical base for future new military units.

Under the next emperors of the Later Le the situation was the same up to the rule of Le Thanh Tong (1460–1497). The witness of the unpunished murders of his brothers Le Nhan Tong and Le Nghi Dan, having been designed and realized by those all-powerful military leaders, he once again tried (though not so radically as Le Quy Ly) to create the army of a new type. It is noteworthy that all his military successes (the utter defeat of Champa in the south and the conquest of its territory, the mighty campaigns to the west, when the troops of Dai Viet reached Burma frontier), were achieved when the military reforms had not been completed yet, so, the combat readiness of his new army had not been tested. But soon after the death of that emperor things returned to the usual.

Up to the first quarter of the 18th century, when the power in Dai Viet passed into the hands of *chua* Trinh Cuong, the situation was the same, but his reforms launched in 1722 destructed everything. According to his decree, all the private military units were liquidated. Instead, a standing army was created; it consisted of recruits from all the provinces (not only from the southern ones); unfortunate communities were to feed them having allocated plots for the purpose. Besides, for the first time the centralized system of personnel training was created and the exams for military ranks were introduced. All the pretenders who answered requirements (both from the south and from the north) could take the examinations. That reform was fatal for the armed forces of that time, as showed lasting civil wars having been broken in 1739. Downsized Guards, as usual consisted of southerners, having lost a number of its advantages showed its weakness in real battles, while a significant number of recruited soldiers and officers from natives of the delta went over to the rebels. The power of *chua* from the Trinh dynasty was under mortal threat and nearly fell. It managed to maintain due to incredible efforts, having created the army of quite a new type, again with the support of the loyal regional elites, but not only southern, but also northern ones. That army, despite the author's opinion (p. 72), was extremely strong. It managed not only to suppress all numerous rebellions within its territories, but also to realize the age-old dream of the North to conquer the main domains of the Nguyen of South Vietnam and even to rout the Tay Son troops, who were forced to recognize their submission to the Later Le dynasty. The efficiency of the administrative structure created by the Trinh with its support on regional elites of the entire country who got unprecedented authority in the field, required a strong central power, able to construct a relevant system of containment and counterbalance. In 1782, when after the death of *chua* Trinh Sam that power disappeared, the country, in fact, broke up into separate hostile domains and was an easy pray for the southern Tay Son. This is a short description of military history of medieval Vietnam, as I see its reflection in chronicles. However, in general, this description is not contrary to the conceptions of the author, but only amplifies and embellish his book.

Also, the author's conclusions about fortifications give rise to questions. Investigated medieval texts show that the Vietnamese were not very competent about them. They could neither build really inaccessible fortifications, nor defend them, nor take fortresses of enemies by assault. Up to the mid-17th century there was no Vietnamese fortress known (capital Thang Long among them), which could endure the siege for more than a day. Also, it concerns fortresses in mountains on the Chinese frontier, where it could have been possible to impede a few passages for Chinese troops for a time, but it never occurred. Fortress Da Bang, which under Le Quy Ly was fondly built by the entire country as the defense center against the Ming inevitable invasion, was taken in the first assault. They even did not attempt to defend the fortresses of the eastern (Thang Long) and western capitals of that time. The earliest noteworthy fortifications, which played a significant role during numerous wars, appeared in Vietnam as early as in the 17th century. This is the famous Dong Hoi wall, an

insurmountable obstacle for the troops of *chua* Trinh in the course of their campaigns against the Nguyen of South Vietnam, according to some data was built with the use of designs offered by western advisers. The first really inaccessible fortresses (Quy Nhon, which emperor Gia Long could conquer when he had routed the Tay Son in the north, or Gia Dinh (Saigon), where the rebel Le Van Khoi held the line for a long time) had been constructed according to the designs by French specialists.

