



The Past, Present, and Future of Vietnamese Historiography: A Century of Modern Vietnamese Historical Writing

Programme Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE 27 Aug 2026, 14:30 - 16:30	LOCATION House 3 - SR223
THEME C - National and Regional Schools of Historiography	CONFERENCE International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

This panel discusses the evolution of modern Vietnamese historiography over the past century. Exactly one hundred years ago, the work *Việt Nam Sử Lược* by historian Trần Trọng Kim was published (1920), inaugurating a new approach that placed the modern Vietnamese nation-state at the center of the historical stage. Over the course of this century, perhaps no historiographical tradition has undergone as many paradigmatic shifts and intense conflicts in the production of knowledge as that of Vietnam. The early decades of the twentieth century marked the construction of a nationalist historiography, which sought to overturn the monarchical past and dynastic-centered historical writing. Following the proletarian revolution of 1945, Vietnam first gained independence and a new revolutionary government was established under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh. This was also the moment when modern proletarian-revolutionary historiography emerged, grounded in historical materialism. The nationalist perspective was now intertwined with the struggles for national liberation and class conflict. When Vietnam was divided in 1954, two states with opposing ideologies coexisted in the North and the South, producing two conflicting historiographies—although both drew on nationalism and the legacies of the past as foundations for legitimacy and authority. With national reunification in 1975, the Marxist-nationalist historiography of the North prevailed, dominating the writing and interpretation of the past for decades. Only in more recent years, with economic reforms, ideological opening, and increasing international exchange, have new perspectives gradually emerged. These have introduced multidisciplinary approaches and fostered greater interaction with global historiography outside Vietnam. This panel is an attempt to reflect upon the past century of Vietnamese historiography and to consider its prospects for the future.

Participants

Convenor

- Vu Duc Liem (Hanoi National University of Education)

Panelists

- Nguyen Thi Hanh (Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam)
- Ninh Xuan Thao (Hanoi National University of Education)
- Tran Ngoc Dung (Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics)
- Hoang Hai Ha (Hanoi National University of Education)
- Tran Xuan Tri (Hanoi National University of Education)

Papers

The First and Second Indochinese Wars in Vietnamese Nationalist Historiography

Nguyen Thi Hanh (Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam)

The State of Vietnam. Competing National Histographies

Ninh Xuan Thao (Hanoi National University of Education), Tran Xuan Tri (Hanoi National University of Education)

The Birth of Modern Vietnamese Historiography

Tran Ngoc Dung (Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics)

Doi Moi's Historiography in Vietnam: What's New?

Hoang Hai Ha (Hanoi National University of Education)

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