History of the Đinh Nho Lineage of Hương Sơn

Complete English translation

丁族千秋蕾玉彩 *Đinh tộc thiên thu lưu ngọc thái* The Đinh lineage, through a thousand autumns, keeps the lustre of jade,

家風萬代顯馨名 *Gia phong vạn đại hiển hinh danh* and its family tradition, through ten thousand generations, makes its golden name resplendent!

(Đinh Nho Thanh — descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 16th generation, Branch B)

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PART I — HISTORY OF THE LINEAGE AND ILLUSTRIOUS FIGURES

ĐINH TÚ ANH *(Composition) [author's signature: "Author: Đinh Tú Anh"]*

History of the Đinh Nho Lineage *(An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province)*

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[Page 4 — Photograph of the handwritten preface in Chinese characters (accompanied by a seal) appearing in the original. The handwritten text in Chinese characters cannot be transliterated by OCR; a separate treatment is required to transcribe it.]

FOREWORD

Dear kinsfolk and members of the Đinh Nho lineage! The worship of ancestors may be held to be the most important of all the yearly activities of a lineage. The practice of the worship rites aims to express the respect and gratitude of the generations of descendants toward their illustrious forebears and ancestors. The occasions of worship are also occasions for members of the lineage, come from every region, to gather, to recognize one another as kin, and thus to draw ever tighter the bonds of blood and affection. "A single drop of blood is worth more than a pond of clear water": we all descend from one and the same founding Ancestor!

Furthermore, the worship is also an important occasion for educating the young generations of the lineage to turn toward their origins, to know their stock and the history of their lineage, so

as to venerate it with piety, to take pride in it, to be united, and to preserve and cause to flourish the tradition of the forebears. The ancients used to say: “The bird has its nest, man has his lineage” — and so it is indeed!

For several decades, the venerable head of our great Đinh Nho lineage, the late head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ, had during his lifetime always devoted all his heart and all his thought to the affairs of the lineage, among them the preservation and the full, solemn, dignified, and reverent practice of the annual worship rites handed down by the forebears.

Today the head of the lineage of the 19th generation, Đinh Hải Quân, resides and works abroad (in Malaysia); the affairs of the lineage in general, and the worship in particular, can be directed only from afar, while their carrying-out rests upon the members of the Committee of Representatives of the lineage residing and working in the native land, as well as upon the wife of the head of the lineage of the 18th generation.

So that the practice of the worship rites might be easy, clear, and simple to carry out, on the basis of the documents that the late head of the lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ transmitted to us, the head of the lineage Đinh Hải Quân charged us to re-edit and recompose them. Such is also the principal reason that led us to publish this book.

The book comprises two parts: - **Part I. History of the lineage & accounts of the illustrious figures of the Đinh Nho lineage.** - **Part II. Liturgical texts for the worship of the ancestors.**

First, to help the members of the lineage as well as the future generations of descendants to gain an overall view and to know their ancestors and forebears better — beyond the information already contained in the genealogy — we judged it necessary to compose Part I. History of the lineage & accounts of the illustrious figures of the Đinh Nho lineage.

In this part, we interweave with the historical events of the lineage the historical accounts handed down orally within the lineage and among the people. Hence there may subsist divergent variants, just as there may be lacking some part of the exactness of historical truth, which is in reality very difficult to verify. And of course, in composing Part I of this book, besides the various genealogies of the lineage:

- Mr. Đinh Nho Khiêm, 18th generation, Branch A, grandson of the late Đinh Nho Dật, provided by Internet: the scan of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* in the national script (quốc ngữ) written in the hand of the late Đinh Nho Dật. As well as the scan of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* in quốc ngữ recopied by hand by the late Đinh Nho Chú, younger brother of the late Đinh Nho Dật, from the version by Đinh Nho Dật, with the addition of some information in the Appendix section.
- Mrs. Đinh Thị Hiếu, 17th generation, Branch A, provided by Internet: the scan of the *Genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage* — the year 2020 version.

We also consulted numerous documentary sources, among them articles published on the Internet by the authors Tông Trân Tùng, Phạm Quang Ái, Nguyễn Thị Lâm, Đinh Nho Chương, Đinh Nho Anh, the head of the lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ…

We also added, in Part I of this book, some online press articles evoking examples of the study, effort, and success of certain members of our lineage, so as to help the young generations to take pride in them and to take them as models. Of course, these are but a few remarkable examples that we happen to know, for we have not had the means to record them all: our lineage is now vast, comprising many branches and offshoots. Within the lineage itself, some are almost unacquainted with others. Thus, when we hear or read in the media of remarkable persons bearing the name Đinh Nho, we do not know whether or not they share our stock. Moreover, many members of the Đinh Nho lineage do not bear the name "Đinh Nho" in their full name — as is the case with our own name, we who compose this book.

At the end of Part I, we also publish the score of the song *Chant of the Offering of Incense at the Ancestral Temple of the Đinh Nho Lineage*, which we composed.

Next, in Part II. Liturgical texts for the worship of the ancestors, we present the worship rites in detail.

In Part II of the book, we further consulted documents concerning the worship on the Internet and in books, and sought the advice of the doctors in Sino-Nôm Nguyễn Xuân Diện, Nguyễn Quốc Khánh; of Messrs. Tống Trần Tùng, Đinh Quang Tích, Lê Công Sĩ (Mr. Tống Trần Tùng is an associate professor and doctor, but in the field of transport, not in Sino-Nôm, although his knowledge of Sino-Nôm is very deep).

The liturgical texts of ancestor worship traditionally employ the Sino-Vietnamese pronunciation. This is why most of the kinsfolk and future generations of descendants, whether they read them or hear them, do not understand their content. To remedy this, we have striven to translate their meaning clearly into everyday Vietnamese, so that everyone may understand them.

The manuscript of the whole book, before its official printing, gathered widely the opinion of the members of the lineage and was officially approved by the head of the lineage of the 19th generation.

However, despite all our efforts, this book cannot surely escape shortcomings; we humbly beg the members of the lineage to be so good as to excuse us and to continue to share their remarks with us, so that we may, in due time, correct and complete it, and so that the next re-edition may be more accomplished.

And may it be permitted us, by the present, to add a few words. From the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, who settled on the land of Hương Sơn between the years 1543 and 1546, down to today, the year 2023, nearly 500 years and 20 to 21 successive generations have elapsed. Our Đinh Nho lineage is a great lineage, rich in a glorious historical tradition. Not only in former times, but still today, many of its members have succeeded. What pride! But the prouder we are of our ancestors and of our lineage, the more each of us must redouble his efforts in study, in self-perfection, in work and production as in all the aspects of life, so as not to bring shame upon our predecessors. To be proud without being presumptuous: we cannot endlessly indulge in ruminating upon the past glory of our forebears; we must strive to raise ourselves by our own efforts. And, if possible, to unite and to help one another so as to develop together. May the generations always cultivate the heart and nourish the spirit, and hold firmly to the character of the ancients, so that forever: "The Đinh lineage, through a thousand autumns, keeps the

lustre of jade / and its family tradition, through ten thousand generations, makes its golden name resplendent!" If it be so, our ancestors will surely have their hearts warmed.

As for the articles and writings whose information we have drawn upon, or which we have quoted or reproduced in this book, we have not had the possibility of requesting authorization nor of thanking each author individually; we hope that the authors will kindly forgive us for it.

Beyond the kinsfolk of the Đinh Nho lineage, both paternal and maternal, this book, we hope, will also be a useful and interesting reference document for friends near and far.

With our most respectful thanks!

THE EDITOR AND COMPOSER **ĐINH TÚ ANH (17TH GENERATION, BRANCH B)**

Part I. HISTORY OF THE LINEAGE & ACCOUNTS OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS FIGURES OF THE ĐINH NHO LINEAGE

I. THE GENEALOGY

Before speaking of the history and the historical accounts of the lineage, one must speak of the genealogy. For the genealogy is the official book of history of a family, of a lineage. It may therefore be held to be the originating document, the most important document, upon which to rely in order to relate the history of a family, of a lineage.

With the exception of the genealogies of families and offshoots formed at a later date, the originating genealogies of the great ancient lineages (the great root-lineages) are almost all in the same case: the writing of the genealogy comes several hundred years after the very founding of the lineage.

Our Đinh Nho lineage is no exception. From the time our First Ancestor (the founding ancestor, the very first ancestor) Đinh Phúc Diên came to settle at An Ấp, Hương Sơn (around 1543–1546), it was necessary to wait until the 8th generation, with the Ancestor Thượng Bảo Tự Khanh, the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn (1671–1715), for the genealogy to be officially established. "Officially," for beforehand there may have existed scattered notes or documents of a genealogical nature that were preserved. But this genealogy had the misfortune of being burned. The son-in-law of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the doctor (tiến sĩ) Nguyễn Trọng Thường (1681–1735), a native of the village of Trung Cần (today Nam Trung Commune, Nam Đàn District, Nghệ An Province), then undertook to recopy the genealogy of our Đinh lineage, under the title *Đinh phổ lược sao* (Abridged Copy of the Genealogy of the Đinh).

In the 12th generation, the Ancestor head of the lineage Triều Liệt Đại phu, lecturer-scholar of the Hàn lâm Academy, Đinh Thái Lãng (1754–1809), gathered the documents engraved on stone stelae and those printed, consulted the *Đinh phổ lược sao* of the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường, collected the opinions of the elders, and recomposed the genealogy under the title *Hương Yên phổ tự*, in manuscript in Chinese characters (chữ Nho, the script of the lettered), with a preface written in the year Ất Mão (1795) by the doctor Phan Bảo Định (1747–1826), a native of Yên

Đồng, Đức Thọ, Hà Tĩnh. The doctor Phan Bảo Định was the son-in-law of the Ancestor of the 10th generation, the head of the lineage Hoàng Tín Đại phu, Thái Bộc Tự Khanh, Marquis of Văn Lĩnh, Đinh Nho Tể (1705–1765). This *Hương Yên phổ tự* was likewise mislaid thereafter, but most fortunately, the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận, of the Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An, had had the time to recopy the original; down to today, the Đinh lineage of that place still keeps a copy of it and made a photocopy of it for our Đinh Nho lineage (we shall return to this further on).

