

BOOKS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES LIBRARY REVIEW

NGUYỄN VĂN NAM, TRẦN THỌ ĐẠT (chief authors). **Economic growth rate and quality in Vietnam**. H.: National Economy, 2006, 287 pages, Vb 44954.

The economy of Vietnam has seen continuous, rapid growth in the last fifteen years. People's material and moral lives have been improved considerably. The economy of Vietnam has gradually integrated with economies in the region and around the world.

From 2006-2010, Vietnam's goals of shrinking the development gap with countries in the region and world will maintain the demand for increasing the growth rate and quality of the economy. The book "Economic Growth Rate and Quality in Vietnam" studies the issues of theory related to the growth rate and quality of the economy systematically, based on plentiful materials that the authors use to analyze and assess the economic growth rate and quality of Vietnam in the last few years. They put forward several scientific policies and solutions to continue increasing the growth rate and enhancing the quality of growth in the Vietnamese economy in the following years.

The book includes four chapters.

Chapter 1: Basis of theory and reality about the economic growth rate and quality.

Chapter 2: The real situation of growth and Vietnam's economic growth quality in the 1991-2005 period

Chapter 3: Elements that have influenced Vietnam's economic growth in the past few years.

Chapter 4: Solutions to increase Vietnam's economic growth rate and quality in the following years.

KHÁNH CHI

CHƯƠNG THẦU. **Contributing to Studies of Confucianism, and Vietnamese Confucian Disciples and Intellectuals before 1945**. H.: Culture-Information and Culture Institute, 2007, 352 pages, Vb 45186

Confucianism was introduced to Vietnam and adopted as the orthodox ideology of feudalism. It existed until the mid-20th century, and the training of many generations of Confucian disciples made an important contribution to Vietnamese culture. In order to help readers and researchers find general information on Vietnamese Confucianism and the matters of Vietnamese Confucian disciples the author has titled the book "Contributing to Studies of Confucianism, and Vietnamese Confucian Disciples and Intellectuals before 1945."

In addition to quotations, appendices and a version of "Việt Nam nho học sử

khái thuật” in Chinese, the main content of the book focuses on two parts.

Part I: *Summary of the History of Vietnamese Confucianism*. The author discusses the main features of the processes of importing, disseminating, and developing Vietnamese Confucianism as well as its decline, and gives a look at Vietnamese Confucianism from a historical tradition.

Part II: *Vietnamese Confucian Disciples and Intellectuals in the Modern Time*. The author analyses a series of matters including the idea of Vietnamese disciples of Confucianism in the modern time, the struggle between conservative and modern ideas in the late 19th century, the change of ideas in the nationalist movement in the early 20th century, the influence of “Tân thư” on a number of patriotic disciples of Confucianism in the early 20th century, and Vietnamese intellectuals in the transitional period of the early 20th century and Vietnamese intellectuals before the August 1945 Revolution.

PHẠM VÂN

NGÔ THỊ PHƯỢNG. **The Contingent of Vietnamese Intellectuals in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities in the Renovation Career**. H.: National Politics, 2007, 267 pages, Vb 45262.

In the current renovation of the country, the contingent of Vietnamese intellectuals in the social sciences and humanities have made great

achievements in developing social sciences and humanities while providing the Party with scientific grounds to make policies and guidelines. They trained and cultivated people and built up Vietnamese culture and a national identity, proposing and implementing strategies of national defense, security, and more. However, this contingent also has limitations. The book “Vietnamese Intellectuals in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities during Renovation,” will help readers understand Vietnamese social sciences and humanities with assessments about their roles and contributions to the country’s development.

The book includes three main chapters.

Chapter I concentrates on defining the concept of social sciences and humanities intellectuals, analyzing the characteristics and development trends of Vietnamese social sciences and humanities intellectuals, and determining the problems raised by Vietnamese intellectuals under the influence of the country’s recent renovations.