The same can be said about the skill to conquer fortresses of the foreign enemy, first of all Chinese ones. Great Vietnamese military leader Ly Thuong Kiet who lived in the period of the Later Ly dynasty, thought over, in details, his campaign to South China, but bumped into a quite insignificant fortress Yongzhou, which he assaulted for more than forty days. In the end the fortress had been conquered, but all the plans were upset, and the Vietnamese troops had to return. For Le Loi, the founder of the Later Le dynasty, the fortresses built in Vietnam by occupational troops of the Ming dynasty were a real headache. Despite numerical superiority of the Vietnamese troops and their lasting standing at the walls, they never took the capital Thang Long. Even at the future emperor's native land, the Thanh Hoa province, the chief fortress was never conquered. Its defenders, like those of most other Chinese fortifications, left it voluntarily after the truce at the end of 1427. The same with the fortress in Nghe An, which was besieged for a long time and was left by the defenders having got the order from the capital. Numerous fortresses of the Ming which had already been controlled did not fall but were ceded due to the "heartfelt" correspondence of Nguyen Trai with their defenders.

Also, I would like to rehabilitate the court Guards, so called "arrogant soldiers" who were fallen upon by Phan Huy Chu followed by the author of the book; both accused them of robbery, oppression of civilians, and cowardice in the battlefield (p. 115). The Guards system based on recruiting of hereditary servicemen even for ordinary posts, from the southern provinces of Thanh Hoa and Nghe An (they guarded *chua* and the emperor) was introduced by emperor Le Thai To, who mistrusted the subjugated elites of North Vietnam and feared them. Throughout its existence the Guard coped with its task remaining a strong and reliable support of the throne. In fact, Guards did not communicate with the capital's residents; they even spoke different languages (up to now the dialect of Thanh Hoa province greatly differs from the capital's mode of speech) and were very arrogant to them. Their conditions were especially advantageous: good financial support, tax-free lands for their families at home, hereditary posts, great perspective for career development; they were envied not only by local common people, but also by ordinary soldiers, because the Guard rarely took part in military actions, only in the presence of emperor or *chua*. They were hated because their functions were those of gendarmes, domestic and foreign intelligence and counter espionage with their illegal arrests, tortures etc. The Guards became dangerous to the throne, if the power encroached on their advantages, made attempt to reduce either their salaries or their number, or the place at the court, or to force them to fight. There were three great riots.

I do not think that the author's attempt to use his own transcription (not transliteration, as he writes on p. 29) of Vietnamese names, terms and toponyms was successful. The very statement "I heard it when staying in Vietnam" is not convincing, if it does not belong to a professional philologist-phonetician. But the use of the system based first of all on transliterations, as it is usual for other works, allows any Vietnamist to understand the syllable without the original text and differ between «ch» and «tr», «s» and «x», «d» and «gi» etc. In any case, if you have chosen any of such systems, you must strictly adhere to it. There are no reasonable explanations for the separate writing of toponyms. At any rate, I have seen such phenomenon for the first time.

The same may be said about the suggestion to call the governors of Dai Viet “kings” relying on the system which existed in the period of the Holy Roman Empire (p. 27). The Far-Eastern Empire unlike the Roman one is first of all a form of government, state ideology, which the Vietnamese copied in details from China. But the author suggests to borrow the Chinese names of Dai Viet governors. Indeed, the term «Annan guowang», or Vietnamese «An Nam quốc vương» may be considered an approximate analogue of a European king. But that “Chinese title” emerged in 1174 and not all the Vietnamese emperors bore it. Thus, for the Yuan only Tran Thai Tong, the first emperor of the Tran dynasty, was Annan guowang. The rest representatives of the dynasty did not get such a title, because the traitor Tran Ich Tac was the first who had got it, then followed by his successors. The Mac emperors (the author obstinately calls them “usurpers”, though this definition was dropped in Vietnamese historiography long ago) got the hereditary office of governor-*dutunshi* (second rank, second class) from the Chinese. They considered Dai Viet one of the provinces of the Celestial Empire and called it Annam. Having returned to Than Long in 1593, the Later Le emperors could get the same office (not a higher one) from the Ming So, in my opinion, it would be better to award the governors of Dai Viet the title used by themselves and known to their subjects, but not that accepted by their geographical neighbors. I see no logic in the statement that emperor Quang Trung “got the king’s title” (p. 238), because that title was *hoang de*.