At the end of the 19th century, the Ancestor of the 14th generation of our lineage, the retired prefect (tuần phủ) Đinh Nho Quang (of literary name Bảo Hiên), rewrote the *Hương Yên phổ tự*. According to the postface written by Đinh Nho Quang himself (1831–1907) in the year Mậu Tuất, the tenth year of the Thành Thái era, shortly after the day of Lập xuân [the beginning of spring] (1898), this volume follows on from the *Thế thứ lược sao* (Abridged Copy of the Generations) of an uncle of a collateral branch (a "lineage uncle," that is, of a branch of our lineage, and not of the senior branch), with additions and clearer annotations. Its content is also that of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Ancestor Đinh Thái Lãng, completed with the later generations.

The *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Quang was originally written in Chinese characters (chữ Nho). Around 1926–1927, the Ancestor of the 15th generation Đinh Nho Tuyên, great-grandson of the Ancestor head of the lineage Triều Liệt Đại phu, lecturer-scholar of the Hàn lâm Academy, Đinh Thái Lãng, translated the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Quang into the national script (quốc ngữ). Thereafter, Mr. Đinh Nho Dật, 16th generation, grandson of the Ancestor prefect Đinh Nho Quang, revised the parts already translated and asked the phó bảng Nguyễn Cự to translate in addition the stele texts, the liturgical texts, the poems, and the songs, while photographing a few stelae from the Temple of Literature, so as to complete the *Hương Yên phổ tự* in quốc ngữ.

During the Land Reform (1954–1956), the genealogy (the *Hương Yên phổ tự*) was once again mislaid. When it was found again, images and documents had been largely lost and greatly damaged. Mr. Đinh Nho Dật, 16th generation, had once more to grope, to research, to inquire here and there, in order to rewrite the lost parts. And the genealogy was restored almost identically. This restored version also includes the translation of the preface of the doctor Phan Bảo Định appearing in the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Triều Liệt Đại phu Đinh Thái Lãng, as well as the translation of the postface of the prefect Đinh Nho Quang mentioned above.

Observing that the genealogy could be mislaid, and that once lost its rewriting would be very difficult, would demand much effort, and might contain errors, Mr. Đinh Nho Chú (1922–1997), younger brother of Mr. Đinh Nho Dật, recopied in 1988 the genealogy that Mr. Đinh Nho Dật had written.

In the year 2000, the Committee for the Compilation of the Genealogy of the Đinh Nho Lineage (under the direction of the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ) relied principally on the *Hương Yên phổ tự* — the quốc-ngữ version restored by Mr. Đinh Nho Dật —, combining it with sources such as the *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* (Complete Annals of Đại Việt), the work *Cultural Figures of Vietnam* (*Danh nhân văn hóa Việt Nam*), the pieces preserved at the Museum of the Nghệ Tĩnh Soviets, as well as the printed or manuscript documents of the sub-branches and the declarations of the families of the lineage, to bring the

whole together and compose a genealogical collection entitled “Genealogy of the Đinh Nho Lineage at Hương Sơn.”

In 2008, kinsfolk of the Đinh branch of Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An, came to the ancestral temple of our Đinh Nho lineage to recognize themselves as kin, bringing the originating genealogy of their Đinh branch, in Chinese characters (chữ Nho). This genealogy had been begun by the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận (1815–1866), whose initial part is recopied from the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Ancestor Đinh Thái Lãng (the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận states this expressly in his genealogy). Then, on the occasion of their coming for the commemorative ceremony of the ancestors on the 9th day of the first month of the year Canh Dần (2010), a delegation of ten persons representing the Đinh branch of Thanh Liên Commune, led by Mr. Đinh Viết Hiểu, offered our lineage a photocopy of this genealogy. The head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ asked Mr. Nguyễn Xuân Triêm, of Sơn An Commune (today An Hòa Thịnh), to translate it into quốc ngữ.

In 2010, and then in 2020 — that is, every ten years counting from the composition of the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage in 2000 —, the Committee for Compilation (still under the direction of the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ) continued the work of revision, completion, and updating of the new information, and transmitted it to the whole body of descendants of the lineage in the form of printed copies or electronic files sent by Internet.

Thus, it may be said that, although the very first genealogy of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn was lost, thanks to the timely existence of the *Đinh phổ lược sao* of Đinh Nho Hoàn’s son-in-law, that is, of the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường; to its transmission and updating by the Ancestors Đinh Thái Lãng, Đinh Nho Quang, and Đinh Nho Dật; to the notes of the families and sub-branches of the lineage; to such vestiges as the ancestral temple, the temples, the stone stelae, and the stone lithophones; to the official histories of the dynasties… the history of our ancestors has been made clear. However, in our view, the genealogy of 2020 still contains certain printing and updating errors difficult to avoid. Hence there subsist here and there some inaccuracies, though not essential ones. May the next updating of the genealogy remedy them.

Not only has our lineage carefully recorded its genealogy, but it is doubtless rare that a great root-lineage of our country should have, to this day, after several hundred years, preserved intact the tomb of the ancestral Mother (the mother of the very first ancestor), the tomb of the very first ancestor, and almost intact the tombs of the following ancestors, down to today.

II. THE ANCESTRAL MOTHER AND THE FOUR BROTHERS

1. The ancestral Mother and the four brothers

The genealogy and the accounts handed down orally from generation to generation within the Đinh Nho lineage say only that the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên and some of his brothers (without specifying that they were four brothers) descended from the general Đinh Điền, one of the four trusted lieutenants of King Đinh Bộ Lĩnh (Đinh Tiên Hoàng), and that they fled the troubles of the Mạc dynasty, from Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình, toward the châu of Hoan (that is, the land of Nghệ, namely present-day Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh), scattering to various places; but they mention nothing of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, nor the names nor the places of

settlement of each of the brothers. Nor do they say anything about the fact that one of the brothers is said to have gone back toward the North. The account of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê, Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An, is more detailed and more precise: it clearly indicates the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, and the four brothers, as well as the place where each would settle. However, it does not say that they came from Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình, but only that they had come fleeing from the North. Yet the parallel couplets of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp (1882–1953), of the Đinh lineage of Kim Khê, Nghi Long, offered in worship at the temples of the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy, Đức Thọ, and of the Đinh lineage of Đức Nậm, Nam Đàn, do indeed mention the place-name of Gia Viễn. On the basis of the information handed down by their ancestors, the various Đinh lineages held to have issued from brothers of the same blood sought one another out, made contact, put themselves in touch with one another, and joined together the accounts of their genealogies and their lineages with those of the related lineages, so as to form the common account below.

In 1527, Mạc Đăng Dung usurped the throne of the Lê. Four brothers of the same blood of the Đinh family, issued from the lineage of the Ngoại giáp Đinh Điền — one of the four trusted lieutenants of King Đinh Bộ Lĩnh —, namely the eldest Đinh Phúc Diên, the second Đinh Phúc Tiên, the third Đinh Phúc… (whose name remains unknown today) and the fourth Đinh Phúc An, all mandarins in the service of the Lê, together took their families and their aged mother, dame Hoàng Quý, fleeing the troubles from the North (the genealogy of the Đinh Văn of Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, indicates “from the North,” whereas the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn indicates “from Gia Viễn”) as far as the hamlet of Thu Lũng, Hiếu Hợp Commune (today Nghi Thu Commune, in the town of Cửa Lò), where they halted and built a house at the edge of the crescent-shaped pond (in front of the present pagoda of Hiếu Hợp).

One day, dame Hoàng Quý went to wash laundry and, by mischance, slipped and drowned in the crescent-shaped pond (the date of her death — day, month, year — is unknown). On the day her burial was completed, that very night the sky suddenly unleashed a heavy rain and a great wind; the earth and sand swept along came to cover the tomb, making of it a great mound. The inhabitants of the region held this tomb to be a “tomb buried by Heaven” and considered it very sacred.

Having accomplished their mother’s funeral, the four brothers deliberated together: to remain in one and the same place would not be advantageous. They therefore divided among themselves the task of leading their families to scatter into various regions.

- The eldest, Đinh Phúc Diên, thereafter led his family to An Ấp, Hương Sơn, and became the founding ancestor (first ancestor) of the Đinh Nho lineage in that place;
- The second, Đinh Phúc Tiên, remained with his family to watch over their mother’s tomb and became the founding ancestor of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An;
- The third, Đinh Phúc… (whose name remains unknown today), led his family to the hamlet of Đông Khê, Cổ Ngu Commune, La Sơn District, Đức Quang Prefecture, citadel of Nghệ An (today the village of Đông Khê, Đức Thủy Commune, Đức Thọ District, Hà Tĩnh Province) and became the founding ancestor of the Đinh Trọng lineage in that place. From the 9th generation, the name was changed to Đinh Văn.

- The fourth, Đinh Phúc An, went back toward the North to gather information on the situation and to be able, should the case arise, to warn his elder brothers of it.