In Chapter II, the author analyzes and defines the role of Vietnamese social scientists and humanities intellectuals during the renovation. On the basis of evaluating the achievements and limitations of Vietnamese social scientists and humanities intellectuals when they take on their roles, the author shows the causes and contradictions raised by this in the past few years.

In Chapter III, the author puts forward her points of view and possible solutions to continue bringing the role of these intellectuals to meet the demand of the current innovation and renovation period.

KHÁNH CHI

NGUYỄN HỒNG DƯƠNG (chief editor). **A number of fundamental problems with religion and the beliefs of the Cham people in Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận provinces today.** H.: Social Sciences, 2007, 267 pages, Vb 45329.

During the process of development, the Cham ethnic group has acquired many religions, including Buddhism, Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Islam. These religions have left deep marks in Cham culture. Under the influence of these religions, the Cham people have gradually divided into three communities with different characteristics of culture, religion, and belief. They are Cham Balamon, Cham Bani and Cham Islam.

Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận are two provinces in the southeastern region of Vietnam that is home to the largest number of the Vietnamese Cham peoples with numerous preserved customs and traditions. Studies on the religions and beliefs of the Cham people in Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận helps us to understand them specifically as well as of Cham communities in other areas. The book is formed on the basis of scientific research at the ministry level and called, "Research on a Number of

Fundamental Problems of the Existing Religions in the Cham Ethnic Group". The fundamental matters of religions mentioned in the book are the system of deities, rituals, religious class, and the basis of worship. The fundamental problems of belief, which are analyzed and studied in this book, are related to agriculture and a number of magic forms.

The book includes five chapters.

Chapter I gives a general introduction to the Cham people in Bình Thuận and Ninh Thuận provinces and the fundamental matters of their beliefs today.

Chapter II and III focus on a number of fundamental matters of Brahmanism, Hinduism, Islam and other religions of the Cham people. The authors give a general introduction to the religions, analyzing the penetration of these religions into the Cham community and the formation of Cham communities according to religious practices.

Chapter IV: The authors analyze the relationships between the Cham Balamon, Cham Bani and Cham Islamic groups, with the Cham in other provinces, the relationship between Cham Islam and Malaysian peoples, and between Cham Bani and Cham Balamon in religious rituals.

Chapter V mentions a number of fundamental problems with the religious life of Cham peoples in Bình

Thuận and Ninh Thuận provinces today.

The end of the book is reference materials.

TRẦN THÀNH

NGÔ ĐỨC THỊNH. **The Colors of Tây Nguyên (Central Highlands) Culture.**

Ho Chi Minh City: Youth Publishing House, 2007, 480 pages, Vv 7700.

Tây Nguyên is an area of historical folklore and one of seven large cultural areas of Vietnam. *The Colors of Tây Nguyên Culture* by Ngô Đức Thịnh helps us to imagine a colorful painting with the characteristics of natural environment, inhabitants, history, traditional architecture, gastronomy, costumes and folk culture of the ethnic groups in Tây Nguyên and the customary laws and epics of the imposing central highlands, ideal for ethnographers and cultural researchers. The author also shows that customary laws are not only valuable in terms of the cultural heritage of indigenous ethnic groups, but also effective tools for organizing and managing communities in the past and at present. They are the customary codes of the Ede, M'ngong, Giarai, and Raglai ethnic groups, and of ethnic groups in southern Tây Nguyên, the Xtieng, Ma, and Coho. The author analyzes the positive and negative aspects of the customary laws of rural development.

The author also expresses his thoughts on preserving and utilizing the traditional cultures of ethnic groups in Tây Nguyên.

The book is published in Vietnamese and English. In addition to the main content of the book, and it contains a lot of photos showing the characteristics of traditional ethnic culture in Tây Nguyên.

HIỀN LY

TRƯỜNG MINH HẰNG. **Handcraft-villages of North Vietnam.** H.: Fine Arts Publishing House, 2006, Vv 7566.

