

INFORMATION

Scientific Conference: Global financial crisis and its impacts on Europe and Vietnam

On 16th July, 2009 in Hanoi The Institute of European Studies (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) held a scientific seminar entitled *The Global Financial Crisis and Its Impacts on Europe and Vietnam* (which belongs to 2009-2010 ministry research subject project: Some European outstanding economic issues in the period of 2001 and 2010, predictions for 2011 and 2020 and impacts on Vietnam). Apart from leading representatives of the host agency the seminar was also attended by scientists from many research institutes. Eleven speeches were delivered in the seminar.

In his introductory speech Dr. Nguyễn Hà An, Deputy Director of the Institute of European Studies presented an overview of the crisis and its impacts on Europe and Vietnam. He put forth evidence of the impacts that the crisis had on the world economy: The world economies suffered a decline of 7.5% GDP from the fourth quarter of 2008 to the first quarter of 2009. At the commence of the second quarter IMF forecast that the three world economic centers, namely The USA suffering a decline of 2.8%, Eurozone 4.2%, Japan 6.2%. According to the forecast unemployment rate in the developed economies increased to 9.2%, among which The USA was 10.1%, the EU 11.5%. In Vietnam the financial crisis caused three main effects: foreign trade

decreased rapidly; foreign investment declined drastically (the number of FDI projects went down by 65% in comparison with the year 2008); tourism and labor export slowed (the quantity of foreign tourists visiting Vietnam in the first two months of 2009 decreased by 10.2% in comparison with 2008). Meanwhile, he proposed several measures to cope with the crisis with the focus on restoring the developing speed and employment rate.

Following his speech, delegates presented reports and concentrated on discussing the issues: The global financial crisis and its impacts on Europe; Some scratches of European political and economic situation in the period of economic crisis; Russia's struggle against the global crisis – its own characteristics; Measures to overcome, ..., through which serious effects of the crisis on social, political, and economic issues of Europe (Russia in particular) and Vietnam were clarified.

The delegates also listened to Dr Nguyễn Cảnh Toàn present Russia's measures to cope with the crisis as follows:

- Implementing competely and comprehensively social obligations of the state to the public.
- Bringing into full play the potentials of labor, material, and intellectual resources.
- Arousing and encouraging domestic needs, especially the need for using domestic commodity.

- Stimulating activeness and creativity of market economy.
- Improving vital information mechanism.
- Setting up a strong and transparent financial system which serves as a reliable base.
- Ensuring stability of the economy.

In concluding the seminar the delegates agreed that overcoming the crisis could not be done within one or two days but spread over a long period during which EU countries and Vietnam must strive effortfully and continuously. Although the crisis has shown sign of slowing down, we should not be subjective and neglecting; we must always be prepared for all contingencies so as to avoid heavy consequences of the crisis whenever it returns.

BÙI THỊ HỒNG

Scientific Seminar “Intellect, intellectual resources, bringing into play intellectual resources: theoretical issues and ways to access”

On 17th June, 2009 in Hanoi, a Scientific Seminar entitled *Intellect, intellectual resources, promoting intellectual resources: theoretical issues and ways to access* was held and hosted by the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. The seminar was part of the state research project coded KX.03.22/06-10 under the theme “Building and promoting Vietnamese intellectual resources to serve the cause of making the country prosper in the 21st century” with Prof. Dr. Nguyễn Văn Khánh, Principal of the university as the

chairman. The seminar attracted the attendance of many scientists, research experts, students, post-graduate students and doctoral candidates from a lot of universities and institutes throughout the country.

In his inductory speech Asso., Dr. Nguyễn Vũ Hào, Chairman of the first branch subject of KX.03.22/06-10 project asserted that specific characteristics of the present era, the transiting era from agricultural civilization to intellectual civilization has made Vietnamese people confront with great challenges. We have to decode a series of problems in both theoretical and practical respects in order to identify the correct and suitable concept of intellect, intellectual resources and clarify the features and state of the resources in Vietnam as well as the issue of exploiting these resources in history and at present in different aspects of social life, especially in science and arts, from which breakthrough measures were invented suitable to the context of global integration and trend of developing an intellectual economy in the process of building and bring into play Vietnam’s intellectual resources to serve the cause of a prosperous country in the 21st century.

Delegates reached a consensus that examination of the concept “intellect” as an instrumental concept of the project is very necessary and important, since it helps to clarify its nature and structure, its similarities and differences from some other common concepts such as “mental power”, “physical properties”,

“will”, “mentality”, “awareness”, “intelligence”, “spirit”, “wisdom”, “grey matter”, “knowledge”, “talent”, etc.; typical features of human intellect and its measuring methods were also discussed by the delegates. Through clarifying these fundamental issues, a lot of opinions pointed out elements influencing the formation and development of human intellect: It is not only heredity factors but mainly the social environment (upbringing, educating, cultural communicating, language and working at the top) that count. In addition, the conference also examined and defined the term “intellectual resources” and its position in relations with other resources.

In rounding up the seminar, the delegates said that the issues discussed in this conference exactly established a theoretical base for proposed matters in the second and the third branch subjects concerning the current situation of Vietnam’s intellectual resources and the work of promoting these resources in history and now. The seminar was also the key to decode the problem of how to build up and promote Vietnam’s intellectual resources to serve the cause of a prosperous nation in the context of international integration and the trend of developing an intellectual economy now.