Today, the three Đinh lineages of three of the brothers — the eldest, the second, and the third — have put themselves in touch and associate with one another. As for the fourth: according to Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư (of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long), the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long affirms with certainty that this is Đinh Phúc An, ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang, Cẩm Giàng, Hải Dương (Hàm Giang later became Hàn Giang and corresponds today to the Quang Trung quarter, town of Hải Dương, Hải Dương Province). However, the genealogy and the accounts handed down from generation to generation in the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang affirm, on the contrary, that this Đinh lineage is descended from the general Đinh Điền and that it had taken refuge at Hàm Giang to settle there immediately after the death in battle of Đinh Điền against Lê Hoàn (Đinh Điền, 924–979). And it possesses no information relating to the fact that its Ancestor Đinh Phúc An, with other brothers, is said to have once fled the troubles toward the châu of Hoan (that is, present-day Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh). Hence the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang and the three other branches have no sufficient basis to recognize one another as kin.

2. The linking of the branches of the lineage

From ancient times, the Đinh lineages (branches) — namely the Đinh Nho of Hương Sơn, the Đinh Văn of Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, and the Đinh of Đức Thủy, Đức Thọ — associated with one another, recognized one another as kin, and went to one another's commemorative ceremonies of the ancestors. After about 1945, circumstances having changed, these relations were interrupted. In the following years, the committees of representatives of the various branches renewed contact, and in 2017 a common liaison committee was formed; together, they contributed by their efforts to repair, restore, and enhance the funerary complex comprising the tomb of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, as well as that of the second brother, Đinh Phúc Tiên, and erected there a stele entitled: "Stele recording the names and the abridged history of the development of the lineage of the four brothers, sons of the ancestral Mother."

During his lifetime, the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp (1882–1953), of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, likewise came to pay homage at the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage at Hương Sơn and offered there in worship the following parallel couplet:

譜存本何敢忘驩愛二州經世代族同地亦非異鴻藍千古一江山 *Phả tồn bản, hà cảm vong, Hoan Ái nhị châu kinh thế đại Tộc đồng địa, diệc phi dị, Hồng Lam thiên cổ nhất giang sơn*

(This couplet no longer exists in its original version at the present temple of the Đinh Nho lineage; there subsists of it only a reproduction in Chinese characters (chữ Nho), but the two characters Hồng Lam 鴻藍 were engraved there reversed, becoming Lam Hồng 藍鴻.)

Translation by Mr. Tống Trần Tùng:

> The genealogy keeps its stock — how could it be forgotten? Hoan and Ái, the two châu, through so many generations; The lineage shares the same land — how could it be a stranger? Hồng Lam, for a thousand ages, one and the same country.

Translation of the *Hương Yên phổ tự*:

> The genealogy keeps its stock — would one dare forget it? Hoan and Ái, the two châu, through so many generations; The lineage shares the same land, nor does it differ therefrom: Lam Hồng, for ten thousand ages, one and the same country.

"The genealogy keeps its stock, would one dare forget it?… / The lineage shares the same land, nor does it differ therefrom…" Yes! The genealogy of the lineage keeps its stock there — how could it be forgotten? And the kinsfolk dwell in the same region — how could they be strangers? This couplet affirms that the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn and the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long share one and the same root.

The Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy, Đức Thọ, Hà Tĩnh, hands down from generation to generation, from ancient times down to today, the recommendation of the ancestors: "Our Đinh lineage and the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn must not intermarry, for they are brothers."

As for the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang (which later became Hàn Giang and belongs today to the Quang Trung quarter, town of Hải Dương, Hải Dương Province):

- According to Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư, of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, his brother residing in Hanoi had gone to Hàm Giang (that is, to the Quang Trung quarter, town of Hải Dương) to work with the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang, but the information of the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of that place differs from that of the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Nghi Long. Hence there is no sufficient basis for the two parties to put themselves in touch.
- Moreover, the head of our lineage, the head of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ, also had two interviews with Mr. Đinh Gia Vĩnh, representative of the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang and head of the liaison committee of the Đinh lineage of Hải Dương Province. During these interviews, the two parties exchanged the information of their respective genealogies and found that there was as yet no sufficient basis to conclude that there was a link between the two Đinh lineages. These two interviews were:
  - According to Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư (Đinh Văn lineage, Nghi Long), on the occasion of the journey of Mr. Đinh Gia Vĩnh, who had come to attend the ceremony of the formation of the liaison committee of the Đinh lineage of Quảng Bình (in 2014), Mr. Vĩnh halted to offer incense at the temple of our Đinh Nho lineage. This meeting and this exchange with our head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ had Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư as witness.
  - According to Mr. Đinh Nho Công (descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 17th generation, Branch B), in 2018, when our State organized the commemoration of the 1050th anniversary of the founding of the State of Đại Cồ Việt at Ninh Bình, the head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ attended it and there met Mr. Đinh Gia Vĩnh. This meeting and this exchange had Mr. Đinh Nho Công as witness.

Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư (Đinh Văn lineage, Nghi Long) further provides the following information:

"According to the writings of the doctor Đinh Văn Chất (1843–1887) and of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp (1882–1953), as soon as he arrived on the land of Nghi Lộc, when the family's life had

begun to become settled, the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Tiên charged his son Đinh Phúc Hân with keeping the family journal.

(The doctor Đinh Văn Chất and the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp were father and son, both received at the great examinations — as in our Đinh Nho lineage, where the doctor Đinh Nho Công and the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn were father and son, both received at the great examinations; note by us, composer of this book.)

In the year Canh Ngọ (1630), the second year of the Đức Long era, under the reign of King Lê Thần Tông, Đinh Phúc Thượng recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 3rd generation.

In the year Canh Thìn (1700), the twenty-first year of the Chính Hòa era, under the reign of King Lê Hy Tông, Đinh Văn Quận and Đinh Văn Đồng recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 5th generation.

In the year Ất Dậu (1765), the twenty-sixth year of the Cảnh Hưng era, under the reign of King Lê Hiển Tông, Đinh Văn Tín, Đinh Gia Thái, and Đinh Văn Thực recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 7th generation.

In the year Bính Tuất (1826), the seventh year of the Minh Mạng era, Đinh Trần Khanh, Đinh Văn Nhuận, Đinh Văn Kế, and Đinh Văn Bâng recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 8th generation.

In the year Canh Thìn (1880), the thirty-third year of the Tự Đức era, Đinh Văn Chất, Đinh Văn Tương, Đinh Văn Hào, and Đinh Văn Hiển recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 9th generation.

In 1940, Đinh Văn Chấp, Đinh Văn Thụ, Đinh Văn Tứ, Đinh Văn Phổ, and Đinh Lê Huy recopied the genealogy and continued it down to the 11th generation. Thereafter, they translated it into quốc ngữ and entrusted a copy to each offshoot of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long.

But, alas, all the versions of the genealogy mentioned above have today disappeared. With the exception of a tattered quôc-ngữ version, handed over by the head of lineage Đinh Văn Tửu in 1983, and of a version deprived of its beginning and its end, of which only the central part subsists, handed over by Mr. Đinh Văn Diệu in 1990. On the basis of these two handed-over versions, and after a complementary study of the genealogies of the other related Đinh lineages, Mr. Đinh Văn Niêm, descendant of the 14th generation, rewrote the genealogy of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê, Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An, completed on 10 June 1999 at Hanoi, and judged by the members of the lineage to be perfectly exact."

According to the genealogy of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê, Nghi Long, of the aforementioned year 1999:

In the years 1933 to 1938, when Đinh Văn Chấp was judicial commissioner (án sát) of Hà Tĩnh Province, he came to the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage to recognize himself as kin and offered there in worship the parallel couplet:

> "Phả tôn bản, hà cảm vong, Hoan Ái nhị châu kinh thế đại Tộc đồng địa, diệc phi dị,
> Hồng Lam thiên cổ nhất giang sơn"

(This couplet has already been cited above — note by us, composer of this book.)

He also came to recognize himself as kin at the temple of the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy and offered there in worship the parallel couplet:

> "Gia Viễn căn cơ hoa động Bắc Kim Khê phái dãn trúc giang Nam"

(The meaning of the Chinese residing in the characters and not in the pronunciation, and for lack of having here the characters but only the Sino-Vietnamese transcription, the translation cannot be entirely exact; nevertheless, according to the context, we — composer of this book — can guess its idea:

> Gia Viễn, of old, took its footing upon the "flowering pavilion of the North"; Kim Khê, today, follows its course along the "bamboo river of the South.")

And he also came to recognize himself as kin at the temple of the Đinh lineage of Nam Đàn and offered there in worship the parallel couplet:

> "Gia Viễn Kim Khê lai dạ cửu Nam Đàn Đức Nậm dãn chi tràng."

(Meaning that we — composer of this book — guess and translate provisionally:

> The Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê comes from Gia Viễn since ancient times; The offshoot of the Đinh Văn lineage of Đức Nậm, Nam Đàn, extends on forever without interruption.)

As we said above, these couplets all mention the place-name of Gia Viễn, in agreement with the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, which affirms that the Đinh Nho lineage has its origin in the region of Gia Viễn.

The Đinh Văn lineage of Đức Nậm, Nam Đàn, mentioned in the couplet above, is an offshoot of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê; we shall speak of it further below, in the part devoted to the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long.

As for the passage on Đinh Phúc An in the genealogy of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê provided by Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư, it coincides with the stele erected at Nghi Long that we cite in the part devoted to the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang. We therefore do not cite it further here, to avoid a repetition.

Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư specifies further:

"At the time when Đinh Nho Băng was sub-prefect (tri huyện) of Nam Đàn, he came to the temple of the Đinh Văn lineage of Đức Nậm, Nam Đàn, to attend the worship of the ancestors at the full moon of the first month.

On his arrival, the Đinh lineage of that place unrolled a mat from the gate for him to walk upon. But he told them to roll the mat back up. He said: 'I come here as a descendant to render worship to the ancestors; this is not an official matter.'