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Lacquering ancestral land

In the past, lacquering trade was developed almost the same as architectural sculpture or carving. Throughout Đại Việt feudal time, lacquering was highly developed with a nearly indefectible lacquer preparation technique. It was seen everywhere in the East, the South, the North and in the Đoài area. In the East, there exists Hà Cầu village (Đồng Minh, Vĩnh Bảo, Hải Phòng), famous for lacquering and statue making. Đình Bảng (Tiên Sơn, Bắc Ninh) in the North has a good reputation for a uniquely smooth black lacquer. Then there is Sơn Nam Hạ, location of Cát Đằng varnishing village (in Ý Yên, Hà Nam), and also Sơn Nam Thượng, home to Đông Mỹ (Thanh Trì, Hà Nội). Hà Tây was a unique area, hosting a large number of lacquering villages (Chuyên Mỹ, Bối Khê, Bình Vọng, Hà Thái, and Văn Giáp, to name a few). Almost all lacquering villages in old Sơn Nam and Nam Ngự believe

that the lacquering trade was spread from Bình Vọng - the ancestral land of lacquering.

Bình Vọng residents worship Trần Lư, or General Trần (born in 1470), a mandarin of the Lê Dynasty. He was the forefather of lacquering who helped make Bình Vọng a lacquering village renowned throughout old Son Nam and Thăng Long Imperial City.

Bình Vọng lacquering village

Lacquering villages in general and Bình Vọng in particular were in close relationship with wax-tree growth zones along the Red River, from Yen Bai to Son Tay, Viet Tri, and Phu Tho. Besides, Bình Vọng also had relations with many wood-related villages, like Nhi Khe lathing village and Ninh So rattan knitting villages. In order to make a lacquered product, people, need to build a frame from materials such as wood, fiberboard, bamboo, or rattan that has been consolidated before. When the product had formed its shape, it would be either transferred to Chuyên Mỹ and Bối Khê for encrusting or to Kiều Ky (Gia Lâm) for inlaying gold or silver. It was such relationships that helped spread the Bình Vọng lacquering trade to other areas.

Bình Vọng workers started bringing their products to the capital city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They gathered in a region, founding Nam Ngụ precinct and selling goods that were produced both on-the-spot or taken from the countryside. In the second half of the nineteenth, when

there was a chance to export lacquered products to some markets in Western Europe, Laos, and Thailand, lacquered-goods shops began to appear in great number in the city. It was also at this time that Bình Vọng lacquering was spreading rapidly to other areas.

The Bình Vọng lacquering trade now are exists in historical literature. There were many factors causing the recession for Bình Vọng lacquering trade. Artisan Trần Đình Phẩm still preserves a highly artistic ancestral tablet and a fresco-door meticulously carved and lacquered. At a fair in Hà Đông in the late nineteenth century, the fresco-door was the most highly recognized, and its author was nominated for the position of the nine grades of mandarin system. But this was the last trace of the golden age of Bình Vọng lacquering.

Hạ Thái village and the spreading of lacquering

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the Hạ Thái lacquering started to thrive. The Hạ Thái people inherited the lacquering trade from Bình Vọng village naturally and with ease. Even before the importation and domination of the trade, Hạ Thái had been considered a multi-function, multi-craft village, and that tradition is upheld even today.

In 1961, Hà Sơn Bình Fine Art School was established. Many lacquering enterprises were revitalized or opened. However, Hạ Thái was still the place with the highest number of artisans. In the 1970s, Hạ Thái had 200 households

doing lacquering business with more than 600 skilled artisans, accounting for more than 50 percent of all the village labor. At the present time, apart from the individual households, there are nearly 20 private enterprises trading lacquered products. These private enterprises directly sign contracts to export goods to overseas markets.

In the later decades of twentieth century, the European markets were curtailed, and Asian ones expanded. During 'season' time. Each enterprise in Hà Thái needs up to 300 or 400 workers. The lacquering trade has changed, attracting almost all economic activities in the village. In certain aspects, Hà Thái lacquering could be considered as the continuation of Bình Vọng lacquering.