Several errors in the text are distressing. They do not impact its content and sense, but can lead to groundless doubts in the competence or accuracy.

Hry is not “ten” (p. 23), but “five”, as the character (伍) shows. In the text below the term’s interpretation is correct.

Van Don is not “coastline” (p. 30), but an island in the sea separated from the land with a narrow strait.

Tran Quoc Tuan (Hung Dao Dai Vuong or Tran Hung Dao) was hardly ever born in 1223 (p. 37) or in 1226 (p. 274), because his father Tran Lieu, the elder brother of emperor Tran Thai Tong, was born in 1211.

Military leader Le Loi could not get the temple name of Le Thai To (p. 53), because every ruler’s temple name is a posthumous one.

In 1533 the representatives of the Le dynasty (or rather the Trinh and Nguyen dynasties, the emperor being the only representative of the Le dynasty) found their shelter not in Thanh Hoa province (p. 59), but in one of the provinces (now Xam Neua) of Laos. They could settle in Thanh Hoa as early as in 1539.

In 1593 it was emperor Le The Tong, who entered the capital, not “a prince from the Le dynasty” (p. 59).

Nguyen Quoc Trinh was killed in 1674, not in 1673 (p. 64), and he had never been a judge. At that time, he was Minister of Public Works and Chancellor Pham Cong Tru’s right-hand man.

Che Bong Nga was the ruler of the Champa, not a prince (p. 84).

For example, it is hardly justified to consider Ngo Si Lien the author of “Complete Annals of Đại Việt” (p. 302). He wrote but one chapter (the 10th chapter of Complete Annals). The chronicle in its canonical version was brought to 1675, while the mentioned historiographer died in the 15th century.

Some references could not be found in the Bibliography: [Познер 1994], p. 265; [Trần Trọng Kim 2000], p. 237, 262; [Our military traditions, 1979], p. 176, 249, 253, 259, 260; [Bình thư yếu lược... 1977], p. 174; [Столтон 1801], p. 335; [Phan Huy Le...], p. 83.

However, these are minor comments. They cannot affect the final high assessment of the book. I can only wish the author to continue his research-work in this most interesting sphere. At the same time in his work, he should pay more attention to chronicles, the main sources containing plenty of facts (not mentioned, so far) for military issues, such as poisoned arrows, oiled (with the otter grease) war kites set on fire and flied towards the hostile fortifications, artillery duels between the enemies in 17th century and so on. We are looking forward to new published works.

SCHOLAR'S JUBILEE

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A GUARDIAN OF HISTORY Andrey Lvovich Fedorin's 70th Birthday



On August 5, 2022, Andrey Lvovich Fedorin, a researcher of the Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies of the RAS Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, turned 70 years old.

There are three periods in A.L. Fedorin's life: public service, teaching, and academic work, i.e., studying history of Vietnam he is passionately devoted to. In 1974 Andrey Lvovich graduated from the Institute of Asian and African Countries at Moscow Lomonosov State University and left for Vietnam to get acquainted with the country after five years of learning its language, history and culture. Fedorin's long-term trips to Vietnam have taken about fifteen years in total. He was the third secretary of the USSR Embassy, a consul of the USSR/Russia Consulate-General in Ho Chi Minh City, the manager of "The Russian Credit" Bank's representative office.

