

'Revisionism' in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam: New Evidence from the East German Archives

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The paper analyse internal debates in the DRV leadership that culminated during the controversial 9th plenum of the Lao Dong Party. The following campaign against "revisionism" is presented as a decisive step of the Le Duan-faction to marginalize dissident Party members and to prepare for the escalation of the military struggle in South Vietnam. The paper also discusses the way the "anti-revisionist" campaign affected relations with East Germany. The paper relies on so far untapped sources like reports of the former GDR embassy in Hanoi, of East German journalists based in North Vietnam and files from the Archives of the Ministry of State Security (Stasi).

Introduction

At the end of 1961 Klaus Pommerening, correspondent of the East German news service ADN in the DRV, sent a report back to Berlin in which he analysed the attitude of the DRV leadership towards the Sino-Soviet dispute.¹ The Lao Dong party – he commented – still followed a middle course between Moscow and Beijing and therefore shied away from condemning the cult of the individual and 'dogmatism'. According to Pommerening, this was mainly due to the fact that Lao Dong party itself was heavily influenced by 'dogmatism' and the cult of the individual. Duong Bach Mai, one of his main informants, confirmed his analysis.² In a talk with the East German journalist, Mai, who was a member of the Central Committee, of the Fatherland Front Presidium, of the National Assembly Standing Committee, and vice-president of the Vietnamese–Soviet Friendship Association, complained of the lack of democracy in the VWP. If the party leadership decided on an 'anti-Soviet' line – he told Pommerening – he would defend 'Leninist' principles regardless of his own person.³

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Duong Bach Mai's pledge of 1961 sounds rather ominous if one looks at the course of events in 1963 and 1964. At the 9th Lao Dong Central Committee Plenum in December 1963 he warned against increasingly taking 'pro-Chinese' positions and clashed with Le Duan and Le Duc Tho and others who wanted to initiate a campaign against 'modern revisionism' in the DRV. A few months later Duong Bach Mai was dead. He had been in close alliance with other party members like Hoang Minh Chinh and Bui Cong Trung who later became entangled in the so-called 'anti-party affair'. The fact that Mai and other middle-ranking cadres held opposing views was well known to the East German embassy.

When looking at documents of the former GDR kept in German archives,⁴ it is striking how closely East German diplomats and correspondents in Hanoi and the Foreign Ministry back in Berlin followed domestic political developments in the DRV. As a close ally of the Soviet Union one of the main tasks of the GDR embassy in Hanoi in those years was to observe the VWP's reaction to the Sino-Soviet dispute and to support those forces in North Vietnam who leaned toward 'pro-Kremlin' positions. Politicians like Duong Bach Mai frequently met with GDR diplomats and Pommerening, the East German correspondent in Hanoi, and informed them about ideological disputes and factional struggles within the Lao Dong party.

The conflict between the Le Duan faction and his critics culminated at the 9th Party Plenum in 1963 and later led to a purge within the VWP, commonly known as the 'revisionist/anti-party affair' (*vu an xet lai – chong Dang*). Previous research on this affair has mainly relied on autobiographical accounts by Vietnamese involved in the affair.⁵ New evidence from the East German archives can contribute to a better understanding of the whole affair and stimulate the debate on 'revisionism' and dissent in Vietnam.

This paper will focus on developments in 1963 and 1964. The developments must be understood in the domestic setting of the DRV in the early 1960s when the Lao Dong leadership was increasingly prepared for a war in the South and therefore found Khrushchev's theory of 'peaceful coexistence' less and less attractive.⁶

After the 15th Plenum of the VWP Central Committee in January 1959 and the formation of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam in December 1960 the war in the South intensified. The decision of the Lao Dong party to return to a policy of revolutionary war to bring about the reunification of the country led to a growing estrangement between Hanoi and Moscow. Based on the doctrine of 'peaceful coexistence' the Soviet leadership did not welcome the intensification of the armed struggle in South Vietnam and urged Hanoi to exercise more restraint.⁷ Especially after the Cuban missile crisis the Soviets tried to avoid any situation that might lead to open confrontation with the United States. In this context, the Soviet Union followed a policy of gradual disengagement from North Vietnam while China's influence was growing correspondingly.

The paper shows how in 1963 the Lao Dong leadership, among them party chief Le Duan, gradually moved closer to 'pro-Chinese' positions and finally launched a campaign against 'modern revisionism' and the influence of 'modern revisionism'

within the VWP. The study will illustrate that the aggressive ‘anti-revisionist’ mood of the Lao Dong leadership not only produced negative personnel repercussions within the party ranks, but also had a negative impact on relations with the GDR. Striking examples of this are the increased surveillance of the GDR embassy in Hanoi and the fate of Vietnamese students studying in East Germany.

Domestic Developments in the DRV in 1963: Ideological Disputes in the Lao Dong Party and the 9th Central Committee Plenum

In January 1963 President Novotny of Czechoslovakia visited the DRV. The final communiqué in general reflected Soviet views and praised peaceful coexistence as ‘the most correct policy.’⁸ However, Herold, the Czechoslovak ambassador in Hanoi, warned the GDR chargé d’affaires not to be too optimistic about the results of the visit.⁹ Pommerening, ADN correspondent in the DRV, interpreted the communiqué as a sign that the Lao Dong had openly endorsed the theory of peaceful coexistence. In the same report, however, he emphasized that the situation among party members in Hanoi was tense and that they were not allowed to discuss ‘problems within the international workers’ movement’, i.e. the issues that were behind the Sino-Soviet dispute. According to his Vietnamese informants, To Huu, head of the Propaganda and Education Board, held the view that if the Lao Dong party wanted to preserve the ‘purity of Marxism-Leninism’, it had to openly attack ‘revisionist’ tendencies.¹⁰

After the Novotny visit the conflict between ‘pro-Chinese’ and ‘pro-Soviet’ elements within the VWP intensified.¹¹ Ung Van Khiem was made responsible for the ‘pro-Soviet’ communiqué of Novotny’s visit and was replaced by Xuan Thuy.¹² Pommerening reported that many cadres that had taken ‘pro-Soviet’ positions were replaced as well – mainly middle-ranking cadres working for the DRV press and writing on foreign policy issues.¹³ The East German embassy had gathered further information that all key positions in the press department of the Lao Dong Central Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Vietnamese News Agency, radio, etc. were occupied by cadres ‘who closely followed the Chinese course’.¹⁴

Obviously, these were measures preparatory to the visit of Chinese President Liu Shaoqi that took place in May 1963.¹⁵ His visit moved Hanoi closer to China. Important points uniting Hanoi and Beijing were their common hostility to the concept of peaceful coexistence. The joint communiqué denounced ‘revisionism’ and ‘rightist opportunism’ as the main threat to the international communist movement and emphasized that the DRV should mainly rely on its own strength when building up socialism and carrying out the revolution in South Vietnam.¹⁶

The model of a self-sufficient North Vietnamese economy was increasingly propagated by the VWP while simultaneously downplaying the significance of foreign aid, i.e. aid from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. This was a highly contested issue between Le Duan and others who leaned toward China and those middle-ranking cadres who were later labelled as ‘being influenced by modern revisionism’. In May 1963, for example, in a speech in the National Assembly, Duong

Bach Mai had demanded that the DRV should enter COMECON. While some delegates had supported his idea, Truong Chinh and Ho Chi Minh had criticized him sharply.¹⁷

In the summer of 1963 the political atmosphere in North Vietnam became more and more tense. Just after Liu Shaoqi's visit Le Duc Tho, member of the Politburo and head of the powerful Party Organizational Committee, denounced Yugoslavia as 'the concentrated and ugliest but not the only exponent of modern revisionism', which constituted a fairly direct attack on the Soviet Union.¹⁸

The pressure on VWP party members to fully adopt 'pro-Chinese' positions was stepped up. In June 1963 a Vietnamese journalist informed the East German embassy that especially middle-ranking cadres no longer dared to express their own opinion.¹⁹ This is consistent with information provided by the East German chargé d'affaires and the Soviet, Hungarian, and Czechoslovak ambassadors in the DRV. Tovmasyan, the Soviet ambassador, mentioned that the DRV press more and more reflected 'pro-Chinese' views, and that Vietnamese-language propaganda material from China was sold in Hanoi. 'Pro-Chinese elements' in the VWP would exert massive pressure on those 'comrades who reject the Chinese positions'.²⁰ Tovmasyan added that a huge number of cadres were influenced by 'anti-Soviet' rumours and 'nationalism' and as a result would behave in an 'anti-European' way.²¹

At the same time, Pommerening reported that 'a group of writers had addressed the Central Committee to protest against the increasingly anti-Soviet statements'.²²

In July 1963 the DRV took a further step away from the Soviet Union. Like Beijing, Hanoi newspapers denounced the nuclear test ban treaty signed by the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union as a 'cunning trick to split the communist world'.²³ Besides criticizing the test ban treaty the North Vietnamese press intensified its attacks on 'Yugoslav revisionism'.²⁴ A *Hoc Tap* article in the July issue demanded that every communist had to vigorously fight against 'modern revisionism'. The article categorically opposed theories of renouncing the use of violence and of achieving national independence peacefully.²⁵

In August 1963, 'pro-Chinese elements' in the VWP were clearly on the offensive. In a long report the German embassy concluded that 'pro-Soviet elements' within the Lao Dong had been systematically isolated.²⁶ This applied in particular to Vo Nguyen Giap who according to several sources had been put under house arrest in mid-1963.²⁷ The GDR embassy and ADN correspondent Pommerening further mention a rumour circulating among VWP cadres that Pham Van Dong's private secretary had been arrested because of passing confidential information to the Soviet embassy, and that former Foreign Minister Ung Van Khiem would soon lose his seat on the Central Committee. The same sources mention that Le Duan had faced Ho Chi Minh with the alternative of 'either following the Politburo or to stand outside'.²⁸ According to Bibow, chargé d'affaires of the GDR embassy, the so-called 'theory of two mistakes' was increasingly propagated among VWP members. According to this theory, Ho Chi Minh had twice committed fatal mistakes. In 1945 he had compromised with the French and let them return to Indochina. In 1954, at the Geneva conference he had

compromised again which led to the partition of the country and had turned South Vietnam over to the US.²⁹ While this theory seemed rather far-fetched, it was a convenient propaganda tool for Le Duan and other 'hard-liners' to denounce any defensive strategy with the West as the abandonment of revolution and to rule out any effort to achieve national independence by means of negotiating or by overtaking South Vietnam economically. Besides undermining Ho Chi Minh's reputation, this theory also aimed at his 'closest comrades-in-arms' during the anti-French resistance who now mostly opposed the shift toward Beijing.