When he was sub-prefect of Nam Đàn, the people praised him: 'Văn kỳ thanh, kiến kỳ hình Đinh Nho Đại nhân' [To hear his renown is to see his person, the lord Đinh Nho].

(We — composer of this book — translate provisionally the meaning: taking up the idea of the formula ‘Văn kỳ thanh, bất kiến kỳ hình’ — to hear the good renown, the praise of someone without ever having been able to meet him in person — to make of it the formula ‘Văn kỳ thanh, kiến kỳ hình’ — that is: not only does one hear the good renown and the praise of the lord Đinh Nho Băng, but one also sees him in person; which means that he was not only a man of worth, but also very close to all.

The aforementioned Ancestor Đinh Nho Băng belongs to the 15th generation of the Đinh Nho lineage.)

3. The Đinh Văn of Nghi Long

The founding Ancestor of our Đinh Nho lineage was the eldest. The founding Ancestor of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê, Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An, was the second brother.

The Đinh Văn lineage is very brilliant: many of its members were received at the great examinations, and many were high mandarins.

The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Tiên of the Đinh Văn lineage was born at the hour of Thìn, on the 20th day of the 7th month of the year Đinh Dậu (1477). He was received as hương cống (licentiate, cử nhân) at the examination of the year Bính Thìn, the twenty-seventh year of the Hồng Đức era (1496), under the reign of King Lê Thánh Tông. He was appointed Thanh Lại ty Lang Trung Mậu Lâm Lang.

The Thanh Lại ty Lang Trung Mậu Lâm Lang was the head of the Thanh Lại ty. The Thanh Lại ty was an organ subordinate to the ministries (in former times there were six ministries: the ministries of Officials, of Rites, of Finances, of the Army, of Justice, and of Public Works). According to the work *Lê triều quan chế* (Mandarinal System of the Lê Dynasty) — Institute of History and Publishing House of Culture and Information, Hanoi, 1977 —, this office belonged to the rank of chánh lục phẩm (sixth rank, principal class). According to the WikipediA website, on the other hand, under the Nguyễn dynasty, this office belonged to the rank of chánh tứ phẩm (fourth rank, principal class).

Having taken refuge there and having been charged by his brothers with remaining to watch over their mother’s tomb at the hamlet of Thu Lũng, he also renounced the path of honors and profit. He died at the hour of Mão, on the 15th day of the 2nd month of the year Canh Tuất (1550), at the age of 74.

Note. The tomb of the ancestral Mother and that of the founding Ancestor of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, at the hamlet of Thu Lũng, Nghi Thu Commune, have today been transferred to the cemetery of Kỳ Ông Trường, Nghi Long Commune, Nghi Lộc District, Nghệ An Province.

From the 4th, the 5th, and the 6th generation, the Đinh Văn lineage of that place had, in each generation, descendants who set off to sit the examinations, and many were received as sinh đồ (bachelors, tú tài). The sinh đồ Đinh Phúc Hào, 4th generation, after his success, went in 1628 to Nam Đàn to teach there and founded an offshoot of the Đinh lineage at the village of Đức Nậm, today Vân Diên Commune, Nam Đàn District, Nghệ An Province. It is there that the Ancestor of

the 15th generation Đinh Nho Băng, of our Đinh Nho lineage, then sub-prefect of the district of Nam Đàn, came to pay homage at the temple, as we said above.

In the 7th generation came the great-grandfather of the doctor Đinh Văn Chất (already mentioned above), Đinh Hồng Phiên, received as hương cống (licentiate) in 1783. The hương cống Đinh Hồng Phiên (1764–1833), received at the three trials (tam trường) of the metropolitan examination (equivalent to the phó bảng under the Nguyễn; the phó bảng is a title lower than the doctorate but higher than the licentiate, equivalent to today's master's), held the office of Toản tu at the National Institute of History (Quốc sử quán) under the two dynasties Lê and Nguyễn. The Quốc sử quán was the organ for the compilation of history. The Toản tu composed and corrected the content, an office equivalent to that of an editor today.

The grandfather of the doctor Đinh Văn Chất was the doctor of the third rank (Đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân) Đinh Văn Phác (1790–1833), one of the first eight doctors of the Nguyễn dynasty. The grandmother of the doctor Đinh Văn Chất was Nguyễn Thị Tiềm, daughter of the great poet Nguyễn Du.

The doctor Đinh Văn Chất took part in the uprising of the Cần Vương movement of King Hàm Nghi; captured thereafter by the French troops, he was handed over to the court to be tried there. Under pressure from the French, the court of Đồng Khánh condemned him for the crime of lèse-majesté and pronounced the sentence of the extermination of the three lineages (tru di tam tộc). He was decapitated and his body exposed on the 17th day of the tenth month of the year Đinh Hợi, that is, 28 November 1887.

The younger brother of Đinh Văn Chất, Đinh Văn Uyển, also called "Đầu xứ Uyển" (đầu xứ designates the one who was received first at the examination of a "xứ," that is, of a province, at that time), was a renowned man of letters and the master of the patriot Phan Bội Châu.

The eldest son of Đinh Văn Chất, Đinh Văn Báu, as well as his nephews Đinh Văn Côn and Đinh Văn Thiều (sons of Đầu xứ Uyển), likewise took part in the Cần Vương movement and were all killed thereafter.

The younger son of the doctor Đinh Văn Chất was the doctor of the second rank (Hoàng giáp) Đinh Văn Chấp (1882–1953). Đinh Văn Chấp, that is, Đinh Văn Chí, was then only five or six years old when his father suffered the misfortune of the extermination of the three lineages; he ought therefore to have been killed as well, but he had the good fortune to be saved by an old woman of the village, after which he fled to Fujian (China) to take refuge there. More than ten years later, when the situation in the native land had become peaceful again, in 1898, he returned to the country, changed his name to Đinh Văn Chấp, and was taken by Lê Huy Thản to Huế to study at the College of the Sons of the State (Quốc Tử Giám); he was then received as hoàng giáp at the examination of the year Quý Sửu (1913), the seventh year of the Duy Tân era. At this examination he was received first, but as the court did not award (or could not choose to award?) the title of doctor of the first rank, he was recognized only as doctor of the second rank. Counting from the hương cống Đinh Hồng Phiên, the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp represents the 4th generation of examination laureates in the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê (that is, today's Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long).

Endowed with an extraordinary character, Đinh Văn Chấp had, from his childhood, a poem dedicated to him by the patriot Phan Bội Châu (1867–1940):

> “The bone of the young unicorn replaces the wing of the mandarin duck; Who would dare to belittle this young boy? Trọng Mão, of old, frequented the house of knowledge; Trường Canh, today, shows the features of an immortal. The house, slender, by the virtue of the forebears, brings forth a being of price; And I, I am ashamed, beside you, of my humble condition. They say your native land is near the isles and the sea; The rising sun, riding the waves, has seen it so many times.”

The son of the first-placed Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chập is the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu (1918–2012), of secular name Đinh Văn Nam, a renowned great master and Buddhist translator.

4. The eminent monk Thích Minh Châu

As we said above, the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu is the son of the first-placed Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chập, of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê (today Nghi Long). To make better known this immensely great man who is the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu, we reproduce here the address by Chơn tâm Lương Châu Phước, delivered at the commemorative ceremony of the great and venerable monk Thích Minh Châu at Montreal (Montreal is the largest city of the province of Quebec and the second most populous city of Canada; chơn tâm (chân tâm) is the true heart, which has stripped itself of all illusory thoughts and all torments, and has recovered the true nature of beings: pure and lucid. The antonym of chơn tâm is vọng tâm [the strayed, illusory heart]).

This address is as follows:

“THE NOBLE AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE AND THE GRANDIOSE WORK OF THE EMINENT MONK THÍCH MINH CHÂU

When a virtuous bhikkhu leaves this world, we Buddhists ordinarily feel affliction and form the wish that he may promptly attain nirvāṇa. When a profound master, an eminent bhikkhu, abandons his fleshly envelope, his disciples and the Buddhists must still take example from him to strengthen their faith, to acquit part of their debt of gratitude, to strive to practice according to the Right Law (Chánh pháp, the Dharma). Master Thích Minh Châu has left us; we gather here to make memory of Him and together to take example from Him.

Three beautiful stages of his life

The life of the great and venerable monk Thích Minh Châu (hereafter named the eminent monk, the Venerable) may be divided into three stages. Stage I runs from his youth to the age of 34. The first ten years are those of a youth who grows and studies normally; the next ten, the life of a layman actively engaged; the remaining years, the life of a religious of the Northern current (Bắc tông, the Mahāyāna), rich in energy and wisdom.

The second period is that of the 12 years of study abroad. The first three years: study and formation in the tradition of the original Buddhism of Ceylon (Buddhism was introduced to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) for the first time in 249 BCE, by the mission of Mahinda — son of the Indian emperor Aśoka — note by us, composer of this book, according to WikipediA); six years perfecting his linguistic knowledge and the Dharma; the three following years, his first attempts at translation and research.

This period was short but decisive: it formed the vow to translate and diffuse the Pali Tripitaka, and to open a Buddhist school for the general public.

(The Tripitaka [Tam tạng, “the three baskets”] is the traditional term designating the whole of the Buddhist canon. According to each Buddhist tradition, there exist corresponding Tripitakas: the Pali Tripitaka, maintained by the Theravāda tradition in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia; the Tripitaka in Chinese, maintained by the East Asian Buddhist tradition; and the Tripitaka in Tibetan, maintained by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. These Tripitakas occupy the most important place in the contemporary Buddhist world. There exist besides canons translated into local languages — note by us, composer of this book, according to WikipediA.)

