

“The Publication of the Party Document Collection (*Văn kiện Đảng toàn tập*) and the Re-Interpretation of the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, 1925 – 45”

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In September 1945, after the victory of the August Revolution, the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) (the Indochinese Communist Party – ICP of that time) came to power. Since then, as the only political ruling party in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV, 1945-76) and in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) the CPV has been faced up to many challenges of political legitimation, despite the fact that it has been strongly supported by a large part of Vietnamese population. In order to legitimize its leading and ruling role, the party has set up in Vietnam a tight control over the studying and teaching the Party’s history and the modern and contemporary history of Vietnam as well.

In this context the publishing of Party Document has played a very important role. The first collection of party document was published already in 1946. Since then the party has re-selected, revised and re-published its documents many times in many kinds of selections. Tightly controlling over the publishing of its documents, the party intentionally introduce to the Vietnamese a well make-up history of itself, in which the righteousness of its leading strategy and tactics, the victory of the struggles under its leadership, the unity of its leadership has been over emphasized, while its political and strategic shortcoming or mistakes, its internal conflicts and its failures have been covered up or simply ignored.

After the fall of the former socialist countries in Europe and the accession to some archives in these countries became possible it is difficult for the CPV to held on its tight control over the interpretation of its party. The Doi moi also contributes to the half-hearted liberalization in political environment in Vietnam. In this new context the party decided in 1997 to publish *Văn kiện Đảng toàn tập* (the Whole Party Document Collection). The first volume appeared in 1998 and the newest one came to life in 2007. Although the publication of the new Document Collection has been also put under tight control of the Party’s Politbureau, many new valuable

documents have been published for the first time and that has been leading to a movement of re-interpretation of the Party's history in Vietnam.

The main purpose of my paper is to examine, to how far the re-publication of the party documents could influence the re-interpretation of the party's history in Vietnam, particularly by the Vietnamese historians. Using the period 1925-45 in the party's history as a test case, my paper will consist of three parts.

1. An Overview of Writing Party's History and Publishing of Party Documents in Vietnam.
2. The Re- Publishing of Party Document 1997-today
3. The Re-Interpretation of the Party History in Vietnam since 1998