'Veteran party members' (*dang vien lao thanh*) like Duong Bach Mai, Bui Cong Trung or Vu Dinh Huynh, who held the view that there were other ways to achieve national independence than only to resort to revolutionary violence, were now more and more on the defensive and in danger of being denounced as defeatist.³⁰

On 2 September 1963 a programmatic article by Le Duc Tho was published in the party newspaper *Nhan Dan*.³¹ In this article Le Duc Tho argued that all party members unanimously had to follow the party line. He wrote that in general cadres and party members ideologically stood on solid ground, but that some party members were influenced by 'rightist thoughts' and 'revisionism' and therefore were sceptical about the party's strategy to achieve national reunification. These 'deviants' also disagreed with the pace of the agricultural collectivization campaign and propagated international economic cooperation instead of a self-sufficient North Vietnamese economy as favoured by the party leadership. According to Le Duc Tho some party members lacked discipline and propagated views not in conformity with party resolutions which would undermine the strength and unity of the party. Tho emphasized that the Lao Dong party uncompromisingly had to fight against the influence of non-proletarian tendencies, rightism, liberalism (*chu nghĩa tu do*) and modern revisionism among party members and suggested that those members who did not follow party resolutions had to be criticized and educated or be 'disciplined in an appropriate manner' (*thi hanh ky luat thich dang*) depending on how much 'party work and the revolutionary cause had been damaged'.³² These sentences written by the 'party's ideological watchdog' and Le Duan's close companion sounded rather ominous.

This was also the interpretation of the GDR embassy, the Foreign Ministry in Berlin and ADN correspondent Pommerening. They concluded that Le Duc Tho's article constituted 'an open attack against those comrades who share pro-Soviet positions'.³³ It reflected the intensification of the struggle between different factions within the VWP and was a major step in the ideological preparation for the next plenum of the Central Committee and a rectification campaign against 'modern revisionism and revisionist' that had already loomed for a long time.

At the same time, the 'dogmatic pro-Chinese forces' opened a second front in the field of literature and launched their first frontal attack against 'bourgeois influences' among writers in the DRV.³⁴ In the August issue of *Hoc Tap*, the party's ideological platform, Hong Chuong targeted the novel *Vao doi*, written by Ha Minh Tuan. He accused the author of 'negativism', of only describing North Vietnamese society in

bleak terms, of making fun of the principle of proletarian dictatorship, and advocating a hedonistic lifestyle. Hong Chuong further argued that Tuan did not follow the obligatory model of socialist realism, but instead was heavily influenced by ‘the ideology of the landlord class and the reactionary bourgeoisie’.³⁵

In contrast to other contributions that were to be published in *Hoc Tap* in 1964, Hong Chuong’s article does not yet link Ha Minh Tuan’s shortcomings with ‘revisionism’. His sharp conclusion, however, also reflected the increasingly aggressive mood in the DRV: not only those elements of the former landowning class that had not been re-educated yet, but also working-class people and even party members were influenced by the ‘poison’ of ‘bourgeois thinking’.³⁶

In a meeting with GDR Cultural Attaché Klaus Matzke in August 1963, high-ranking cadres of the DRV Ministry of Culture elaborated on the origin of ‘bourgeois influences’ on writers and artists in North Vietnam. When asked by Matzke whether this ‘harmful bourgeois thinking’ originated from Thailand or South Vietnam, they answered in the negative and told their astonished East German guest that the main culprit was the Soviet Union and that in future the import of Soviet literature and films would be restricted.³⁷

In September 1963 East German correspondent Pommerening reported on the new atmosphere of fear in Hanoi: a cadre working in a state publishing house whom he had met quoted a member of the DRV state security apparatus who had recently spoken on the problem of vigilance: ‘With the help of the people we will also find the last comrade “working” for the Soviet Union.’³⁸ As a further typical example Pommerening cites a strange conversation with Duong Bach Mai and Ton That Tung, director of the Viet-Duc hospital in Hanoi: when mentioning the topic of beer Thung suddenly said in a loud voice: ‘Yes, the beer from the GDR is good, but your policy is bad.’³⁹ Obviously even a person like Ton That Tung – known as a ‘close friend of East Germany’ – found himself compelled to display his ‘correct attitude’ in public. Contacts between Vietnamese and foreigners were restricted as well. Without official permission most Vietnamese were no longer allowed to visit foreign offices, embassies, etc.⁴⁰

While fully acknowledging that the political situation in North Vietnam had become more tense and that ‘pro-Chinese elements’ were on the advance, East German diplomats were convinced that those forces who advocated a ‘truly Marxist-Leninist policy’ within the PWP still occupied important positions. The embassy knew in detail about the strength of the different factions in the party since it had received confidential information from Duong Bach Mai on who – besides himself – rejected the new ‘pro-Chinese’ line.⁴¹

The list includes 19 persons. Some persons on the list later became directly or indirectly involved in the ‘revisionist/anti-party affair’: Ung Van Khiem, minister of interior, former minister of foreign affairs; Vu Dinh Huynh, former personal secretary to Ho Chi Minh and head of the Protocol Department in the Foreign Ministry, Bui Cong Trung, member of the Party Central Committee, vice-chairman of the National Science and Technological Commission and director of the Institute of Economics, Le Liem, member of the Party Central Committee, deputy minister of culture, political

commissar at Dien Bien Phu, and Vo Nguyen Giap, minister of defence.⁴² What is striking about the list is the absence of the name of Hoang Minh Chinh, who played a major role in the whole affair.

While preparing for the upcoming Central Committee plenum the VWP intensified its ideological campaign. In the October issue of *Hoc Tap* Politburo member Nguyen Chi Thanh published an article that directly denounced the influence of 'modern revisionism' within the VWP. He emphasized that most members would follow the party line, but that a few still endorsed 'rightist' ideas. His criticism aimed in particular at those party members who opposed the model of a self-sufficient North Vietnamese economy and instead argued for closer economic cooperation with other socialist countries.⁴³ He further criticized 'individualistic', 'pessimistic' and 'hedonistic' party members who lacked a thorough understanding of the necessity of class struggle in the DRV and feared the sacrifices and hardships that an armed struggle for the reunification of the country would demand. According to Thanh these bourgeois thoughts were influenced by 'revisionism', had a negative impact on North Vietnamese society in general and undermined the fighting spirit. He concluded that the party had to vigorously fight against 'revisionism' and 'rightism' within the Lao Dong. In order to overcome the 'wrong ideas' the ideological struggle (*dau tranh tu tuong*) within the party should be stepped up and every party member should commit 'criticism and self-criticism'.⁴⁴

An occasion for self-criticism and the exposure of 'revisionist' tendencies among party members was soon to come. At the end of 1963 the Central Committee of the Lao Dong party held its 9th Plenum, which was of crucial significance. Originally, it was scheduled two months earlier. In the end, the meeting started on 22 November and finished at the beginning of January 1964 after several interruptions.⁴⁵ The plenum constituted a milestone in the process of moving closer to Beijing and resulted in heated discussions between the 'pro-Chinese' and the 'pro-Soviet faction'. In the end the group around First Secretary Le Duan prevailed and launched a rectification campaign to struggle against 'revisionists' influences within the party.⁴⁶

ADN correspondent Pommerening interpreted the meeting as 'the most solid confirmation of disputes within the party'.⁴⁷ About 50 middle-ranking cadres had sent letters to the Central Committee and demanded that the Lao Dong party should continue following a middle course between Moscow and Beijing and not move towards positions close to China. According to information gathered by the East German embassy and Pommerening these demands were made by cadres like Dang Thai Mai, chairman of the Writers' and Artists' Association, Ta Quang Buu, and Bui Cong Trung, both vice-chairmen of the National Scientific and Technological Commission, Hoang Minh Chinh, director of the Institute of Philosophy, former Foreign Minister Ung Van Khiem, and an assistant of Pham Van Dong whose name is not revealed.⁴⁸

In a speech at the plenum economic expert Bui Cong Trung explained that the economic situation of the DRV was very tense. He proposed a closer economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and to abandon the unrealistic idea to establish a

self-sufficient North Vietnamese economy. Ta Quang Buu warned that he would give up all his positions and work as a normal university teacher if the VWP leadership decided to switch over to Beijing and cut ties with Moscow. Le Liem and Ung Van Khiem seemed to have been the most outspoken opponents of the new 'pro-Chinese' course at the Central Committee. Ung Van Khiem spoke for three, Le Liem for four hours.⁴⁹

Ho Chi Minh, who usually argued in favour of balancing relations with Beijing and Moscow, had encouraged Le Liem to speak up against a shift towards a 'pro-Chinese' stance, but when it came to heated discussions during the plenum he did not support Le Liem. Whether 'Ho Chi Minh had been intimidated by the new leadership'⁵⁰ can only be guessed. According to another version, Ho Chi Minh tried several times to intervene in the debate, but was hindered by Le Duc Tho.⁵¹ In sum, it is quite obvious that at this stage it was the group around party leader Le Duan and his closest aid Le Duc Tho who were steering the course.