The third period is that of the nearly 50 remaining years, during which the eminent monk was already an accomplished religious, a great educator of Buddhism, the head of institutes for the formation of monks and nuns, and above all a translator of the Canon of the Nikāyas. Of these years, 11 unfolded under the regime of the Republic of Viet Nam, and 37 under the regime of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

His life was good in its beginning, good in its middle, good in its end. Let us enter into the detail of each stage.

The eminent monk Thích Minh Châu had for his secular name Đinh Văn Nam. He was born on 20 October 1918, the year Mậu Ngọ, at the village of Kim Thành, Quảng Nam Province. His family was originally from the village of Kim Khê, Nghi Lộc District, Nghệ An Province. He was issued from a family of great lineage. The Đinh lineage had counted five successive generations of doctors. His father was Đinh Văn Chấp, received as doctor at the examination of 1913. His mother was Lê Thị Đạt. He was the fourth son of a family of 11 children. From childhood, he was reputed diligent, studious, and intelligent.

In 1939, he obtained the diploma of higher primary studies of Indochina; the following year, he was received as bachelor at the Khải Định lycée (today the Quốc Học lycée of Huế). After his success, he became secretary at the Superior Residence (toà Khâm sứ), but at the end of a year he resigned.

From the 1930s, the Center of Viet Nam knew a movement of renaissance of Buddhism, whose leader was the eminent lay Buddhist, the doctor Lê Đình Thám. In 1936, then aged only 18, Mr. Nam joined this movement and was quickly entrusted with the function of chief secretary. He then took part in the founding of the Buddhist Moral Education Youth and of the Buddhist Family (Gia đình Phật tử), then called Gia đình Hoá phổ.

At 28, he entered the Tường Vân pagoda, at Huế, to request the ordination of novice (“chú điệu,” that is, śrāmaṇera), under the religious name of Tâm Trí.

(The śrāmaṇera is a young man newly entered into religion, still at the stage of apprenticeship, having received only the 10 precepts, not yet having received the complete 250 precepts of the bhikkhu. If it is a girl, she is called śrāmaṇerī. In Vietnamese pagodas, according to the regions, the śrāmaṇera is often called “sư chú” or “chú tiểu”; if he is older, “sư bác.” One ordinarily employs the terms “chú tiểu,” “chú điệu” for the youngest newly entered into religion, having received only the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts, and accomplishing the minor tasks of the pagoda: sweeping, beating the drum, ringing the bell, lighting incense and candles, serving

the aged religious. As for the terms “sư ông, sư cụ,” they ordinarily designate the fully ordained religious, observing the complete 250 precepts of the bhikkhu — note by us, composer of this book.)

The eminent monk who ordained him was Thích Tịnh Khiết, who would later become the first patriarch (Đệ nhất Pháp chủ) of Vietnamese Buddhism. Three years later, he received the major ordination of bhikkhu, under the religious name Minh Châu and the religious title Viên Dung. From then on, the Venerable Thích Minh Châu preached the Dharma in many places, directed the review *Vạn Hạnh* (which later became the review *Tư tưởng* [Thought]), then was headmaster of the Bồ Đề Buddhist lycée.

Twelve years of study in Ceylon and in India

Studying the Canon of the sūtras and observing that many words and names transposed from Pali and Sanskrit into Vietnamese presented many difficulties and inconsistencies, he formed the project of deepening this question and of pursuing studies abroad. In 1952, the Venerable set off to study in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), learning both English and Pali, studying the discipline (vinaya) and the doctrine, and forming himself as a bhikkhu according to the tradition of the original Buddhism of Ceylon. From then on, and until the end of his life, he kept the yellow robe of the original Buddhism.

The 1950s marked the beginning of a period of renaissance of Buddhism in Ceylon, with the existence of many institutions, in particular Buddhist schools open to the general public. There appeared many profound eminent monks and many eminent scholars. Many Western scholars, German and English, came to study there. Ceylon was the place of origin of the organization that diffused the Pali Canon in English, the Pali Text Society… These events kindled the desire of the Venerable Thích Minh Châu to translate and diffuse the original Pali Tripitaka into Vietnamese and to open Buddhist schools for the general public in Viet Nam.

In 1955, after obtaining the diploma of master of the Dharma (Sadhammacariya), he went to India to pursue his studies at the new Nālandā (Nava Nalanda Mahavihara). There, the Venerable gained access to the immense doctrinal treasure in Sanskrit. He continued to perfect his linguistic, translation, and research capacities on the Dharma. He obtained a licentiate in Pali, a licentiate in English, and was received first in the master’s (M.A.) of Abhidharma. In 1961, he defended his doctoral thesis: *A Comparative Study of the Madhyamāgama in Chinese and the Majjhima Nikāya in Pali.*

Two works of comparative study of the Canon

The doctoral thesis of the Venerable Thích Minh Châu is a precious and rare work. Before it, and during the 50 years that followed, there existed, so to speak, no comparable work. For very rare were those who knew both the original current and the Northern current (Mahāyāna), and mastered at the same time Pali and Chinese. This work, of more than 550 pages, was held in very high esteem.

Mr. S. Mookerjee, rector of the University of Nālandā, praised it: “Your work has truly broadened the horizon of our knowledge. You have approached this subject with the eye of the scholar and with an impartial attitude, concerned to exalt the truth and not to erect a dogma or to found a school.” (…) “I am extremely satisfied that this work was completed within the

precinct of the new Nālandā. We shall be forever proud of what the doctor Thích Minh Châu and his collaborators have accomplished."

The first Vietnamese received as doctor in Buddhist studies in India, with a remarkable thesis, the religious and doctor Thích Minh Châu had his diploma handed to him from the very hands of the president of that country. As soon as he was graduated, he was invited to remain to teach at the University of Bihar, in India.

In the space of three short years, teaching and conducting his research, the Venerable published three works in English: *Xuanzang, Pilgrim and Scholar*; *Faxian, the Humble Pilgrim*; and *A Comparative Study of the Questions of Milinda (Milinda Pañha) in Pali and the Sūtra of the Bhikkhu Nāgasena in Chinese*, his second work of comparative study bearing on the Canon of the two currents.

While the Majjhima Nikāya is central to practice and meditation, and the Venerable analyzed it in his thesis, the Questions of Milinda constitute a very remarkable text, appearing around the 1st century; although it is not a word of the Buddha, it is ranked among the holy scriptures. This text resolves complex and difficult philosophical problems through accessible and savory examples.

This work too was held in very high esteem. Professor Nalinaksha Dutt, of the University of Calcutta, wrote: "The author is a Vietnamese religious, who masters both Pali and Chinese and has perfected all his knowledge of the Pali language at the Pali Institute of Nālandā. Versed in these two languages, he can compare these two texts down to their root, on each question, and clearly set out their similarities and their differences. His conclusions are therefore of great value. His manner of presenting the documents is clear and striking. By this work, he has made a remarkable contribution to the study of Buddhism."

The Venerable Thích Minh Châu, with the help of the documents of the two currents, has demonstrated that these two texts have one and the same origin, and present common points and differences as to their content.

The Vạn Hạnh Buddhist University

While the Venerable Thích Minh Châu was teaching in India, the situation in Viet Nam knew grave upheavals touching upon Buddhist life, and the country was on the point of entering a period of atrocious war. The Venerable was greatly preoccupied by these developments. In 1964, then aged 46, he decided to return to the country and was welcomed with great fervor by the people at Saigon, then at Huế. He was at once entrusted with important responsibilities within the Buddhist Church of Viet Nam: vice-rector of the Higher Institute of Buddhist Studies of Saigon, director general of the Department of Culture and Education of the Unified Buddhist Church of Viet Nam.

In 1965, the Venerable took part in the founding of Vạn Hạnh University and was its rector until 1975. Unlike the other Buddhist institutes, ordinarily reserved for monks and nuns, the Vạn Hạnh Buddhist University opened to all, in the effort to understand the doctrine of the Buddha and the related fields. It was a model close to the community Buddhist universities of Ceylon, such as the Vidyodaya Pirivena or the Vidyalankara Pirivena. In the course of its 10

years of existence, Vạn Hạnh University trained more than 4,500 persons, including 215 master's graduates and 568 licentiate graduates.

At the end of the war, Viet Nam entered a new phase. The State took in hand the management of all the institutions of teaching. Vạn Hạnh University, which was an establishment of the ministry of Education of the government of the Republic of Viet Nam, had to be restored to the State of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. The Venerable kept only the establishment on Võ Duy Nguy Street, which would later become again an institute of Buddhist studies.

Thanks to happy circumstances, and above all to the effective support of his younger brother, Mr. Minh Chi, a fairly high-placed economic cadre of the new State and at the same time a lay Buddhist, the Venerable re-established in 1976 the Vạn Hạnh meditation monastery.

In 1981, with other monks and nuns of the South and of the North, the Venerable took part in the founding of the Buddhist Church of Viet Nam and was its secretary general; he founded the Higher School of Buddhist Studies of Viet Nam, the first establishment at Hanoi, then, three years later, a second establishment at Hồ Chí Minh City, on Võ Duy Nguy Street (today Nguyễn Kiệm Street). In 1997, he founded the Buddhist Academy of Viet Nam at Hồ Chí Minh City and was the rector of these institutes of Buddhist studies.

The Canon of the original Buddhism

In the course of his rectorate, and under the two regimes, despite the absorption of his work of education and formation, the Venerable undertook a task of the highest importance: to translate into Vietnamese the entirety of the Canon of the Nikāyas, also called the Pali Canon.

The original Pali Canon comprises five collections: the Dīgha Nikāya, the Majjhima Nikāya, the Saṃyutta Nikāya, the Aṅguttara Nikāya, and the Khuddaka Nikāya.