The second period of A.L. Fedorin's life began in 1995: he was the rector of the Institute of Practical Oriental Studies (IPOS) established in 1993, the only non-state university for Oriental studies. The necessity of its establishment was dictated by the demands of the time: transformations

in Russia, intensification of Russia's contacts with Oriental countries, the rapid growth of joint ventures which showed an acute shortage of specialists in Oriental studies. The teaching level at the IPOS was very high. The rector recruited teachers from the Institute of Asian and African Countries, who taught Oriental languages to the students of the new institute, using the university curriculum. The IPOS conducted an active scientific work and publishing. For twenty years the IPOS has produced a large group of specialists in Oriental languages. Now many of them work successfully in the spheres of science, expert examination and diplomacy. Andrey Lvovich taught Vietnam's ancient and medieval history, his favorite subject, in the IPOS, RGGU and the Institute of Asian and African Countries. When the IPOS had been closed as an independent institution and became the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Moscow International Academy, A.L. Fedorin was the Dean of the Faculty in 2015 – 2019.

Since 2020 Andrey L'vovich has been a researcher at the RAS Institute for Far Eastern Studies, but he does academic research all his life. D.V. Deopik, an outstanding teacher and historian, "infected" Andrey Fedorin, then a first-year student of the Institute of Asian and African Countries (the former Institute of Oriental Languages), with history. In Vietnam Andrey Lvovich worked in archives for months. He created a large library including numerous photocopies of ancient and medieval manuscripts and books. In 1993 he defended his dissertation for the Candidate of Sciences degree (History) with the theme «The Vietnamese Epigraphy as a Historical Source for the Late Middle Ages and the Modern Period». In 2010 he defended the dissertation for the Doctor of Sciences degree (History) with the theme "The History of Creation and Existence of "Dai Viet su ky toan thu" ("The Complete Annals of Dai Viet"), the Main Source for Ancient and Medieval History of Vietnam".

The idea to translate "Dai Viet su ky toan thu" which covers the period from the era of the Hungs to the 17th cent. A.D. from Han Viet into Russian emerged in the Center for Vietnam Studies of the Institute of Asian and African Countries in the late 90s. A team of talented researchers, D.V. Deopik's pupils, took the job. The first volume of the eight-volume edition was issued in the prestigious series "Written Monuments of the East" in 2002, the last one has appeared in 2022. From the fourth volume the preparatory work (the translation from Han Viet, commentaries etc. have been done exclusively by A.L. Fedorin). During the latest ten years, being the project leader and executor, he has received eight grants for research and publishing from RHSF and RFBR.

It is hard to imagine the scope of the work. "Beside the translation of the text, there are numerous appendices in every volume", A.L. Fedorin says, "I tried and found everything in Chinese literature on Vietnam's history of the period. The commentaries take the lion's share of the edition. Thus, in the eighth volume they take 42 of 45 copyright sheets. There are commentaries to every term, geographical name, and general commentaries to the text. I did my best to make them as detailed and authentic as possible. I enjoyed the work, because I am fond of it." Love for his profession is the secret of forces and inspiration that let A.L. Fedorin raise the project block.

The Russian translation of "Dai Viet su ky toan thu" with appendices and commentaries is the first translation of the Vietnamese chronicle into the foreign language. This fundamental work is of an invaluable importance both for Russian and world Vietnam studies and for training Vietnam specialists. While working at the translation and commentaries of "The Complete Annals of Dai Viet", A.L. Fedorin have published a number of the most interesting articles on different aspects of the life in medieval Vietnam. Now he is the leading specialist in this period of Vietnam's history.

Now A.L. Fedorin is busy with the translation of the continuation of "Dai Viet su ky toan thu" covering the period from 1675 to the end of the 18th century. This chronicle was destroyed by the

ruling Nguyen House; there are but fragments left. The scholar has collected them and is reconstructing the lost fragments. This is a much more complicated task, but also a much more interesting one.

The Editorial Board of “The Russian Journal of Vietnamese Studies” wishes many happy returns of the day and new successful discoveries of the mysteries of Vietnam’s history to the outstanding scholar and teacher!

TRIBUTE TO THE SCIENTIST

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A FIGHTER, A TRIBUNE, A SCHOLAR **In memory of Grigori Mikhailovich Lokshin**



On September 7, 2022, Grigori Mikhailovich Lokshin, a leading researcher of the Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies of the RAS Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, passed away after a long and serious illness.