Unfortunately, there is no record available of the Plenum debates and discussions. However, two important documents exist – one of them is the Plenum's resolution discussing the international situation.⁵² This document clearly shows that the Lao Dong party now mainly followed 'pro-Chinese' lines on ideological issues. It argued that 'revisionism' had betrayed Marxism-Leninism and had propagated the principle of peaceful coexistence instead of supporting the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and for national independence of the people in colonies and dependent countries.⁵³ It asserted that 'the struggle against imperialism cannot be separated from the struggle against revisionism and rightist opportunism'.⁵⁴

The 9th Plenum formally recognized that armed struggle would play a crucial role in the revolutionary process. The Central Committee refrained from sending combat troops from the North to the South, but decided that the level of military assistance from the DRV and the support for the southern revolution was to be increased.

The resolution adopted at the plenum also reflected the ongoing debate within the Lao Dong party. The Central Committee criticized some party members for adopting 'revisionist' positions.⁵⁵ 'It observed that these views had led cadres not to support either the measures taken for the socialization of North Vietnam or the efforts required to achieve unification'⁵⁶ and recommended them 'to pursue the systematic education of cadres and party members in Marxism-Leninism' so that they could fully understand the party's standpoint.⁵⁷

The Campaign against 'Modern Revisionism' and 'Revisionist Elements' within the Lao Dong Party in 1964

In January 1964 Bergold, the GDR ambassador in North Vietnam, wrote a relatively positive report about the outcome of the 9th plenum. According to his analysis, the 'pro-Chinese elements' had overestimated their influence and had not managed to oust their opponents.⁵⁸ ADN correspondent Pommerening shared this view: originally, the 'Le Duan faction' had planned to carry out a purge and to enforce a

complete shift toward 'pro-Chinese' positions, but had failed to do so.⁵⁹ The Foreign Ministry in Berlin praised the 'courageous resistance of positive forces' during the plenum that had forced the 'Le Duan group' to make concessions.⁶⁰ At the same time, it admitted that the resolutions adopted at the 9th Plenum constituted a platform to launch a campaign against revisionism within the party and to isolate the 'Marxist-Leninist forces' in the VWP. The report concluded that the GDR should continue to develop mutual relations 'in order to support the progressive forces within the Lao Dong and to curb the harmful influence of the leadership of the Communist Party of China on the Lao Dong Party'.⁶¹

This, however, became more and more difficult. Right after the 9th Plenum the Lao Dong leadership started 'an ideological offensive to intimidate the Marxist-Leninist forces and to overcome their resistance'.⁶² Again it was Le Duc Tho, the head of the party organization department, who increased the ideological pressure on opponents within the party. In a series of articles in *Nhan Dan* he announced a rectification campaign.⁶³ He argued that while the DRV faced the difficult task of both building up socialism and fighting for the reunification of the country it was absolutely necessary that all party members submit themselves to party discipline. Le Duc Tho attacked those party members who were influenced by 'modern revisionism' and 'bourgeois thinking'. He criticized them for being 'pessimistic', lacking revolutionary vigilance and the right understanding of the principle of proletarian dictatorship, for being excessively prone to rely on foreign aid instead of supporting the idea of a self-sufficient economy and for being indifferent and unaware of their responsibilities with regard to the struggle for national reunification. While these were arguments that Le Duc Tho and others like Nguyen Chi Thanh had already used before, the tone of the article was much sharper and suggested concrete measures to fight 'revisionist' and 'rightist tendencies' within the party. Most importantly, however, Le Duc Tho directly admitted that a small faction existed within the Lao Dong party that did not follow the party line. He did not mention names, but it is obvious that he targeted party members like Bui Cong Trung, Duong Bach Mai, Hoang Minh Chinh, Le Liem, Ung Van Khiem and others who at the 9th Plenum had spoken up against Le Duan and his faction.

According to Le Duc Tho, 'a number of cadres and party members have separated themselves from the [party] organization. With regard to party lines and policies, they do not express their views at meetings, but when the meetings are over they gather in small groups and speak in terms that counter party resolutions'.⁶⁴ Tho added that 'such factionalist and divisive activities (*hanh dong be phai, chia re*) had to be stopped as early as possible'.⁶⁵

Le Duc Tho announced that all party members and cadres had to attend re-education classes to study the resolutions adopted at the 9th Central Committee plenum (*hoc tap va chinh huan*) and to employ self-criticism.⁶⁶ Both the East German embassy and ADN correspondent Pommerening were well informed about the contents of these rectification courses. The embassy even managed to get hold of a copy of the course syllabus although the Lao Dong party had classified the document as 'top secret' and forbidden all cadres to talk to others about

the contents of the courses.⁶⁷ According to this syllabus all party members had to ‘absorb’ (*tham nhuan*) the resolutions adopted by the 9th Plenum to fully understand the difference between the political line of ‘true Marxism-Leninism’ and of ‘revisionism’ with regard to the international situation and revolutionary strategy. At the end of the course every cadre had to submit a written personal declaration and explain what he had learnt.

The GDR embassy observed that the rectification campaign marginalized the ‘dissident’ faction within the Lao Dong party. In May 1964 Bibow, the second secretary, stated that some ‘comrades who had been outspoken [at the 9th Plenum] had suddenly disappeared’.⁶⁸ He reported that leading politicians like Ung Van Khiem and Ta Quang Buu who had criticized anti-Soviet positions held by the Le Duan-faction only rarely appeared in public.

On 4 April 1964 Duong Bach Mai, who had close relations with the GDR embassy and the East German News Service bureau in the DRV, suddenly died at age 60. Due to the mysterious circumstances of Mai’s death, but also due to the tense political atmosphere, rumours were circulating in Hanoi that not everything possible had been done to save his life.⁶⁹ According to embassy and ADN reports, the Lao Dong leadership made great efforts to undermine speculations that Duong Bach Mai had not died a natural death.⁷⁰

The GDR embassy and the Foreign Ministry linked the death of Mai, one of the most prominent ‘pro-Soviet’ party members in the DRV, to the ongoing rectification campaign and the struggle against ‘rightist’ and ‘revisionist thoughts’ within the Lao Dong party.

Bibow argued that there was evidence that ‘with the death of Duong Bach Mai the centre of a faction that was just in the making had been eliminated’.⁷¹ He added that this faction continued to exist and mainly consisted of younger and middle-ranking cadres. This view was not shared by his colleague Kowalski from the Soviet embassy in Hanoi. He emphasized that those forces in the DRV that opposed a ‘pro-Chinese’ course were not organized in a group.⁷²

In his analysis of the significance of Mai’s death Schneidewind, director of the First Department for Non-European Countries in the East German Foreign Ministry, went even further than the GDR embassy in Hanoi. He interpreted Mai’s sudden death as ‘the deliberate elimination of one of the most energetic opponents within the Vietnamese Workers’ Party’.⁷³

In June 1964 Vietnam expert P. J. Honey dwelt at length on Duong Bach Mai’s death. He argues that if one takes into account that Mai had been ‘among the leaders of the communist movement in Vietnam from its earliest days’, holding several high-ranking positions in the National Assembly and the Fatherland Front, ‘it might have been expected that his death would have been the occasion of eulogies and possibly even a state funeral, but the reverse happened’.⁷⁴

Indeed, it is striking that according to Bibow’s and Pommerening’s accounts of Duong Bach Mai’s funeral, Politburo member Hoang Quoc Viet only gave a very short funeral oration and did not even mention that Mai had been a veteran party member. He just mentioned that Mai had ‘gained merits’ and then enumerated his different

positions. The obituary notice in the *Nhan Dan* issue of 6 April 1964 was short as well, giving no details of the circumstances of Mai's death, and did not elaborate further on his merits.⁷⁵ Party leaders like Truong Chinh attended the funeral, but obviously mainly to undermine the abovementioned rumours.

Whether the Le Duan faction really mourned for the deceased Duong Bach Mai is questionable. Even before Mai was buried, police and members of the DRV state security service searched his house. Right after his death Duong Bach Mai was expelled from the Lao Dong party.⁷⁶ In 1965 Tuan Nguyen, who had written poems mourning the death of Duong Bach Mai, was imprisoned for eight years. The poems had not even been published.⁷⁷

Without consulting the relevant documents in the party archive in Hanoi it can only be speculated whether Duong Bach Mai had died a natural death or not. The way the Lao Dong party leadership reacted to the death of one of its most prominent and outspoken opponents was a foreboding of what the remaining party critics still awaited. Meanwhile, the campaign against 'modern revisionism' was intensified and carried out at several fronts at the same time.