In May 1965 appeared volume 1 of the Dīgha Nikāya. The work, of 220 pages, contained only three bilingual sūtras: original Pali and Vietnamese. In August 1972, that is, 7 years later, the 4 volumes of the Dīgha Nikāya were completed. The 4 volumes were then regrouped into 2 volumes, and this time without the original Pali text. In 1978 appeared the Majjhima Nikāya, the most important collection of the Pali Canon. Then appeared successively the remaining collections: the Aṅguttara Nikāya (4 volumes), the Saṃyutta Nikāya (5 volumes), the Khuddaka Nikāya…

Shortly after their appearance, the collections were reprinted many times. In the first editions, each collection included a preface specifying the aim, relating the difficulties, and formulating remarks. Alas, in the later re-editions and in the diffusion on the Internet, these useful prefaces were not preserved.

The Khuddaka Nikāya is the most complex, the longest, composed of many independent parts. Because of his advanced age and of Parkinson's disease, which began to develop at the end of the 1990s (he was then 81), his capacity for work had diminished: only 10 of the 18 parts were completed. And the last volumes benefited from the assistance of a lay disciple, the English teacher Trần Phương Lan.

In 2004, the published work of the Canon comprised 24 volumes, that is, more than 20,000 pages. For the first time in the history of Viet Nam, the complete collection of the teachings of the Buddha was published in Vietnamese.

Previously, although the Buddhist doctrine also figured in the canons of the Northern current, in the Chinese Canon, it was not complete there. The reader of the current Mahāyāna sūtras — Saddharmapuṇḍarīka (Lotus), Prajñāpāramitā, Vajracchedikā (Diamond), Amitābha… — would not find there the most fundamental doctrines: the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, the conditioned co-production (pratītyasamutpāda), the 37 factors of Awakening… These notions existed only in a very vague manner among Buddhists, and even among monks and nuns.

The Nikāya sūtras and the Pali language were also introduced by the Venerable into the teaching of the institutes for the formation of monks and nuns and at Vạn Hạnh University. This university was besides a place of gathering of the talents and intellectuals of Saigon. In time of war, it was also a roof that sheltered many people from the risk of being drawn into the war, such as the religious Tuệ Sĩ, Trí Siêu (Lê Mạnh Thát), Trí Hải, as well as Nguyễn Đăng Thục, Nguyễn Hữu Ba, Kim Định, Lê Tôn Nghiêm, Trần Thái Đỉnh, Bùi Giáng, Phạm Thiên Thư…

Some thirty other works left as a heritage

Parallel to the Canon, the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu left some thirty works of research, translations, and lectures. Among them: the two volumes of the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* and *The Mahāyāna and Its Relation to the Hīnayāna* (translations, from the original by N. Dutt), the *Dictionary of Vietnamese Buddhism* (Minh Châu & Minh Chi), the *Manual of Pali* (3 volumes), *History of the Buddha Śākyamuni*, *The Dharma and Happiness*, *Light Your Own Torch Yourself and Walk*, *The Practice of Meditation*, *The Path Toward the Land of the Buddha*…

In these works and these lectures, the eminent monk transmits the doctrine of the Buddha, opens the heart to benevolence, cultivates wisdom, exhorts to diligent practice and to meditation, to the extinction of suffering, toward deliverance. He simply invites each one to live virtuously, to observe the precepts so as to have a pure and happy life. He teaches meditation to purify the heart. He teaches the practice of Discipline, Concentration, and Wisdom (Śīla, Samādhi, Prajñā) to deliver oneself from the cycle of rebirths.

The language of the eminent monk is limpid, clear, accessible, convincing. All his lectures exhale benevolence, but they are sometimes a severe criticism of false views (like the lecture *Translating the Sūtras and the University*), or overflowing with patriotic sentiments and love of the people (like *The Vietnamese Pagoda*), or again overflowing with emotion when he speaks of the nation, of the father and the mother (like *The Vietnamese Loves His Mother and Venerates His Father*).

Since his return to the country, he translated the sūtras and taught the original doctrine. He transmitted the words of the Buddha by relying on the Pali Canon. Thanks to him, the original canon and the Pali language were introduced into the official formation of monks and nuns, of both the Northern current and the Southern current. And under his direction, the monks of the two currents lived in harmony.

Disciples of multiple sources

He was the eminent monk having the most disciples in Viet Nam, in the South as in the North, of the Northern and Southern currents, religious and lay… He protected and sheltered many times a number of persons and talents, allowing them to escape difficult situations and to have the opportunity to work… But it seems that few disciples followed a path similar to his, very delicate, complex, and arduous.

Some disciples supported his works, others labored in their own field. Some translated and studied the Pali Canon, such as the nun Thích Nữ Trí Hải, the laywoman Trần Phương Lan, the eminent monk Thích Chơn Thiện (rector of the Institute of Buddhist Studies of Huế). Some composed the history and culture of Vietnamese Buddhism, such as master Lê Mạnh Thát (vice-rector of the Institute of Buddhist Studies of Hồ Chí Minh City). Some translated the sūtras of the Chinese Canon, such as master Tuệ Sĩ. Others took charge of the organization, the teaching, and the meditation monasteries, such as master Tâm Đức (vice-rector of the Institute of Buddhist Studies of Hồ Chí Minh City), the monk Bửu Chánh (abbot of the Phước Sơn meditation monastery, dean of the Pali department of the Institute of Buddhist Studies of Hồ Chí Minh City), the nun Tịnh Vân (professor of Pali at the Institute of Buddhist Studies of Hồ Chí Minh City)…

He also had many external activities and international exchanges. As representative, as messenger of Vietnamese Buddhism, he took part in many international congresses and colloquia on Buddhism, peace, and education, on almost all the continents… At these congresses, the eminent monk called for the banishment of every form of war and every manifestation of violence, saluted every effort of peace, encouraged the Buddhists to take part in these movements, supported the process of democratization and humanization in each country as in the relations between countries. He called:

“Buddhism exalts the effort of each individual to create, between peoples, between nations as between men, a climate of mutual understanding, of mutual confidence and respect, banishing every prejudice — such as the inferiority complex or immoderate pride — which gravely harm the dignity and the value of man.

We Buddhists hold it extremely urgent to build a new economy, a new moral order capable of appeasing all anger and all upheaval, of cleansing the present international political climate, and of preparing a new era, more human and richer in meaning.”

For the great works that he accomplished, he received an honorary doctorate, many decorations, and eulogies of merit. But that belonged to the affairs of society and of the world; he cared neither for titles nor for temporal advantages.

A grandiose work, a singular career

One may say in summary that the role and the contribution of the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu to Vietnamese Buddhism are very singular and also very grandiose.

Singular, for Viet Nam is the only country in the world to possess the two currents — the Northern Buddhism (Mahāyāna) and the original Buddhism —, although the Northern current is dominant. And the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu was the one who established the indispensable bridge between these two currents. He was an eminent monk of the North,

endowed with a role of direction within the Church, but who dressed and lived according to the Southern current, translated the scriptures of the original Buddhism, and taught and diffused its doctrine. He was the only religious, in Viet Nam as in the world, to occupy a position and to lead a mode of life and of practice so singular.

The Venerable Minh Châu made multiple contributions to Vietnamese Buddhism; but for his work on the Pali Canon alone, many have nicknamed him the Xuanzang of Viet Nam. This is, in truth, hardly far from reality.

Let us say a word of his work of translating the sūtras. It was no easy thing, and he met with few favorable conditions. In the 1960s, in Viet Nam, only the religious of Cambodian origin knew Pali and the sūtras in Pali. In general, Vietnamese Buddhists still knew almost nothing of the sūtras in original Pali. In the Northern current, there was, so to speak, no one who mastered Pali. In the Southern current, the Church of the original Buddhism had just been constituted and its monks concentrated on their internal affairs; if sūtras were translated from Pali, it was above all to recite them at ceremonies. Hence the Venerable Thích Minh Châu had to work alone, or almost alone, for nearly 50 years.

Nor did there exist many documents available on which to rely. The Chinese version was obscure and inconsistent; one could use of it only the already-translated terms. The Venerable had to rely on his own notes (from the time of his studies at Colombo), on the English version of the Pali Text Society, and on the Japanese version.

He had, besides, very little time for translation, always absorbed by the affairs of the Buddhist institutes. He made use of every hour, down to the moments when he ought to have rested: “We can set aside only the days off, the very early mornings, and the evenings (if we are not too exhausted by the day’s work) to translate.”

And one of the not-lesser difficulties was public opinion, the slanders and the criticisms: why then translate and diffuse the canon of the Southern current? He answered with firmness:

“Some will think that to translate the Pali Canon is to make propaganda for the Hīnayāna and to betray Mahāyāna thought. Let us put an end at once to this naive and laughable attitude. Buddhism knows neither Mahāyāna nor Hīnayāna, neither Southern current nor Northern current. Buddhism comprises a certain number of fundamental doctrines that every school must respect, a certain number of essential methods on which every disciple of the Buddha must rely to practice, if he does not wish to stray into false doctrines and heterodoxies. In translating the Pali Canon, we wish to present and to make known these fundamental doctrines and these essential methods.”

He defined the aim of the translation of the Pali Canon:

“Our aim is only to present the scriptures that may be held to be original, or the closest to the original, so that the reader may understand the authentic teaching of the Buddha, without passing through the prism of any school, whether Indian, Chinese, or Vietnamese. Nor do we have the duty to indicate to the reader which passage is original, which passage is not. Only the reader, after having himself read, himself sought to understand, himself reflected, himself observed, himself experienced in his own person, will be able of himself to understand and to see which passage is truly original. The duty to understand and to experience personally falls to

the reader, not to the translator; for Buddhism is the Way where one comes to see, and not the Way where one comes to be seen by others; the Way of the man who has eyes (Cakkhumato), not the Way of the man who closes his eyes; the Way of the one who sees and who knows (Passato Jānato), not the Way of the one who neither sees nor knows (Apassato Ajānato). Hence only the reader can of himself see, of himself understand, and of himself experience." (…)

"Here, we strive to translate integrally, without omitting any sūtra, and to translate by printing the original Pali text alongside, on purpose, so that the reader may of himself understand the original meaning of each word and each phrase, without falling into the explanations or the deviations of the translator."