Cát Đằng lacquering village

The Cát Đằng (Ý Yên, Hà Nam) lacquering trade made its first appearance in the late Trần Dynasty, under the training of Ngô Đức Dững and his younger brother, Ân Ba, after Dững left his office in the feudal court. By the second half of the fifteenth century, Cát Đằng lacquering was very well-known. Cát Đằng products were made from two main materials, wood and bamboo, with specific lacquer preparing and producing techniques for each material. Most products made from wood are worshipping objects. Cát Đằng's forte is household goods (also called 'joint' and 'knitted' products), such as lacquered baskets, betel boxes, fruit traps, flower baskets,

and wall plates, all featuring a wide variety of designs. While worshipping objects are often covered with black or luxurious jewelry lacquer, joint and knitted products are outstanding with bamboo materials and the strikingly colorful shine of varnish. After the "open-door" period, markets in lacquered products were better promoted, and all lacquer making processes were professionalized and mechanized. Cát Đằng lacquered products were then exported to many countries, such as France, Italy, Taiwan, Singapore, and Thailand.

Together with Hà Thái, Cát Đằng is one of the rarest village in the Red River Delta that upholds its traditional craft till today.

6. Knitting & embroidery trade

The old Vietnamese of the Hùng King's era were able not only to knit but also to make original costumes from knitted materials. Besides growing mulberries and raising silkworms to provide materials for knitting, the people could also grow cotton plants for weaving fabric. In addition, they could also make cloth from jute, flax, bamboo, and banana silk cord. Cloth made from banana silk cord is a specialty of the Giao Chỉ.

Knitting, which was recognized as one of Vietnam's two most important crafts in early centuries of the Christian era, still flourished during the period of domination by northern invaders. Historical literature recorded that the knitting techniques of the time were fairly complicated, which could be

seen in the diversity of silk products. Silk, chiffon, gauze, and also raw silk were especially favored by the northern court. Silkworm raising and cloth weaving are the two most important secondary jobs in Vietnamese rural areas. Weaving technologies are always being improved. Colorful cloths such as *ràng chiều*, *vóc*, and *nhĩều điều* are considered top-ranking goods to be used as tributes.

In the mid nineteenth century, together with the appearance of embroidery, weaved products were exported to many Eastern Europe countries in great number. Weaving centers in North Vietnam are mostly located in Bắc Ninh, Hà Nội and Hà Tây. Among them, Hà Tây is considered the most important center.

After 1945, markets in weaved products gradually fell into oblivion due to the failure to meet the customers' demands. It was not until the 1980s that silk goods started to appear in foreign markets again. Many weaving villages, apart from silks, also import other weaving materials from China and Japan.

Closely associated with weaving is embroidery, another age-old traditional craft of Vietnam. From Hùng Kings' time, Lạc Việt people were wearing embroidered clothes. Embroidery was a popular career that produced products popular among the people. In the Trần Dynasty, 'red silks and satins embroidered with yellow threads' were used by the court as tributes to the

Yuan Dynasty. All feudal lords and mandarins had their royal mantles embroidered with dragons or tigers, while imperial maids had their dresses embroidered with phoenixes. Embroideries can also be seen on flags, fans, parasols, and hangings that are used in folk festivals and practices. Based on the patterns embroidered on dresses and beddings, people can recognize the cultural characteristics of a certain ethnic group. Embroidery has been maintained and preserved by the people for thousands of years now.

La Khê traditional knitting village

La Khê village (Hoài Đức, Hà Tây) used to be one of the seven "La" village (also called "Ke La"), the most famous knitting villages throughout the Sơn Nam Thượng area. La Khê worships ten ancestors from the Restoration Lê Dynasty who were credited with upgrading the ancestral weaving techniques. The villagers also worship Trần Quý, forefather of the brocading trade.