An article in the April 1964 issue of *Van Hoc* by Vu Duc Phuc applied the new political line adopted at the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee to the field of literature.⁷⁸ The author warned of the influence of 'modern revisionism' on writers in North Vietnam. He argued that before the August revolution older writers had not thoroughly grasped the party line and therefore written books that were ideologically mediocre and sometimes even 'reactionary'. After 1945 writers in the DRV had followed Marxism-Leninism more closely, only 'anti-party cliques' like the *Nhan Van Giai Pham* group had refused to do so.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, many cadres working in the field of literature had not yet realized how dangerous 'modern revisionism' was because it usually appeared under the cloak of Marxism-Leninism.⁸⁰ Therefore, some books published in the DRV showed 'revisionist' tendencies. Some books were influenced by 'pessimism' and 'defeatism', especially with regard to the problem of national reunification. For example, in their books some writers opposed any kind of war which contradicted the party's view that without resorting to revolutionary violence the South Vietnamese people could not liberate themselves. Other books celebrated an 'individualistic' and 'hedonistic' lifestyle and 'discredited' (*boi nho*) the construction of socialism in the DRV.⁸¹

In this context Vu Duc Phuc considered the resolutions adopted at the 9th Plenum as an opportunity to review (*kiem diem*) the work in the literary work. He concluded that 'as fighters on the literary front' (*chien si tren mat tran van hoc*) writers in the DRV had to track down and denounce 'revisionist' influences in Vietnamese literature.

In a speech held in June 1964 at a conference of the Writers' and Artists' Association To Huu, head of the Lao Dong Propaganda and Education Department, further elaborated on the negative influence of 'revisionist' literature, films, etc. on the DRV.⁸² He directly criticized the fact that in the past too many books, films and plays from socialist countries showing 'revisionist' tendencies had been imported to the DRV.

According to To Huu, these works propagated the dangerous ideas of ‘humanism’ (*chủ nghĩa nhân đạo*) trying to prove the existence of ‘general humanity’, ‘eternal ethics’ and ‘timeless love’ and totally ignored the crucial significance of the class background and a correct Marxist-Leninist standpoint.⁸³ ‘Revisionists in some socialist countries’, however, would never admit that they disseminated ideas of a ‘bourgeois humanism’. Instead, they would always pretend to be ‘true Marxist-Leninists’.⁸⁴

To Huu concluded that ‘modern revisionism’ was the greatest danger for the international communist movement and revolutionary art. Together with the Lao Dong party writers and artists should resolutely and uncompromisingly fight against the tendencies of ‘modern revisionism’ in North Vietnam. In future, the import of books, films, etc. from other socialist countries should be restricted.⁸⁵ An article by Hong Chuong in the same *Hoc Tap* issue repeated To Huu’s arguments, the anti-Soviet tone of his contribution; however, was even more pronounced.⁸⁶

The GDR embassy closely followed how the rectification campaign that had been initiated after the 9th Plenum was also extended to the field of literature. Klaus Matzke, cultural attaché of the East German embassy in Hanoi, submitted a long report on the cultural policy of the DRV.⁸⁷ His analysis relies mainly on a close reading of the abovementioned articles written by Vu Duc Phuc and To Huu. He stated that the new course adopted by the Lao Dong party at the 9th Plenum did have negative influences on the cultural relations of two countries, but that there were still ‘enough possibilities to develop these relations’.⁸⁸ For example, the DRV restricted the import of literature and films and the invitation of artists from the European socialist countries.

In general, Matzke concluded, the new course had not been generally accepted in the DRV. While this conclusion might be correct, other available evidence suggests that the rectification campaign was also carried out among writers and several Vietnamese authors like Vu Thu Hien, Phu Thang and Huu Mai were denounced by To Huu and others for being influenced by ‘modern revisionism’.⁸⁹ One of the first to be purged was Minh Tranh, director of the ‘Truth Publishing House’ (*Nha Xuat ban Su That*), who was accused of having supported the translation and publication of too many ‘revisionist’ books, but his main ‘fault’ seems to have been an article in the *Hoc Tap* issue of February 1963 that warned against a shift toward Beijing and ‘adventurous manoeuvres’ in South Vietnam, implicitly arguing against sending North Vietnamese troops to South Vietnam.⁹⁰

In 1964 arguments for a self-sufficient North Vietnamese economy became much more pronounced. In an article in March 1964, Luu Quy Ky, head of the Propaganda Department of the Lao Dong party, maintained that the DRV was ‘exploited’ by all socialist countries except the People’s Republic of China and Albania.⁹¹ He particularly complained that economic aid supplied by Moscow mainly served the interests of the Soviet Union. In 1964, the Soviet Union actually reduced its economic aid to the DRV. Soviet exports to North Vietnam declined as well.⁹² However, it is not clear whether this was due to a decision of the DRV leadership to reduce the dependency on Soviet aid or rather a Soviet reaction to the estrangement of relations with North Vietnam.

The campaign against 'revisionism' not only led to a more restrictive economic and cultural policy by the DRV, but also to a much more restrictive policy towards Europeans in general and towards embassies representing socialist countries in the DRV in particular. In May 1964, in a report to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin, the GDR embassy complained that while the situation for the 'Marxist-Leninist forces' had become worse, the surveillance of the East German embassy had been stepped up, and it also became more and more difficult for the embassy to present its views.⁹³

The freedom of movement for the embassy outside Hanoi was restricted. This also applied to contacts between Vietnamese citizens and representatives of European socialist countries. The GDR embassy observed that many Vietnamese 'comrades' no longer dared to maintain contacts with Europeans out of fear of criticism and reprisals.⁹⁴ Franz Faber, Pommerening's successor as ADN correspondent in the DRV, had the same experience. Faber, who in 1954 had visited North Vietnam as the first East German journalist, noticed many positive changes, but was irritated by the tense atmosphere in the capital and the lack of contacts with Vietnamese. In October 1964 he reported that so far, out of fear, no Vietnamese had entered the AND bureau without permission. In spite of the formal politeness of Vietnamese cadres towards him, Faber concluded 'that in the eyes of party and government we are at least undesirable foreigners.'⁹⁵

In a report of April 1964 Bibow mentioned an incident that he considered to be 'typical' of the atmosphere in Hanoi and the domestic development of the DRV at that time: after GDR Cultural Attaché Klaus Matzke, who spoke fluent Vietnamese, and a colleague had engaged in conversation with some Vietnamese at Hanoi main railway station, the latter were arrested and interrogated by Vietnamese police. One of these diplomats was also told by his Vietnamese language teacher that in future they could not talk to each other since Vietnamese were no longer allowed to 'mix' with Europeans.⁹⁶

Mistrust, however, started to be mutual. On 25 May 1964 Bergold, the GDR ambassador, ordered all Vietnamese to be replaced with German staff members until autumn that year and to change all locks on the embassy compound in order to enhance security.⁹⁷ The night before Vietnamese security forces had surrounded the embassy and wanted to search for a Vietnamese who had entered the embassy compound, which East German diplomats rejected. The GDR Foreign Ministry in Berlin considered the behaviour of the Vietnamese security forces as a provocation and an attempt to violate the territorial integrity of the embassy. Schneidewind, chief of the First Department for Non-European Countries, commented that the whole affair had been instigated by 'pro-Chinese elements' in the DRV leadership who wanted to discredit the reputation of the East German embassy in Hanoi and further isolate those Vietnamese who were still interested in good relations with the embassy.⁹⁸

The GDR Foreign Ministry first ordered the East German ambassador to officially protest, but then refrained from this rather strong reaction⁹⁹ when the DRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs apologized for the incident.¹⁰⁰ The GDR committed itself to continue improving relations with the DRV, but in fact these relations were now at low ebb. This was also due to the fact that the campaign against 'revisionism' was even carried out in the GDR.

Vietnamese Students in the GDR and the Campaign against 'Modern Revisionism'

Right from the start of the rectification campaign the Lao Dong leadership – in particular To Huu – had paid special attention to those Vietnamese cadres and students who were studying in socialist countries now classified as 'revisionist'. In order to make sure that they would follow the new political line of the Lao Dong party, the students were ordered to return home to attend re-education classes.

This applied especially to the Soviet Union where the largest number of North Vietnamese was studying. While most of them obeyed the orders of the DRV embassy, some cadres and students decided to stay in the Soviet Union out of protest against the new 'pro-Chinese' political line in Hanoi. One of the most prominent cases was that of Van Doan, editor-in-chief of the army newspaper *Quan Doi Nhan Dan*.¹⁰¹ In sum about 50 Vietnamese chose to stay in the Soviet Union and applied for political asylum.

At the same time, similar developments took place in East Germany. Due to the fact that Vietnamese students studying in the GDR were closely watched by their host universities and the Ministry of State Security (MfS) many 'Stasi' documents shed light on the specific situation in East Germany and give evidence that the fight against 'modern revisionism' led by the DRV 'also took place on German soil'.

According to a Vietnamese who later applied for GDR citizenship in summer 1963 all Vietnamese students studying in East Germany had to gather in a small town near Leipzig to attend political summer courses organized by the DRV embassy. The main aim of these courses was to 'unmask and condemn modern revisionism and to agree on how to fight against revisionist influences'.¹⁰² The DRV embassy told the students not to have close relations with Germans and not to read (East) German newspapers and journals. Instead, they should study political propaganda brochures in Vietnamese that were published by the People's Republic of China and distributed by the DRV embassy in Berlin.