The deeper he sank into the translation, the more he discovered the ulterior motives of those who professed false views, the currents hostile to Buddhism existing since the time of the Buddha and subsisting down to today. He wrote:

"The more I translate, the more clearly I see the malevolence of the brahmins, who have used the term Hīnayāna to attach it to the truly original teachings of the Buddha, and to make it so that Buddhists no longer dare to read them, nor to study them, nor to practice these methods. The more I translate, the more clearly I see the pernicious design of the brahmins, who have skillfully denatured Buddhism, making it so that the fundamental doctrines, the most noble quintessence of human thought, mixed with heterodox thoughts, have been neglected, concealed, ignored, neither studied nor practiced."

Nor is it easy to understand fully the phenomenon Thích Minh Châu, a dignitary of the rank of the heads of Northern Buddhism, but who poured all his energy into the translation and diffusion of the original doctrine. Let us listen to some of his confidences:

"I asked myself the question: to be rector or to be translator of the sūtras, which function is the more useful to Buddhism? And I must answer in all frankness: translating the sūtras is more useful! And I can only make up for it by devoting my moments of leisure to applying myself to translation. I write these lines both to repent and so that Buddhists and scholars may kindly understand me."

"It suffices to consider the time it took to complete each volume to see how much the engrossing function of rector hindered the translation. Having returned to the country in 1964, if I had not accepted the function of rector of Vạn Hạnh University, I would today already have translated at least the entirety of the Pali Canon." This passage he wrote in 1972.

And the deeper he sank into the translation of the Pali Canon, the more he made a very interesting remark, close to the celebrated remark of the scholar Einstein:

"Furthermore, one is today gradually becoming aware that only original Buddhism can answer the requirements of a present scientific world. A religion that wishes to be accepted by the young intellectuals of today must both not contradict the most recent scientific discoveries and resolve the problems proper to the man of the 20th and 21st centuries. Only original Buddhism can, perhaps, answer these requirements."

Today, even if, in reading the sūtras he translated, one may note a few inexact passages or ones of still-obscure meaning, be that as it may, the text is coherent, limpid, simple, and faithful. Although it is not yet a reference translation, the canon translated by the Venerable Thích

Minh Châu remains to this day the principal canon on which many generations of monks, nuns, students, and researchers rely to understand, study, and practice the doctrine of the Buddha.

Although his forces allowed him to translate only the Canon, this one laid the very first cornerstone on which, thereafter, other collections, other canons, other works have been added and completed.

In summary, the life of the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu is a very luminous example of service of the Dharma, of service of the nation, of service of humanity. His contributions to Vietnamese Buddhism are of an unprecedented greatness.

A few contributions

1. He translated in a fairly complete, systematic, and limpid manner the near-totality of one of the three canons: the one that gathers the teachings of the 45 years of the Buddha's preaching.
2. He contributed to comparing and to clarifying the common points and the differences between certain major works of the two Buddhist currents.
3. He contributed importantly to dissipating the erroneous prejudices about the Hīnayāna and about original Buddhism.
4. He introduced the doctrine of original Buddhism and the Pali language into the teaching of the schools for the formation of monks and nuns, which belong in the majority to the Mahāyāna current.
5. He formed tens of thousands of monks and nuns for the two regions of the South and the North, and for the two currents — original Buddhism and Mahāyāna.
6. He carried the doctrine of the Buddha among the people, through schools and classes, through the diffusion of the scriptures, through the weekly organization of preachings and meditation sessions for the public.

What is the heartwood of the tree will subsist long

After many years of illness, many years bedridden or confined to one place, on 1 September 2012 — that is, the 16th day of the 7th lunar month, year 2556 of the Buddhist era —, the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu abandoned his fleshly envelope at the Vạn Hạnh meditation monastery, at the age of 95 and 64 "rains" (years of monastic life). The eminent monk Thích Minh Châu has left us, leaving an immense affliction to the Buddhist world and to the intellectuals of the country and abroad. In the first days of September, hundreds and thousands of wreaths of condolence, tens of thousands of people of every condition, many organizations, many representatives of the country and abroad came to the Vạn Hạnh monastery to express their affliction, their affection, and their gratitude toward the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu.

The eminent monk has left us, but what there is of the most beautiful will subsist long, as he had inscribed on his stūpa: "Yo sāro thassati. What is the heartwood of the tree will subsist long." These are the Canon, the works, the lectures, the teachings, and a whole life in the service of the Dharma and of the nation.

We who are here present today have, for the most part, not had the good fortune to meet Him, nor to pay homage to Him directly. But one may say that we are all His disciples. For, ever since

we understand the doctrine of the Buddha, we have recited and studied the sūtras of the Great Buddhist Canon of Viet Nam translated by the Venerable Minh Châu.

As disciples, we together burn a stick of incense in memory of the grace and virtue of the Master. Presently, we shall together recite the words of the Buddha that he translated. And we make the vow to live in the Right Law, to practice it faithfully, and to rely on the teachings of the Master, the eminent monk Thích Minh Châu.

Chơn Tâm Lương Châu Phước Montreal, Canada, September 2012, year 2556 of the Buddhist era."

5. The Đinh of Đức Thủy

The founding Ancestor of the Đinh lineage of the hamlet of Đông Khê, Cổ Ngu Commune, La Sơn District, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today the village of Đông Khê, Đức Thủy Commune, Đức Thọ District, Hà Tĩnh Province), was the third brother, whose surname and middle name are Đinh Phúc…, the personal name remaining unknown.

He was a military mandarin, holding the offices of Đô Chỉ huy Thiêm sự and of Ti Đô Chỉ huy sứ. According to the work *Lê triều quan chế* — Institute of History and Publishing House of Culture and Information, Hanoi, 1977 —, this office belonged to the rank of chánh tứ phẩm (fourth rank, principal class).

He died on the 12th day of the first month (the year of death is unknown). For the convenience of the descendants, the Đinh lineage of that place celebrates the commemoration of the ancestor on the 15th day (full moon) of the first month.

Among the descendants of the 7th generation of the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy figures Đinh Đăng Trù, received as ất tiến sĩ (that is, phó bảng, equivalent to today's master's), who was a mandarin in the guard of Lâm Khang (Võ Vệ Lâm Khang).

In the 9th generation, Đinh Hữu Nậm held the office of Tiến Công Thứ lang (rank chánh bát phẩm, eighth rank, principal class; a civil mandarin). Three brothers of the same blood, Đinh Trọng Cầu, Đinh Trọng Đáng, Đinh Trọng Phiên, as well as Đinh Trọng Chiểu, were all sub-prefects (tri huyện). Đinh Văn Giản was judicial commissioner (án sát) of Quảng Trị Province, under the literary name Trung Thuận Đại nhân.

From the 9th generation, the descendants attaining offices, succeeding, and progressing in their studies, the name was changed to Đinh Văn.

In a more recent period lived the brigadier general Đinh Văn Khanh, political commissar of the corps of Vietnamese volunteers in Laos. And today, the lineage counts many professors and doctors.

The ancestral temple, built in 1938, long served as a warehouse, a place of production, and a cache of weapons for the two wars of resistance against France and against the United States. It has therefore been classified a Historical and Cultural Vestige of provincial level in 2009.

6. The Đinh of Trung Lương

The genealogy of our Đinh Nho lineage, the year 2020 version, reproduces a passage from the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương Commune, Đức Thọ District (today the Trung Lương quarter, town of Hồng Lĩnh, Hà Tĩnh Province). This passage is the following:

“It has been transmitted to us thus: our ancestors formerly resided in the district of Gia Viễn, beyond the land of Thanh Hóa, then came to settle at Đô Cương Commune, Nghi Xuân District, land of Nghệ An. They were two brothers. The elder later reached Yên Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District. The younger went to Cổ Ngu Commune, La Sơn District. After two generations, the senior branch remained at Yên Ấp; among its later descendants figures the posterity of Đinh Nho Công, received as doctor under the Lê. The first ancestor of our lineage left Yên Ấp Commune for Minh Lương Commune, Can Lộc District.

We now wish to record the deeds of the ancients so that the descendants, for ten thousand generations, may know them. From the taboo names of the high generations of forebears and ancestors, of the kinsfolk of the various branches and offshoots, to the commemoration dates, the tombs, and the places of burial, all is recorded so that the descendants may clearly know the merits and the founding work of the ancestors, for the prosperity of the posterity. Hence, following the order, we record clearly the list of our own ancestors proper to the various branches, to serve as a durable reference document.”

Thus, according to the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương, two generations after our founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên of the Đinh Nho lineage — that is, from the 3rd generation —, someone had already set off for Minh Lương Commune, Can Lộc District, to found the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương. However, the genealogy of our Đinh Nho lineage does not record this fact (perhaps by omission?); it says only that from the 1st to the 7th generation, our lineage was “độc đinh” (a single male heir in each generation).