With its wide variety of knitting types, La Khê is mostly known for its gauze, which always ranks the first among all the gauze producing village. Gauze is sparsely knitted with slender silk cords, thereby creating a holed surface. La Khê gauze normally has large-sized flowers with many eye-catching designs. Gauze dresses are often worn outside to highlight the elegance of the interior layer. La Khê weavers were well-known nationwide. Right from the Gia Long, Minh Mệnh, and Thiệu Trị times, the courts forced the La Khê

people to contribute 600 pieces of gauze of various colors annually. They also had to supply all weaved products that the courts required. Even without conforming to domestic tastes, La Khê products are highly valuable exporting goods today.

Vạn Phúc silk village

Vạn Phúc village (Hà Đông) was widely known for its two unique goods, silk and brocade. Vạn Phúc silk, also called “Vân silk”, is made from raw silk which is smooth, shiny, and strong. In addition to plain silks, Vạn Phúc also produces patterned silks with butterflies, phoenixes, cranes, roses, daisies, peach flowers, etc., embellished on banana-green, yellowish-red, violet and bronze-colored backgrounds. Flowery brocades are those weaved in such Chinese letters as Fu (Happiness), Lu (Wealth), and Shou (Longevity), in many styles and colors. Brocades used to make clothes for kings were normally woven with the four supernatural creatures. For a number of mandarins, each flap was woven separately so as to make gowns.

In the past, to make flowery silks and brocades, people had to use a manual loom with the cooperation of both a weaver and a flower knitter. Later, knitting was developed with mechanization in many stages. Today, each loom only needs one artisan, while weaving quality is still greatly enhanced, Vạn Phúc knitting products are very much favored by overseas customers.

Triều Khúc – a suburban traditional craft village

Situated southwest of Hanoi, Triều Khúc was also known as Trang Triều Khúc, an area and its neighborhoods for its wide variety of fine arts crafts. The craft ancestor worshipped in Triều Khúc is Vũ Úy, a mandarin of the Lê Dynasty who, on the way to China as an envoy, learned the local weaving techniques and then taught them to the people.

It was the dramatic change in land structure during the Nguyễn Dynasty that helped promote secondary jobs in the area, gradually making them overwhelm agriculture. Up to the 1930s, there had been 30 different crafts in the village, including conical hat fringers, silks, brocades, face-cloths, carpets, flag fringes, feather dusters, switches, laces, landscape paintings, embroidery threats, jewelries and so on. Thanks to the villagers' versatile talents, Triều Khúc's products could be seen everywhere, from the hustle and bustle cities to the remote areas, from Vietnam's neighboring countries to the Eastern Europe ones. Although no craft here is evaluated as 'really sharp', Triều Khúc has always remained a prosperous trade village throughout its course of history. Triều Khúc artisans have been able to make a fortune because of their ability to adapt, their sense of creativity, and also their advantageous location on the edge of the city. Triều Khúc products vary considerably, thereby meeting the demands and aesthetic tastes of the society.

Quất Động embroidery village

Embroidery appeared in Quất Động village (Thường Tín, Hà Tây) from the beginning of the seventeenth century thanks to the teaching of a Lê Dynasty minister named Lê Công Hành (or Trần Quốc Khải). The main products of the village at the time were wall hangings, turbans, royal dresses, court robes, parasols, fan, theatrical clothes, etc. The main materials of embroidery are cloth, felt, and wood, while embroidery threads come from dyed silk cords; the five main colors are blue, red, purple, yellow, and green.

In the early twentieth century, together with the appearance of imported materials such as satins, silk threads, and chemical dyes of all colors, embroidery technology was improved, and product qualities enhanced. There appeared a wide range of embroidery types, such as plain, embossed, and brocaded. If in the past the village mainly aimed at domestic customers for traditional practices, it now also produces exported goods such as pillow cases, bed sheets, table cloths, dresses, curtains, and more. Embroidered paintings, including scenery and portrait paintings, are the most commonly exported. Embroidery goods have ever been considered a valuable exported product since the French domination. Like Bưởi, Quất Động has been able to find its own market right in the capital city.