At the end of 1963, the North Vietnamese embassy intensified its control over Vietnamese students in the GDR to make sure that they did not show political attitudes that were in conflict with the official party line. Correspondingly, East German authorities complained that many Vietnamese students increasingly shared the 'well-known sectarian attitudes' of the Chinese Communist Party.¹⁰³ While the Vietnamese embassy was mostly successful in its effort to keep watch over the students, political disputes and conflicts among Vietnamese students became more and more frequent. In December 1963 and January 1964 several Vietnamese students contacted the East German authorities and stated that they did not share the new 'anti-Soviet' positions propagated by their embassy, therefore would not comply with orders to return home and wished to stay in the GDR.¹⁰⁴

The DRV embassy increased its political pressure on the Vietnamese students and – in line with the 'anti-revisionist campaign' that had started back home – denounced those with 'pro-Soviet' views as 'revisionists'. As a reaction, at the end of March 1964 three 'dissident' students disappeared. The DRV embassy immediately asked the GDR authorities to help find them.¹⁰⁵ The Vietnam Section in the GDR Foreign Ministry

promised that it would do so. In fact the Vietnam experts in the Foreign Ministry just agreed pro forma because they were well aware of current domestic developments in North Vietnam, and convinced that the students had fled out of fear for reprisals taken by the embassy.¹⁰⁶

The whole conflict reached a new stage, when at the beginning of June 1964 all Vietnamese cadres living in the GDR were summoned to attend a political meeting in the DRV embassy. The embassy propagated the view that in the GDR 'revisionism' dominated all political and social activities and that therefore all Vietnamese had to take care not be 'infected' by 'revisionism'.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, the DRV embassy informed the East German Ministry of Foreign Affairs that all Vietnamese students studying in the GDR should return home in summer instead of attending political courses in Germany.

In internal reports the East German side commented that this decision had obviously been taken for political reasons, and that it was not in the interest of the GDR if Vietnamese students returned home to take part in 'political indoctrination courses'.¹⁰⁸ To speed up the whole procedure, a few weeks later the DRV sent its vice-minister of education to the GDR. Obviously, his departure was rather hasty since the East German Foreign Ministry complained of not having been informed of his visit in due time as it was the diplomatic custom. In talks with his East German counterparts the DRV vice-minister of education made additional demands that reflected a clear political background. He requested that in future Vietnamese students should be excluded from the obligatory introductory courses in Marxism-Leninism. He argued that it would be much easier for them to attend these courses in Vietnamese than in German. The GDR State Secretariat for Higher Education, however, insisted that courses in Marxism-Leninism were integral part of the syllabus for foreign students studying in East Germany.¹⁰⁹ The DRV vice-minister also denounced rumours circulating among Vietnamese students that they would not be allowed to return to East Germany after taking part in political courses in the DRV.¹¹⁰ In spite of these official declarations, these rumours proved to be true: 53 out of more than 100 students who had returned home to attend political courses¹¹¹ were not sent back to East Germany.¹¹²

In sum, about 20 Vietnamese students disobeyed their embassy's orders and stayed in the GDR. In June 1964 the Vietnamese embassy informed the GDR Secretariat of Higher Education that ten additional students had fled. According to the embassy's version, these students were 'bad and depraved elements' that did not want to return home and were 'too lazy to work'.¹¹³ In July 1964, the Vietnamese embassy also contacted Department X of the Ministry of State Security (MfS) that was in charge of foreign students studying in the GDR and asked for its support in finding the fugitive students.¹¹⁴

In the second half of 1964, the Vietnamese embassy on several occasions asked the GDR Foreign Ministry and other East German authorities about the fate of the Vietnamese students who had decided not to return home. The embassy emphasized that the students had not stayed in East Germany out of political reasons and continued to dwell on their 'depraved' character. In one meeting, however, a DRV

diplomat indirectly admitted the political background of the whole affair: 'They [the fugitive students] are ideologically degenerated and don't want to study.'¹¹⁵

As mentioned before, from the very beginning the East German side had realized that the decision of the DRV to send the students back home was politically motivated and had to be understood in the context of the campaign against 'modern revisionism' in North Vietnam. Initial doubts that some of the Vietnamese students had submitted applications to stay in the GDR because they did not share the political views of the embassy and were afraid of reprisals after their return home soon evaporated. When screening the applications it even turned out that a member of the MfS had recommended some students to ask for permission to stay in East Germany.¹¹⁶

In July 1964, the GDR Foreign Ministry realized that the whole affair would have a negative impact on relations with the DRV. It suggested dealing with the embassy's requests to send the fugitive students back to Vietnam using delaying tactics.¹¹⁷ Consequently, in July and September a high-ranking representative of the East German Foreign Ministry in charge of Vietnam told the Vietnamese embassy that the Vietnamese students had been found, but that the authorities of the GDR had no means to force them to return home. The GDR authorities ignored the embassy's assertions that the Vietnamese students were 'not worthy' to continue studying and allowed them to stay in East Germany.¹¹⁸

The uncompromising attitude of the GDR Foreign Ministry to the requests of the DRV embassy stiffened when in August 1964 it received a report from the DRV embassy in Hanoi that confirmed its worst fears. The embassy had managed to gather information about the indoctrination courses that students returning from the GDR (and other socialist countries) had to attend. In these courses the students had to be convinced of the correctness of the new policy of the Lao Dong party. They specifically had to report 'concrete facts' about the 'revisionist policy of the SED and the government of the GDR'. As requested, the students denounced the GDR 'as being completely dependent on the Soviet Union' and 'restoring the capitalist system' – accusations that Matzke, GDR cultural attaché, qualified as 'slandorous'.¹¹⁹

The GDR embassy further reported that the DRV wanted to restrict the number of students studying in East Germany. Likewise, the DRV Ministry of Education had declared that it did not need a GDR lecturer in German anymore. The East German embassy concluded that obviously the DRV wanted to avoid the risk that a lecturer from East Germany would spread the ideas of the 'modern revisionists' among students in Hanoi.¹²⁰

After the Tonkin incident in 1964 and the escalation of the Vietnam War relations between the GDR and the DRV improved again. However, the case of those dissident students that had stayed in East Germany in 1964 continued to trouble GDR authorities. In 1966 they complained that the Vietnamese student community at the universities of Leipzig and Dresden was still split into different political factions that were fighting each other. Six Vietnamese students had declared they would not return home as long as the Lao Dong party followed the 'Chinese' line.¹²¹

In the late 1960s, when in the DRV attacks against 'revisionist tendencies in socialist countries in Eastern Europe' had almost completely disappeared from the mass media, the DRV embassy in the GDR still upheld this campaign. In summer courses in 1966, the Vietnamese embassy denounced the political line of the SED as 'revisionist' and the 6th Party Congress in the GDR as the 'climax of revisionism'.¹²² Life in the GDR, the students were warned, was 'bourgeois, like in capitalism'.¹²³ In contrast, Vietnamese were 'real revolutionaries'. If they adopted the way of life of the East Germans, they would 'betray the revolution'.¹²⁴ To prevent Vietnamese students from being influenced by this 'bourgeois' lifestyle, they were given detailed instructions on how to behave during their stay in the GDR, to avoid personal contacts with Germans, not to accept private invitations, not to talk about politics, not to watch 'indecent' movies from capitalist and socialist countries, to regularly perform self-criticism, not to attend courses on Marxism-Leninism at East German universities, avoid any contact with the 'group of revisionist students'.¹²⁵ These instructions, reflecting a deep-seated fear of 'western culture' were upheld at least until the end of the 1960s. According to a Stasi file, in 1969 Vietnamese trainees were told by the Vietnamese embassy in Berlin not to listen to German radio or to watch TV, to read German newspapers or listen to western music.¹²⁶

In a similar vein, the Vietnamese embassy continued to denounce the dissident students as 'traitors' and 'group of revisionists' and on several occasions asked the East German authorities to help send them back to the DRV. It argued that in spite of all efforts made by the DRV embassy for many years the students stuck to their 'incorrect political views' and that therefore there was no other way but to continue their 'educational process' in the DRV.¹²⁷ In 1967, during his first meeting with Erich Mielke, minister for state security, the new DRV ambassador insisted to such a degree on 'solving the problem' of the Vietnamese students that in the end Mielke, who pretended not to know about the whole issue seemed to be rather irritated and abruptly closed the conversation.¹²⁸

The GDR did not follow the demands brought forward by North Vietnamese diplomats: in 1969 the East German minister of foreign affairs suggested officially extending the residence permits of several 'Vietnamese citizens' who had applied for political asylum.¹²⁹

Conclusion

The events of 1963 and 1964 in the DRV were of crucial significance. By launching a campaign against 'revisionism' and 'modern revisionism' the party leadership around Le Duan and Le Duc Tho managed to isolate those party cadres who held views not in line with the official strategy on a further escalation of the war. 'Revisionist' became a synonym for any kind of 'dissent' and was combined with further attributes like 'pessimistic', 'hedonistic' and 'bourgeois'.

The rectification campaign, however, not only dealt with dissenting views within the party, but also served as a propaganda tool to mentally prepare the North Vietnamese

society for the escalation of war and the sacrifices that a violent struggle for the reunification of the country would demand. It was not by coincidence that high-ranking party cadres like To Huu and Nguyen Chi Thanh especially targeted 'revisionist' influences in the field of culture. After having crushed open dissent among writers and artists during the 'Nhan Van-Giai Pham affair' in the 1950s, the 'anti-revisionist' campaign in 1963 and 1964 was a further step to establish the hegemony of the party over cultural activities and to isolate those writers who propagated views of 'humanism' and 'peaceful coexistence' that according to party analysts were not in line with the new militant mood and could undermine the fighting spirit of the North Vietnamese people.

The fight against dissent within the Communist Party continued during the war and was stepped up in 1967 at the wake of the Tet offensive when dissident party members like Bui Cong Trung, Hoang Minh Chinh, Le Liem or Ung Van Khiem were arrested or put under house arrest. These drastic measures must be analysed in the domestic and international context at this time, but it is obvious that they originated from ideological disputes that had taken place in 1963 and 1964.¹³⁰ Strikingly, this wave of arrests took place when the campaign against 'modern revisionism' had been officially stepped down in the North Vietnamese media and the Soviet Union had become a close ally of the DRV. Under the cloak of official declarations of 'friendship' with East Germany the DRV upheld its distrust of East German society and in secret continued to denounce the GDR as 'revisionist'.

