

Văn Khánh Nguyễn

The Vietnam Nationalist Party (1927–1954)

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Foreword

In the 1920s, an event occurred that transformed the Vietnamese political landscape. This was the almost simultaneous establishment of three political organizations: the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth League (Việt Nam Cách mạng Thanh niên đảng—VRYL) in 1925, the New Vietnam Revolutionary Party (Tân Việt Cách mạng Đảng—NVRP) in 1927, and the Vietnam Nationalist Party (1927).

The assessment and evaluation of the two former organizations followed the dominant path of Vietnamese revolutionary development, which aimed toward socialism. As for VNP, from the onset, it was not clear which position and role it would play in the revolutionary movement from 1925 to 1930; at that time making it more difficult to assess what it might influence and how it may impact the subsequent development of the Vietnamese revolution.

Materials pertaining to the development of the VNP prior to 1945, found in the occupied territory during the resistance war against France and America produced both within and outside the country, were of limited value. These are mostly primarily focused on serving egoistic political interests. Within the territory occupied by the revolutionary government after 1954, when the North was liberated, there has been no monograph which gives an in-depth account of this issue and scholarly work on the subject has chiefly been some papers published on conference proceedings or paragraphs in common historical books.

That led Prof. Dr. Văn Khánh Nguyễn to choose VNP in the history of the Vietnamese revolution, a complex issue, as a topic for his research and teaching material in the Faculty of History, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. Thus, this is a daring and audacious decision.

The author's mission is to research *VNP* in a systematic and comprehensive way, from its origins to the establishment and development, to its political ideas and organizational structure, and finally its internal divisions and decline as a political force after the Yen Bai uprising, so as to define the role and position of this organization in the revolutionary movement from 1927 to 1930 and hereafter. He has done so by making a comprehensive survey of materials, both official and unofficial, both domestic and foreign, which include not only conventional documents but also texts from localities and hometowns of vital

personalities of this organization. The challenge before him was to utilize such a complex collection of documents and then compare, contrast, and evaluate them based on Marxist—Leninism, Hồ Chí Minh ideology, documents of the Party, and with the advice of Party leaders who gave comments on *VNP* such as Lê Duẩn, Trường Chinh, etc. He has done so with great success.

Now the work has been completed, republished (with amendments and additions), and presented to both domestic and foreign readers, including first of all undergraduates, graduates, and research fellows majoring in history as a necessary reference. The author is apparently not satisfied with his results and thus would like to receive constructive comments and advice. The composer of this preface also shares that honest and proper desire.

Prof. Đinh Xuân Lâm

Preface

Vietnam Nationalist Party (Việt Nam Quốc Dân Đảng—VNP) was one of the patriotic and revolutionary parties that played a great role in the national liberation of Vietnam in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, after independence was restored in the North (1954) and in the whole country (1975), there no systematic examination of party. This study was originally designed to fill this lacunae in scholarly studies of the independence movement by providing a number of systematic and comprehensive evaluations of the VNP with the intention of tracing the development of this organization from its establishment in December 1927 to its disastrous defeat and suppression connected with the failure of the VNP designed during the Yen Bai uprising, after which it declined as a major historical force. It was completed in 2005 with support from the Asia Research Fund, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, and Social Sciences Publisher (Khoa học Xã hội).

However, in the seven years since that study took place, a few monographs were published relevant to the study of the VNP, such as *Lịch sử Chính phủ Việt Nam/History of Vietnamese Government*, Volume 1 (Hanoi: Chính trị Quốc gia Publisher 2006) and Francois Giullemot's *Đại Việt/Great Vietnam*, (Paris: Indes Savants, 2012). Additionally, I continued to collect more materials on the operations of the VNP itself, especially on its activities after the Yen Bai uprising through to the complete liberation of the North (1954). I discovered that the VNP, despite its decline as a revolutionary movement after the establishment of the Vietnam Communist Party in 1930 and the Yen Bai disaster, remained active as nationalist and anti-communist groups whose overseas operations were aimed at disrupting the Communist Party and Vietnamese revolutionary movements. These additional materials and insights have prompted me to add a new chapter (Chap. 5) to this edition of my work which offers much in-depth information on the organization and operations of various parties/groups associated with the VNP and the VNP itself after its suppression by the French in 1930. I have also taken this opportunity to broaden the treatment accorded to the VNP in this work's introductory and concluding sections. It is my hope that this current paper will help readers

make a fuller and more accurate evaluation of the role of this political party in the Vietnamese national revolution during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Keeping in mind the spirit of all scholarly inquiry, I welcome constructive feedback from my colleagues and readers so that I can continue to revise and make further improvements to this book.

Văn Khánh Nguyễn

Acknowledgments

This book is the result of a prolonged study and research by the author on VNP (Vietnamese Nationalist Party). During the preparation for materials and writing of this book, I received support and encouragement from various agencies, institutions, and individuals such as the National Archives Center No. 1, the The Vietnam Museum of Revolution (now the Vietnam National Museum), central libraries, Culture—Information Departments, provincial and city museums and libraries in Yen Bai, Phu Tho, Vinh Yen, Phuc Yen, Ha Tay, Hanoi, Hai Duong, Thai Binh, Nam Dinh, Hai Phong, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, etc. I also sought references and used some materials collected by *Phạm Xuân Thanh*, a student in the 26th term from Faculty of History, Hanoi University (now University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi National University) during his field trip before graduation, under my direct supervision in the summer of 1986.

I also give thanks to Prof. Đinh Xuân Lâm, a close and honorable teacher of mine and an expert in Vietnamese pre-modern history for reading, commenting the draft, and writing the foreword.

On the occasion of its publication, I hereby convey my deep appreciation to agencies and institutions that provided me with additional materials and helped me in publishing the book; especially young colleagues such as Dr. Trương Thị Bích Hạnh, Ms. Nguyễn Thị Minh Nguyệt, and Ms. Michelle Miguel Galvez (Faculty of History, University of Social Sciences and Humanities), staff from Office for Research Affairs who assisted me enormously in designing, editing, and completing its draft for publication.

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