Grigori Mikhailivich belonged to a glorious cohort of the first Soviet Vietnamists. In 1961 he graduated from MGIMO, was a post-graduate of that Institute, and in 1964 defended the dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences with the theme: “The National Liberation Movement in South Vietnam in 1954-1964”. In 1961, at the 22d Congress of the CPSU he was a member of the first Vietnamese interpretation team.

Grigori Mikhailovich contributed greatly to “public diplomacy”. In 1965-1973 as the Executive Secretary of the Soviet Committee of the Support of Vietnam from the very beginning of the American intervention in Vietnam he organized the mass movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese people in the USSR and cooperated with numerous social movements in different countries which joined for the cessation of the war in Vietnam. He passionately put all his forces, his organizational skills, his talent of the polemicist and orator in that work. In many respects due to Lokshin “solidarity ships” departed to Vietnam with thousands of tons of cargos necessary for

fighting Vietnam and bought for the money collected throughout the Soviet Union. He rendered great services in having found a common language with foreign social organizations which opposed the war in Vietnam. This resulted in Stockholm Conferences on Vietnam held from 1967 to 1975 and the establishment of the International Commission for the Inquiry of the US War Crimes in Indochina. G.M. Lokshin was one of inspirers of the international protest campaign against the US war in Vietnam, one of the crucial moral and political factors for the victory of patriotic forces in South Vietnam.

In 1973—1993 Grigori Mikhailovich continued working for peace as the Executive Secretary of the Soviet Peace Committee. In 1994 he was a Secretary of the Executive Committee of the International Association of Peace Foundations, and in 1998 he was the Secretary-General of the International Peace Institute in Vienna. G.M. Lokshin rendered great services in the prohibition the testing of nuclear weapons. From 2007 he continued his social work as the Vice-Chairman of the Russia-Vietnam Friendship Association.

Grigori Mikhailovich did science all his life. In 1963 he began working at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In 1968 he worked at the Institute of World Economy and International Relationships of the USSR Academy of Sciences. G.M. Lokshin's active social position made for the success in his researches. He is one of the authors of such books as "History of Vietnam in Modern Times", (1965), "The Public and the Problems of War and Peace" (1978), "20th Century: Full-Face and Profile" (2001). In 2007 G.M. Lokshin became a leading researcher of the Center for Vietnam and ASEAN Studies of the RAS Institute of Far Eastern Studies. He was the author of numerous scientific and journalistic articles on the problems of the national liberation movement in South Vietnam, on the policy of the US and the former USSR in SEA, one of the leading specialists on the issues of the South China Sea and ASEAN not only in Russia, but also worldwide. G.M. Lokshin was the initiator and one of the authors of such collective works as "ASEAN at the Beginning of the 20th Century: Relevant Problems and Perspectives" (2010) and "ASEAN in the Current World" (2019). His book "The South China Sea: a Difficult Search for Accord" (2013) created a great resonance. Also, he participated in the work at the unique multivolume edition "The Complete Academic History of Vietnam" (2014), and the work "Modern Vietnam: A Guide" (2015). G.M. Lokshin was an indispensable participant of different Oriental forums, where his papers always attracted attention with their originality, acute judgements and brilliant speech.

G.M. Lokshin rendered great services for Russia and Vietnam; his contribution to the development of "public diplomacy" and Oriental science was highly appreciated: he was a Cavalier of the Order of Friendship of Peoples and the Order of the Badge of Honor; also, of two Vietnamese Friendship Orders and several medals.

Grigori Mikhailovich Lokshin will live in the memory of his friends, colleagues and all those who knew him, as a patriot, an uncompromising fighter for justice, a tribune, a scholar with enormous horizons, a loyal friend and a good man.

Editorial Board

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Contacts:

Address: Moscow 117997, Nakhimovsky pr-t, 32. ICCA RAS

E-mail: vietnamjournal@yandex.ru

Tel.: (499) 124 08 33

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