The ideological dispute among DRV students studying in East Germany continued until the late 1960s. 'Normal' Vietnamese students were advised by their embassy not to have contacts with their dissident compatriots. The DRV embassy still tried to force the 'revisionist' students to go home, but had to give up. Then it seemed to have lost interest in the whole issue. Later events, however, show that the DRV embassy had not forgotten and certainly not 'forgiven' those 20 students who had applied for political asylum in East Germany in the 1960s.

In 1983, the Stasi realized that several of those Vietnamese who had been granted a permanent residence permit and GDR citizenship were now looking after Vietnamese contract workers. The DRV embassy considered this to be a strain on the otherwise good relations with the GDR and therefore asked the East German side to find a 'solution'. This time the GDR authorities tried their best to please the Vietnamese embassy. The MfS in the meantime had developed close relations with the Vietnamese Ministry of Interior and was assigned the task to gradually 'isolate the GDR citizens from Vietnam' from the Vietnamese contract workers. It managed to do so to the satisfaction of their Vietnamese colleagues. The Vietnamese with GDR passports lost their jobs.¹³¹

Abbreviations

- ADN Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst (General German News Service, GDR)
1. AEA 1. Außereuropäische Abteilung (First Department for Non-European Countries in the GDR Foreign Ministry)

MfAA	Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten (GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
MfS	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry of State Security, commonly known as 'Stasi')
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Unified Socialist Party of Germany)
VWP	Vietnamese Workers' Party

Archival Sources

BStU = Die Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der Ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic).

MfAA = Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten (Political Archives of the Foreign Ministry, GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

SAPMO-BArch = Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (Foundation for Archives of the Parties and Mass Organisation of the GDR in the Federal Archives).

VVA = The Vietnam Virtual Archive, Texas Tech University.

Notes

- [1] This paper is part of a larger research project on 'Domestic Developments in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the Background of Relations to the German Democratic Republic: Dissidence in North Vietnam'. I would like to thank my colleague Heinz Schütte, Paris, for sharing some of his archival sources with me.
- [2] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, ADN-Auslandsstelle Hanoi, Betrifft: Information über die vietnamesische Haltung zu Albanien, Hanoi, 11 December 1961.
- [3] Ibid., 2.
- [4] The relevant documents are kept in the Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv: <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/index.html?lang=en>) and the Political Archives of the Foreign Ministry (Politisches Archiv: http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/en/infoservice/politik/index_html) both in Berlin.
- [5] The best available study is Stowe, 'Révisionnisme au Vietnam'. Heng, 'Of the State, for the State, Yet Against the State', also gives a good account of the affair and its impact on the DRV media. I thank the author for making available his unpublished thesis. Two of the memoirs most often cited are Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, and Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*. See also Bui Tin, *Following Ho Chi Minh*; Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh. A Life*, 534–539, Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh*, 245–246, and Boudarel and Nguyen Van Ky, *Hanoi 1936–1996*, 144–148.

- [6] For the ideological domestic setting see Heng, 'Of the State, for the State, Yet Against the State', 117–120.
- [7] For the development of Soviet–Vietnamese relations in the early 1960s see Gaiduk, *Confronting Vietnam*, 181–204.
- [8] Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 61.
- [9] MfAA/A 8705, 179–180, 1. AEA, 23 February 1963, Schneidewind, Information über die Haltung der PWV anlässlich der Besuche einer Delegation des Obersten Sowjets der UdSSR und des Präsidenten der CSSR, Genossen A. Novotny in der DRV.
- [10] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 2, ADN Hanoi, Zum VI. Parteitag der SED, 21 February 1963, Pommerening.
- [11] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, Situation nach Politbüroerklärung, March 1963, Pommerening. See also Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 61–63.
- [12] Duong Bach Mai's proposal in a National Assembly session to postpone Ung Van Khiem's replacement until September 1963 was rejected. See SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 1, ADN Hanoi, Zum Besuch von Liou Chao chi, Pommerening, 28 May 1963.
- [13] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 1, Informationsbericht des ADN-Korrespondenten in Hanoi, 24 April 1963.
- [14] MfAA/A 8705, 68, 1. AEA, 3 May 1963, Information über die Auswertung des VI. Parteitages der SED in der DRV, Schneidewind.
- [15] MfAA/G-A 324, 2, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, 28 May 1963, Bibow, Einschätzung des Besuches der chinesischen Partei- und Regierungsdelegation unter der Leitung des Präsidenten der VR China Liu Shao Tshi und des stellv. Ministerpräsidenten Tschen-Yu, vom 10. bis 15.05.1963 in der DRV.
- [16] See *Ibid.*, 8–9, SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/441, ADN Hanoi, Gemeinsame Erklärung des Präsidenten HCM und des Präsidenten Liou Chao Chi, 16 May 1963, MfAA/A 8749, 8–9, 1. AEA, Entwurf, Einflußnahme der KP Chinas auf die Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams, Berlin, 4 June 1963. For an analysis of Liu Shaoqi's visit see Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 63–65, and Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars 1950–1975*, 124.
- [17] See SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 1, ADN Hanoi, Zum Besuch von Liou Chao chi, Pommerening, 28 May 1963, 4.
- [18] *Tien Phong*, 19 June 1963, cited in Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 65.
- [19] MfAA/A 8749, 10.
- [20] MfAA/G-A 324, 20, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Mehlig, 17 June 1963, Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit den Botschaftern der Sowjetunion, der CSSR und Ungarn anlässlich eines Filmabends der Botschaft am 14.6.1963 von 21.30 – 02.00 Uhr.
- [21] *Ibid.*, 20.
- [22] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/296, 3, ADN Auslandsstelle Hanoi/Vietnam, Pommerening, 24 June 1963.
- [23] Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 66. For an analysis of the DRV position see SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 1, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, 31 August 1963, Pommerening, and SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/441, 1. AEA, Sektion Vietnam, 21 August 1963, Strauss, Die Haltung der DRV zum Abkommen über teilweisen Kernteststopp.
- [24] See MfAA/A 8705, 198–206, Botschaft der DDR, Guhl, Bericht über die Berichterstattung der Presse der DRV zu den Meinungsverschiedenheiten zwischen der internationalen kommunistischen Arbeiterbewegung und der KP Chinas sowie den damit zusammenhängenden Problemen, 7 August 1963.
- [25] 'Ten phan boi Ti-To lai phun ra noc doc cua nghia xet lai' (The Traitor Tito again Spreads the Poison of Revisionism), *Hoc Tap*, no. 7 (July 1963): 9–17. For an analysis see MfAA/G-A 324, 31, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Bibow, 19 August 1963. Einschätzung der derzeitigen

Haltung der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams in den ideologisch-politischen Meinungsverschiedenheiten.

- [26] See *Ibid.*, MfAA/G-A 324, 28–44.
- [27] That Giap had been put under house arrest was first mentioned by the Soviet ambassador in June 1963. MfAA/G-A 324, 19. For further sources see MfAA/G-A 324, 32, SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 2, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, 31 August 1963, Pommerening.
- [28] See MfAA/G-A 324, 32–33, and SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 2, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, 31 August 1963, Pommerening.
- [29] MfAA/G-A 324, 37–38, and MfAA/A G-A 331, 61–62, 1. AEA, Information über die derzeitige Haltung der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams (PWV) zu den ideologisch-politischen Meinungsverschiedenheiten, 11 October 1963, Löbel, Sektionsleiter.
- [30] See MfAA/A G-A 331, 61. For the conflict between older ‘pro-Soviet’ VWP party members like the above-mentioned and the ‘new generation’ of Le Duan and Le Duc Tho see Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 225–226.
- [31] Le Duc Tho, ‘Phat huy truyen thong cach mang’, 2, 4.
- [32] *Ibid.*, 2.
- [33] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 1–2, ADN Außenstelle Hanoi/Vietnam, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, Pommerening, 18 September 1963. See also MfAA/A G-A 331, 56–57, and MfAA/G-A 326, 45, 71–72, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Einschätzung der Haltung der Führung der PWV und der Regierung der DRV zu den ideologischen Meinungsverschiedenheiten in der internationalen kommunistischen Arbeiterbewegung sowie zu innen- und außenpolitischen Problemen, 14 November 1963, Bibow, 2. Sekr.
- [34] See Heng, ‘Of the State, for the State, Yet Against the State’, 126–135.
- [35] Hong Chuong, ‘Do la van de tu tuong hoac la van de nghe thuat?’, 50. For more details on the ‘Ha Minh Tuan affair’ see Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, 120–124, and Heng, ‘Of the State, for the State, Yet Against the State’, 131–132. For a revealing account of the campaign against Ha Minh Tuan and other ‘revisionist’ writers that was published at the outset of the ‘doi moi era’ see Mai Ngu, ‘Ve mot thoi ky da qua’, 106–107. See also the report of the East German cultural attache in MfAA/A 8701, Botschaft DDR Hanoi, 3 August 1963, Mehlig, 115–123. Bericht über den 3. Schriftstellerkongreß der DRV (10.–12.1.1963) und einige Fragen der Entwicklung der vietnamesischen Literatur.
- [36] Hong Chuong, ‘Do la van de tu tuong hoac la van de nghe thuat?’, 50.
- [37] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/ IV 2/907/100, 1, Botschaft der DDR, 7 September 1963, Matzke Aktenvermerk Nr. 117/63, Vermerk über eine gegenseitige Information im Min. für Kultur der DRV, 23 August 1963.
- [38] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 2, ADN Außenstelle Hanoi/Vietnam, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, Pommerening, 18 September 1963.
- [39] See *Ibid.* According to Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 260–261, before the 9th Party Plenum Ton That Tung had written a letter to the Central Committee and warned the VWP of too closely following a ‘pro-Chinese’ course. Ton That Tung was one of the driving forces in the field of medical cooperation with the GDR.
- [40] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/54, 2, ADN Außenstelle Hanoi/Vietnam, Zur politischen Situation in der DRV, Pommerening, 18 September 1963. For further examples see the report of Hans Israel, German lecturer in Hanoi in 1963 and 1964: SAPMO, BArch, DR 3, 1. Schicht, 2843, Berichte über die Lektorentätigkeit in der VR China und in der DRV, Hans Israel, Hanoi/Vietnam an das Staatssekretariat für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen, Sektor Sozialistisches Ausland, Hanoi, 15 October 1963, 3; and Hans Israel, Leipzig, an das Staatssekretariat für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen, Bericht über meine Tätigkeit in Vietnam im Studienjahr 1962/63, 6.
- [41] MfAA/G-A 326, 15.