PHAM THU TRANG

International conference “100 years of discovering and studying Sa Huỳnh culture”

On 24th July, 2009 in Quảng Ngãi, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in coordination with Quảng Ngãi’s People’s Committee held an

international conference on “100 years discovering and studying Sa Huỳnh culture”. The conference was attended by Mr Hervé Bolot, Ambassador of French Republic to Vietnam, Mr Trần Chiến Thắng, Deputy minister of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, over 100 managers, scientists, and archaeological researchers from research institutes, universities and localities where Sa Huynh relics existed. The conference also attracted researchers from Japan, Taiwan, French, India, Philippines, Thailand, etc.. More than 50 reports of both domestic and international researchers were sent to the conference.

In the conference the delegates presented their studies and the discussion was organized into three main themes: First, achievements of Sa Huỳnh cultural and archaeological study; achievements, problems, directions for accessing Sa Huỳnh historical documentary resources in both space and time; latest archaeological discoveries. Second, Sa Huỳnh culture: cultural contacts and studies; Influences of Sa Huỳnh culture on the developing process of cultures of Quảng Ngãi and Central provinces. Third, promoting Sa Huỳnh cultural relics: Theoretical views; projects and directions of accessing to maintain and preserve some Sa Huỳnh discovered relics in museums; linking Sa Huỳnh cultural relics with tourism and socio-economic development in the central coastal areas.

All delegates agreed that Sa Huỳnh culture was one of the three most important cultural centers in the ancient

metal age of Vietnam with interrelated comparison and cultural exchanges with Asian culture 2,500 years ago. Owners of Sa Huỳnh culture were its native people; Space of Sa Huỳnh culture was not restricted within a province, but spread along the central land strip of which the core areas included Quảng Ngãi, Quảng Nam, and Bình Định. Sa Huỳnh culture, with its pervasion, has crossed the national boundary.

Sharing this view, Prof. W. G. Solheim, Hawaii University (The USA) commented that Sa Huỳnh pottery and its pottery exhibits collected from excavations in Kalanav, which belongs to Palawan archipelago in Philippines were quite similar to the extent that they could be grouped together and named as “Sa Huỳnh-Kalanav pottery complex”. This showed that thousand years ago Sa Huỳnh people were able to connect with the outside world and exchange with other cultures. Traces of excavations on Trường Sa archipelago said Sa Huỳnh people established a trade axis very early among the Central provinces of Vietnam, Trường Sa archipelago, and Palawan island of Philippines.

Regarding the matter of preserving and promoting Sa Huỳnh cultural values, a lot of delegates were concerned with the idea of how to make all Sa Huỳnh cultural values work in the present life? Sa Huỳnh culture – an invaluable cultural heritage so why don't we awake these potentials by setting up a heritage route “Sa Huỳnh culture” along the Central Province to offer new prospects for the development of culture and economy of the Central provinces

through tourism? Mr Lương Hồng Quang, Deputy Head of Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts, affirmed that it was necessary to have “interzone” vision, which meant strict coordination among ministries, industries, and localities so as to form and link the heritage route of Sa Huỳnh culture together.

In addition, scientists recommended that it was necessary to have a master plan of and investigation into heritage places, especially in the Central provinces in order to propose suitable protection and excavation measures. Prof. Petter Bellwood, French National University said, “It is necessary to strictly protect Sa Huỳnh cultural relics, not let illegal excavations happen. All excavations must be approved by the State to preserve all the exhibits and promote their values”.

HIỆN LỖY

Conference: Vũ Đình Long and the birth of Vietnam's plays

On 28th August, 2009 in Hanoi, a workshop entitled “*Vũ Đình Long and the birth of Vietnam's plays*” was held under the coordination of Vietnam Literature Society, Phan Châu Trinh Culture Funds and Literature Society Publisher. Being present at the seminar was the writer's family and family of Vũ last name together with a lot of writers, researchers, visitors coming from domestic and international organizations.

Opening the seminar, Dr. Ngô Tự Lập, General Secretary of Phan Châu Trinh Culture Funds presented an introduction

about writer Vũ Đình Long, a vanguard playwright of home country with the famous three-act play “The poison cup”, which was written and performed on stage of Hanoi’s Opera House on 22nd October, 1921; he was also considered one of the fathers of Vietnam’s modern stage. Vũ Đình Long deserved to be one of the most excellent and influential cultural activists of our country in the 20th century.

At the seminar, writers and researchers put forth exact opinions and true evaluations to assert the position and role as well as the contribution of Vũ Đình Long to the birth of Vietnam’s modern plays. In his speech, Assoc., Prof. Dr. Phan Trọng Thuởng – Director of of Literature Institute (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) indicated that the appearance of the play “The poison cup” offered a new kind in national literature history, which changed the face of Vietnam’s literature in this period to be more complete, perfect, and modern. It changed not only the nature but also the structure of literature. Vũ Đình Long was regarded as the first playwright in Vietnam’s play history who, as the owner of a newspaper and Tân Dân publishing house, had great contributions to the formation of literature market. The two plays “The poison cup” (1921) and “The Court of conscience” (1923) created a significant revolution which moved

national stage to play road with a new face following Western model.

Generally, writers and researchers all agreed that playwright Vũ Đình Long was the first person to the task “Cutting a road through a mountain” for Vietnam’s modern stage; he was the person who brought the matters of conscience and lust, or in broader sense the matters of morals and characters’ lives to stage where “*good and bad habits of common people*” were all displayed in the deepest and finest way.

Vũ Đình Long died 50 years ago. Up till now, through this seminar, we were able to acknowledge fully his contributions in different fields such as fathering Vietnam’s modern plays, stage adaptation, translation; meanwhile, he also had credits in joining organizations to promote literature activities during 1930-1945 period according to the developing trend of modern lives.

Looking at the first play collection ever published reminds us of and makes us remember a man who has been acknowledged in history as the first person of Vietnam’s modern stage. On the first day of introducing this collection readers will get view of a man who had great and active contributions to literature and arts of our home country.

BÍCH HẠNH