7. Paper and folk painting trade*Dó paper making village in Bưởi*

The Dó paper making trade, in the Bưởi area (including Đông Xã, Hà Khẩu, Yên Thái, and Thọ Thôn villages, current Ba Đình district, Hà Nội) first appeared in the late Lý Dynasty in the thirteenth century. Of the valuable tributes that Lý Cao Tông made to the Song Dynasty, there was the Bưởi area's dó paper. Dó paper is closely associated with Vietnamese culture and is a specialty of Thăng Long capital city.

Making dó paper was a fairly strenuous job, requiring artisans to manipulate the product in many stages. The paper is produced with various qualities and of different sizes depending on customer requirements as well as the intended function of the paper.

Demand for dó paper has declined a bit since the second half of the twentieth century. Currently in Đông Xã, Hồ Khẩu and Yên Thái, there are only a few households still producing dó paper.

Đông Hồ painting village

Đông Hồ is also known as Hồ village, or Mai village, in Song Hồ commune (Thuận Thành, Bắc Ninh). Hồ village was recorded in history as a votive paper making village. Later, it earned a good reputation for making *điệp* paintings, which were also called Tết paintings. Đông Hồ paintings include such outstanding works as: 'Chicken', 'Pig', 'Making a scene of jealousy', 'Catching falling coconuts', 'Toad teacher', 'Mice's wedding' and so on. From past to present, traditional

paintings have always been printed on *dó* paper with three basic background colors of shiny white, light yellow, and orange red. The paintings are very suitable for Springtime and also for the Tết holiday.

Điệp paintings always use inexpensive domestic materials that are easy to find. Printing paper is often thin, soft, elastic, and color-absorptive. Before printing, the artisans coat a thin layer of *điệp* on the paper, both to enhance the hardness and sponginess of the paper and to highlight the radiant color of *điệp* on it as well. Đông Hồ's printing technique is unique. Apart from the stroke printing block (also used for printing the black section), each color is presented on a different wood-block, which means the number of colors is equivalent to the number of wood-blocks required. Hồ artisans print their paper in the same way as rubber stamping, which is opposite to the turned-up block mode of Hàng Trống painting.

Since the early 20th century, Đông Hồ has produced large paintings called '*hang*' or '*gam*' that are drawn with colorful pigments and imported paper. In the mid twentieth century, almost all Đông Hồ old printing blocks were lost due to natural disasters and war. Painting was on the verge of falling into oblivion.

In 1999, before the real situation of Đông Hồ painting, some artisans, with

the support of local authorities, established a traditional folk painting trade club, with the mission to uphold and develop traditional painting in the nation. This establishment was considered a practical step in the preservation of national culture.

Hàng Trống folk painting village

The Hàng Trống carved painting was mostly developed during the first part of the nineteenth century. Hàng Trống paintings exist in many forms, the most popular of which is the worshipping branch. This painting branch is known via such unique stories as "Kiều", "Thạch Sanh", "Phạm Công, Cúc Hoa", "Bích Câu's unusual meeting" or such painting sets as "Beautiful girl" (Tổ Nữ), "Four seasons" (Xuân, Hạ, Thu, Đông), "Peacock" and "Fish".

Hàng Trống painting are printed in the Buddha method. The printing's lines are normally soft and slender, but not thick like in Đông Hồ paintings. The artisans only use one printing board to print lines, then a quill to 'move' the colors. Sometimes the lines are drawn by hands.

Since the August Revolution, Hàng Trống and its neighboring streets have ceased to produce and sell paintings. However, in some other areas in Ha Noi, this painting branch continues to develop. Some people still enjoy Hàng Trống paintings, and every year a large number of painting are exported to foreign countries.