- [42] For biographical details about some of these persons see the biographical appendix in Quinn-Judge, *Ho Chi Minh*, 308–345. Interestingly, a Dictionary of Historical Vietnamese Persons published in Vietnam also includes short biographies of Bui Cong Trung, Duong Bach Mai and Ung Van Khiem, albeit mostly leaving out the ‘sensitive’ period after 1954. See Nguyen Q. Thang and Nguyen Ba The, *Tu dien nhan vat lich su Viet Nam*, 95–96, 1101–1102, and 1358–1359.
- [43] Nguyen Chi Thanh, ‘Nang cao lap trung, tu tuong vo san’, 6–7.
- [44] *Ibid.*, 12.
- [45] MfAA/G-A 324, 060, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Bergold, Information Nr. 2 über das Novemberplenium der PWV und die Entwicklung innerhalb der Partei (Nach Informationen aus Gesprächen mit Botschaftern und vietnamesischen Genossen), 15 January 1964.
- [46] For an analysis of the 9th Plenum see, for example, Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, pp.67-70, Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh. A Life*, 534–538, Boudarel and Nguyen Van Ky, *Hanoi 1936–1996*, 144–146, Boudarel, *Cent Fleurs Eclodes dans la Nui du Vietnam*, 256–259. For an autobiographical account see Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 273–275.
- [47] MfAA/A 8749, 065, Informationsbericht des ADN-Korrespondenten in Hanoi, Information über das 9. Plenum des ZK der PWV, Eingang 1. AEA, January (?) 1964.
- [48] See MfAA/A 8749, 065, MfAA/G-A 324, 060-61, MfAA/G-A 324, 0126, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, 10 December 1963, Vermerk vom 10.12.1963 über das Novemberplenium der PWV und die Entwicklung innerhalb der Partei. Duong Bach Mai was the main informant.
- [49] MfAA/G-A 324, 126.
- [50] See Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh. A Life*, 537, who relies on Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 359–360.
- [51] See Nguyen Van Tran, *Viet cho me va quoc hoi*, 326–328, and Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh*, 246.
- [52] The document was seized by US forces in South Vietnam in 1967. See The Central Committee 9th Plenum Resolution Discussing the International Situation, December 1963, VVA, Record 104141 (Item Number: 2320109006).
- [53] See *Ibid.*, 36. For an analysis of the resolution see Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 68–69.
- [54] See Resolution, 39.
- [55] See Resolution, 47–49.
- [56] Smyser, *The Independent Vietnamese*, 69.
- [57] See Resolution, 51.
- [58] MfAA/G-A 324, 061–064. In a meeting at the Soviet embassy in January 1964, the Soviet ambassador agreed with the analysis of his East German colleague. See MfAA/G-A 324, 070, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Bergold, 15 January 1964, Aktenvermerk über Aussprachen des Genossen Bergold mit dem sowjetischen Botschafter in der DRV, Gen. Tovmassian [Tovmasyan], am 11 January 1964 in der sowjetischen Botschaft.
- [59] MfAA/A 8749, 065.
- [60] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/439, 1–2, 1. AEA, Sektion Vietnam, 13 February 1964, Schneidewind, Jahresplan für die Entwicklung der Beziehungen zwischen der DDR und der DRV im Jahre 1964.
- [61] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/439, 2.
- [62] MfAA/G-A 324, 073, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Bibow, Einschätzung der Entwicklung der politischen Situation in der DRV nach dem 9. Plenum des ZK der PWV im Dez. 1963/Januar 1964, 27 May 1964.
- [63] Le Duc Tho, ‘Tang Cuong mat tran tu tuong de cung co Dang’, 2. Bibow, second secretary of the GDR embassy in Hanoi, emphasizes the crucial significance of these articles. See his analysis in MfAA/G-A 324, 073–074. See further Latimer, *Hanoi’s Leaders and the Policies of War*, 20, VVA, Record 69694 (Item Number: 0720118002), and Smyser, *The Independent*

Vietnamese, 72, who quotes a similar article by Le Duc Tho that was published in the March issue of *Tuyen Huan*.

- [64] Le Duc Tho. 'Tang Cuong', 5 February 1964, 2.
- [65] *Ibid.*, 2.
- [66] For details about these rectification courses see MfAA/G-A 324, 073, and especially MfAA/A 8749, 089–090, Abschrift, Informationsbericht des ADN-Korrespondenten. in HN über eine ideologische Kampagne der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams, Pommerening, Eingang Abt. Information, 23 April 1964.
- [67] MfAA/A 8725, 074–076, Botschaft Hanoi, Studium der Resolution des IX. Plenums des Zentralkomitees der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams über die internationalen Probleme, 27 April 1964, Bibow. See also MfAA/A 8749, 089–090, Abschrift, Informationsbericht des ADN-K. in HN über eine ideologische Kampagne der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams, Eingang Abt. Information, 23 April 1964, and MfAA/G-A 324, 073–075. For autobiographical accounts of the rectification campaign and the tense atmosphere in Hanoi see Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 129–132, and Le Xuan Ta, 'Hoi uc ve cuoc khung bo chu nghia xet lai o Viet Nam', 288.
- [68] MfAA/G-A 324, 074.
- [69] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/441, ADN, Informationsbericht des ADN-Korrespondenten in Hanoi, 27 April 1964. Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 275–276, provides most details about Duong Bach Mai's death.
- [70] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/441, MfAA/A 8725, 062–065, Botschaft der DDR, An MfAA, Bibow, 9 April 1964.
- [71] MfAA/G-A 324, 079.
- [72] MfAA/A 8725, 0128, Botschaft der DDR, Jarck, Aktenvermerk über eine Besprechung mit dem 1. Sekr. der sowjetischen Botschaft, Genossen Kowalski, am 6.8.1964 in der Zeit von 8.00 – 10.00 Uhr in der sowjetischen Botschaft.
- [73] MfAA/A 8725, 66, 1. AEA, Sektion Vietnam, Mehlig, 29 April 1964, Betr.: Haltung der PWV zu den Meinungsverschiedenheiten in der internationalen Arbeiterbewegung. For a similar interpretation see MfAA/A 8749, 084, 1. AEA, Schneidewind, An den Außerordentlichen und Bevollmächtigten Botschafter der DRV in der DRV, Genossen Wolfgang Bergold, Berlin, 22 April 1964.
- [74] Honey, 'North Vietnam', 5.
- [75] The obituary notice was authored by the Fatherland Front, not by the Central Committee. See Nhan Dan, 6 April 1964, 1. Bibow seems to suggest that no obituary notice at all appeared in North Vietnamese newspapers which is definitely not true. See MfAA/A 8725, 065.
- [76] See Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 276.
- [77] See *Ibid.*, 189–190, and Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, 177.
- [78] Vu Duc Phuc. 'Nghĩ quyet', 1–5.
- [79] *Ibid.*, 2.
- [80] *Ibid.*, 2–3.
- [81] *Ibid.*, 4–5. As an example Vu Duc Phuc mentions the novel *Vao Doi* by Ha Minh Tuan that had already been criticized in 1963.
- [82] The speech was published in *Hoc Tap*. To Huu, 'Dung vung tren lap truong giai cap vo san'.
- [83] For his criticism of 'humanism' see *Ibid.*, 14–17.
- [84] *Ibid.*, 17.
- [85] *Ibid.*, 22.
- [86] Hong Chuong, 'Hai quan niem ve chu nghia nhan dao'.
- [87] SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/437, Botschaft der DDR, Einschätzung über die Kulturpolitik und kulturelle Entwicklung in der DRV, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung

- der Verwirklichung der Beschlüsse des 9. Plenums des ZK der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams auf dem Gebiete der Kunst und Literatur, 24 November 1964, Matzke.
- [88] Ibid., 22.
- [89] See To Huu, 'Dung vung tren lap truong giai cap vo san', 15–18, and Hong Chuong, 'Hai quan niem ve chu nghia nhan dao', 34–35. For an autobiographical account see Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 131–132, 186–189, and Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, 122–124.
- [90] Unfortunately, the original *Hoc Tap* article is not available. However, see the analysis in Latimer, *Hanoi's Leaders and the Policies of War*, 12–13, VVA, Record 69694 (Item Number: 0720118002), See Vu Thu Hien, *Dem giua ban ngay*, 182–183, Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, 287–288. Minh Tranh lost his job and had to live in Nam Dinh province for 12 years. See Nguyen Van Tran, *Viet cho me va quoc hoi*, 326.
- [91] See the German translation of the article that was published in *Thong Nhat*: MfAA A 8725, 'Konkrete Fakten', Bericht von Luu Quy Ky, Vizepräsident des Komitees für kulturelle Beziehungen mit dem Ausland, Leiter der Propagandaabteilung beim ZK der Partei, Direktor der Zeitschrift Thong Nhat, 81–89. See also the analysis in MfAA A 8725, DRV, Betreff: Ministerium für Außenhandel und Innerdeutschen Handel, Information, Vertraulicher Bericht des Leiters der Abt. Propaganda des ZK der Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams über die Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit mit sozialistischen Ländern, 20 May 1964, 77–80.
- [92] See Pike, *Vietnam and the Soviet Union*, 74.
- [93] MfAA/G-A 324, 082, Botschaft der DDR Hanoi, Bibow, Einschätzung der Entwicklung der politischen Situation in der DRV nach dem 9. Plenum des ZK der PWV im Dez. 1963/Januar 1964, 27 May 1964. See also PA AA A 8746, 40, Botschaft an 1. AEA, Schneidewind, 16 September 1964, Bergold. In this report the GDR ambassador mentioned that these instructions were officially explained with reference to the tense situation in the region (Tonkin gulf incident).
- [94] MfAA/A 8725, 100, Botschaft der DDR, Bibow, 11 June 1964.
- [95] SAPMO, BArch, DC 900/296a, ADN, Faber, 14 October 1964.
- [96] MfAA/A 8725, 064, Botschaft, Bibow, 9 April 1964. For another example see MfAA/A8754, 13–14, 1. AEA, Ergänzung zu Blitz VVS 140/64, 26 May 1964.
- [97] MfAA/A 8754, 005–008, Botschaft, Beschäftigung von ausländischen Angestellten in unseren Auslandsvertretungen, 25 May 1964, Bergold.
- [98] MfAA/A 8754, 013, 1. AEA, Ergänzung zu Blitz VVS 140/64, 26 May 1964, Schneidewind. See also MfAA/A 8725, 091–092, 1. AEA, Sickert, an Botschaft Hanoi, 17 June 1964.
- [99] For the text of the notice see MfAA/A 8754, 13–14, see also Ibid., 17.
- [100] See MfAA/A 8754, 020–022, Botschaft der DDR, Aktenvermerk Nr.47/64 über ein Gespräch zwischen dem Abteilungsleiter im MfAA Genossen Pham Van Su und dem Genossen Bibow am 3.6.1964 von 15.00 – 16.00 Uhr, 4 June 1964, Bibow; and SAPMO, BArch, DY 30/IV A2/20/439, 1. AEA/Sektion Vietnam, Quartalsübersicht zu den Beziehungen zwischen der DDR und der DRV im II. Quartal 1964, Löbel, 24 July 1964.
- [101] Van Doan later committed suicide. See Heng, 'Of the State, for the State, Yet Against the State', 115, Tran Thu, *Tu tu xu ly noi bo (hoi ky)*, 38–39, 96, and Stowe, 'Révisionnisme au Vietnam', 238.
- [102] BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl. 9–15. See also Feige, *Vietnamesische Studenten*, 35–40.
- [103] MfAA/A 8738, 133–136, Lange, Studienrat, Staatssekretariat für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen, 13 December 1963.
- [104] MfAA/A 8738, 142–143, 1. AEA/Sektion Vietnam, 10 January 1964, Aktenvermerk über Angelegenheiten vietnamesischer Studenten, Löbel; MfAA/A 8738, 138–139, 1. AEA/Sektion Vietnam, 10 January 1964, Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit dem vn. Studenten Nguyen Phung Hoang am 6.1.1964 im MfAA der DDR, Sektion Vietnam, Mehlig.

- [105] MfAA/A 8738, 111–114, Aktenvermerk über eine Besprechung mit einem Sekretär der Botschaft der DRV am 6.4.1964 im Staatssekretariat für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen, 111–114, Käbel.
- [106] MfAA/A 8738, 106–108, 1. AEA, Sektion VN, Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit dem 2. Sekr. der Botschaft der DRV, Genossen Thao, am 9.4.1964, von 10.00 bis 11.00 Uhr, 10 April 1964, Mehlig.
- [107] BStU MfS, BV Potsdam, Abt. XX/1, 934/68, Bl.18–19.
- [108] MfAA/A 8738, 91–93, Kulturabteilung Ministerbüro Krolikowski (MfAA), Ferienheimreise der in der DDR studierenden vietnamesischen Studenten, 18 June 1964, Grunert.
- [109] MfAA/A 8738, 87–89, Staatssekretariat für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen StfHF, Abt. I, Aktenvermerk, 25 June 1964, Helbing.
- [110] MfAA/A 8725, 100, 1. AEA, Sickert an Min. Kieseewetter, 24 June 1964, Aussprache des stellv. Ministers für Volksbildung der DRV, Giam, mit Professor Dr. Gießmann, 23 June 1964.
- [111] MfAA/A 8738, 25–29, 1. AEA, Sektion Vietnam, 21 August 1964, Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch des Gen. Schneidewind mit dem Rat der Botschaft der DRV in der DDR, Gen. Nguyen Duc Thien, im MfAA am 20.08.1964 in der Zeit von 15.00 – 16.10 Uhr, Löbel.
- [112] MfAA/C 865/72, 29–31, DRV Studenten in DDR: DRV schränkt die Ausbildung ihrer Studenten in der DDR ein (Information der Kulturabteilung vom 9.12.64). See also BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl. 17–19. For a reprint of the report see Feige, *Vietnamesische Studenten*, 26–28.
- [113] MfAA/A 8738, 71–74, 1. AEA Sektion Vietnam, Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit dem Botschaftsrat der DDR, Genossen Nguyen Duc Thien, am 1.7.1964, 10.00 Uhr bis 11.00 Uhr, 3 July 1964, Mehlig.
- [114] BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl. 38–39, Abteilung X, 2. July 1964, Aktenvermerk, Damm. See Feige, *Vietnamesische Studenten*, 33–34.
- [115] MfAA/A 8738, 52, 1. AEA, Sektion Vietnam, 28 July 1964, Schneidewind, Aktenvermerk über eine Unterredung zwischen Gen. Schneidewind und dem Botschaftsrat der Botschaft der DRV, Gesandten Nguyen Duc Thien, am 27.7.1964, im MfAA in der Zeit von 15.00 – 15.45 Uhr.
- [116] MfAA/ A 8738, 076, Staatssekretariat für das Hochschul- und Fachschulwesen, Betr.: Vietnamesische Studierende, 3 July 1964.
- [117] MfAA/A 8738, 62–70, 1. AEA, an Bergold, 14 July 1964, Sickert.
- [118] MfAA/A 8738, 1. AEA, Betr.: Maßnahmen zur Regelung des Studiums und des weiteren Aufenthaltes vn. Studenten in der DDR, 24 July 1964, 60; MfAA/A 8738, 51–53.
- [119] MfAA/A 8738, 35–37, Botschaft Hanoi, Vermerk des Genossen Matzke über verleumderische äußerungen der in der DDR studierenden vietnamesischen Bürgern, die sich z.Z. zur Schulung in der DRV aufhalten, 13 August 1964, Matzke.
- [120] MfAA/C 865/72, 29–31.
- [121] MfAA/C 865/72, 27–28, Information über das Verhalten vietnamesischer Studierender der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig und der Technischen Universität Dresden, and BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl. 22–32, and BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Hauptabteilung XX/3/III, Information über die Situation unter den vietnamesischen Studenten und Aspiranten in der DDR, 17 December 1966, Leutnant Schwanz, Bl. 570.
- [122] MfAA, PA AA, C 865/72, Information über das Verhalten vietnamesischer Studierender der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig und der Technischen Universität Dresden, 17 September 1966, 27–28. See also BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl. 17–19, and Feige, *Vietnamesische Studenten*, 28.
- [123] BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Abschrift. Bericht über ein Zusammentreffen mit dem vietnamesischen Studenten [Name geschwärzt] (Germanistik) am 18.1.1967, gez. 'Hermann', 19 January 1967, Bl. 579.
- [124] Ibid.

- [125] See *Ibid.*, BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Hauptabteilung XX/3/III, Information über die Situation unter den vietnamesischen Studenten und Aspiranten in der DDR, 17 December 1966, Leutnant Schwanz, Bl. 570, and especially BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Abschrift, Bericht: Situation unter den vn. Studenten, ohne Datum, 'Adler', Bl. 580–587. This Stasi file contains a detailed summary of the instructions, Bl. 584–587.
- [126] BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Abschrift Kreisdienststelle Freital, 30 April 1969, Bl. 566–67.
- [127] MfAA/C 865/72, 32–33, Information über eine Aussprache mit dem II. Sekr. der Botschaft der DRV, Gen. Pham Hao, im Staatssekretariat für das Hochschul- und Fachschulwesen am 24.10.1966, Dr. Joachimi; MfAA/C 865/72, 91–93, Ministerium für Hoch- und Fachschulwesen. HA Internationale Beziehungen, 25 April 1969, Aktennotiz über den vietnamesischen Studenten ... betreffende Vorkommnisse, Garz.
- [128] BStU MfS Abt. X, 562, Notiz über den Empfang des neuen Botschafters der Demokratischen Republik Vietnam in Berlin Nguyen Viet Dung am 31. Januar 1967 von 14.00 bis 15.00 Uhr im MfS durch Genossen Minister Mielke, 7 February 1967, Bl. 167–180.
- [129] MfAA/C 865/72, 94–95, MfAA an den Minister des Inneren und Chef der Deutschen Volkspolizei Dickel, 28 April 1969, Winzer.
- [130] See Sophie Quinn-Judge's contribution to this collection.
- [131] For the whole affair see Feige, *Vietnamesische Studenten*, 22–25. See BStU MfS Abt. X SA 339, Bl.3, Bl.6, and BStU MfS, BVfS Leipzig, Leitung 1037, Bl. 47–49, 51–52.

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