And the article below is by Mr. Đinh Xuân Vinh (Mr. Đinh Xuân Vinh is not of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương, but of the Đinh lineage of Đông An Commune, Xuân Trường, Nam Định; he is today vice-president of the liaison committee of the Đinh lineage of Viet Nam), published on the site hodinhvietnam.com on 30 May 2012; we reproduce it for the consultation of our kinsfolk. According to this article, one may understand that the Ancestor of the 11th generation Đinh Nho Tùng, of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương, had also come to our ancestral temple to recognize himself as kin and to recopy our genealogy, the *Hương Yên phổ tự* (for it is only after having recognized oneself as kin that one recopies; and the character “Yên” may be read “An,” Hương Yên — Hương An). One may therefore affirm that the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương is an offshoot of our Đinh Nho lineage, detached around the 3rd generation, and omitted by the *Hương Yên phổ tự*. This article is the following:

Brief presentation

OF THE ĐINH LINEAGE OF TRUNG LƯƠNG COMMUNE — ĐỨC THỌ DISTRICT *(Today the Trung Lương quarter, town of Hồng Lĩnh, Hà Tĩnh Province. In abbreviation: the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương)*

Trung Lương is an ancient village of Hà Tĩnh, densely populated, living in community near the foot of Mount Hồng Lĩnh, on the two banks of the Lam Giang and the Minh Giang; a land rich in a cultural and revolutionary tradition.

The Đinh lineage of Trung Lương is a relatively large and ancient lineage of Hà Tĩnh, part of the Đinh lineage of Viet Nam.

The genealogy of the Đinh lineage in Chinese characters, composed and transmitted by the Confucian scholar Đinh Nho Tùng (11th generation), records this: “It has been transmitted to us that our ancestors formerly resided in the district of Gia Viễn, beyond the land of Thanh Hóa.” The respectful copy of the *Hương An phả tự* likewise records: “The Đinh lineage is a great lineage of Gia Viễn, in the land of Ái Châu.” “From ancient times, two brothers came to settle at Đô Cương Commune, Nghi Xuân District, land of Nghệ An. The elder later reached An Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District; the younger went to Cổ Ngu Commune, La Sơn District.”

According to these documents, one may estimate that: the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương has its ancient origin in the district of Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình Province (?).

The genealogies do not record the age of the lineage. According to the ordinary calculation of an average of 20 years per generation (16 generations), one deduces that the age of the lineage is perhaps about 320 to 350 years (?), from the first ancestor down to today.

The founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương bore the literary name Thuần Phác, the posthumous name Cương Trực phủ quân, commemorated on the 3rd day of the 2nd lunar month, his tomb being located at the place called Lập Thạch. The ancestor of the second generation bore the literary name Đôn Thành, the posthumous name Hoa Nhị phủ quân. Then come the ancestors of the third, of the fourth generation… down to the 16 current generations.

Through 16 generations of existence and development, the descendants have become more and more numerous. An incomplete census counts about 1,000 of them, of a robust and long-lived stock.

Today, the descendants live in Hà Tĩnh, Nghệ An, Thanh Hóa, Hải Phòng… The center of the lineage is at Trung Lương, where the temples and the tombs of the ancestors and the predecessors are found; it is also the place where the descendants gather in the greatest numbers, with kinsfolk of other lineages attached and united in solidarity for generations.

The Đinh lineage of Trung Lương today possesses some precious documents: the genealogy of the Đinh lineage, the respectful copy of the *Hương An phả tự* (a copied exemplar), the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương, composed and completed by the descendants. The genealogical diagram records fairly completely the names of the members from the 1st to the 16th generation. These are precious documents bequeathed to the generations of descendants of today and tomorrow.

The Đinh lineage of Trung Lương possesses two temples: the temple that honors the founding ancestors of the lineage; and the temple of the cadet branch, which honors Đinh Thế Thát (Đinh Thế Phổ), 8th generation, head of the cadet branch. The two temples were destroyed by the French and American bombs; the descendants united their efforts to restore and rebuild them in a relatively imposing manner, so as to make of them places of worship, of conservation of documents, and of reunion of the lineage.

The tombs of the ancestors and the predecessors were likewise regrouped and rebuilt at the cemetery of the Trung Lương quarter.

The worship and commemoration of the ancestors are also organized regularly and with care. Each year a small ceremony takes place; every five years, a great ceremony, at which the near and far descendants return in great numbers to commemorate the ancestors, to find their kinsfolk again, and to hold the reunion of the lineage.

The descendants chiefly practice the traditional trade of the lineage: the forge. Many are peasants, workers, artisans; a few are cadres of the public administration; some work in the sciences, education, health, sport, aviation, building, architecture… Some also are entrepreneurs; the standard of living is in general secure.

The generations of descendants of the lineage are in the majority studious, and many have succeeded. About a hundred have a higher-education level (technical diploma, licentiate, post-licentiate). The descendants follow with one heart the Communist Party and socialism, animated by a progressive thought and morality. Many have received from the State high decorations, and from the Party the insignia of 30, 40, 50, and 55 years of membership. All are united and devoted to building an ever more civilized and progressive lineage, with prosperous and happy families.

The descendants are all proud of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương and of the great Đinh lineage of Viet Nam.

The descendants strive to progress in all fields to keep pace with the general development of society, contributing to making the Đinh lineage of Viet Nam resplendent in the new era, worthy descendants of the illustrious predecessors.

The descendants of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương respectfully salute the Đinh lineages of the Vietnamese land, ever turned toward Gia Viễn — the place of founding and source of the lineage.

7. The Đinh of Hàm Giang

We have no sufficient basis to conclude whether or not the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang is linked to our Đinh Nho lineage. Nevertheless, we include this rubric in the book for the consultation of the kinsfolk of the lineage and of all whom it may interest.

According to the genealogy and the accounts handed down in the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, and figuring on the Stele recording the names and the abridged history of the development of the lineage of the four brothers, sons of the ancestral Mother mentioned above, the passage on Đinh Phúc An is the following (original text of the stele):

“IV. The fourth son, the lord Đinh Phúc An (or Yên), was assigned to the North (Bắc Hà) with the principal mission of gathering information on the political situation so as to warn in due time his elder brothers of the South. In the fourth generation, the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang counted the general Đinh Văn Tả, born at the hour of Dần on the 2nd day of the 11th month of the year Kỷ Hợi (1599), at An Trường Commune, Chân Phúc District, Đức Quang Prefecture (today the northern sector of the town of Vinh — formerly belonging to Nghi Lộc). The lord Đinh Văn Tả was the son of the general Đinh Văn Phủ (and named the lord Đinh Phúc Yên his

grandfather); his mother, Nguyễn Thị Năng, a native of An Trường, Chân Phúc (Chân Phúc is the district of Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An Province today — note by us, composer of this book), took him to the village of Cựu Khê, Hàn Giang (his father, Mr. Phủ, having died in battle at Hải Dương in 1600 — Đinh Văn Tả was then not yet a year old). During this period, at Kim Khê lived the ancestor of the 3rd generation, Đinh Phúc Nhàn (that is, the ancestor of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long — note by us, composer of this book), who asked in marriage (that is, took as wife — note by us, composer of this book) a woman of Hàn Giang, dame Nguyễn Thị Hà. Thanks to this bond, during this period, the two Đinh Phúc lineages of Kim Khê and Đinh Phúc of Hàn Giang were in very close relation…"

As for the article entitled *The House of the Đinh Lineage at Hàm Giang*, pp. 492–493, in the weekly cultural review *Tri Tân*, third year, no. 99, of Thursday 10 June 1943, by the author Tiên Đàm, citing the work *Lives of the Illustrious Generals of Hàm Giang* (*Hàm Giang danh tướng liệt truyện*) by Đinh Gia Nghi — licentiate of the examination of the year Bính Ngọ (1846), acting sub-prefect of Lâm Thao, who composed and prefaced it on the 20th day of the 10th month of the 3rd year of Thành Thái (that is, 21 November 1891) — and the work *Genealogy of the Đinh Lineage at Hàm Giang*, in verse, composed by Đinh Gia Mai at Viên Yên on 12 June 1936, it emerges that:

The Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang (that is, Hàn Giang) is descended from the brother of King Đinh Bộ Lĩnh (that is, descended from the grand general Đinh Điền, Kim Ngô Đại tướng quân). Đinh Điền and Nguyễn Bặc having raised troops against Lê Hoàn and been defeated, their descendants took refuge at Hàm Giang to found there a new country. Thereafter, the generations growing distant, one no longer knows clearly what became of it. From the Thái Bảo Thạch Quốc công Đinh Đàm, a meritorious dignitary of the beginning of the Lê, six generations lead to the great lord Lộc Quận công Đinh Văn Tả, first of the meritorious dignitaries of the restoration of the Lê (Lê Trung hưng).

And according to this, the successive generations of the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang are the following:

- The generations prior to the Thái bảo Thạch Quận công Đinh Đàm: unknown.
- Thái bảo Thạch Quận công Đinh Đàm: years of birth and death unknown. Learning that King Lê Thái Tổ had raised troops at Lam Sơn, he asked to follow him, then aged 53. Now Lê Thái Tổ (that is, Lê Lợi) raised troops in 1418. He would therefore have been born around 1365.
- Đinh Phúc An: years of birth and death unknown. Office and rank unknown. (And the relation between Đinh Phúc An and the Thạch Quận công Đinh Đàm is unknown — note by the author of this book.)
- Đức Giang Hầu: Đức Giang Hầu was the son of Đinh Phúc An. His years of birth and death are likewise unknown. In the year Canh Thìn (1460), he plotted with the grand dignitaries, including Lê Xí, to annihilate the faction of Phạm Đôn and Phạm Ban, depose Nghi Dân, and welcome Gia Vương to the imperial throne (that is, Lê Thánh Tông). Thus, in 1460, Đức Giang Hầu must have been more than 20 years old. He must therefore have been born at the latest around 1440. And, from then on, his father, Đinh Phúc An, must have been born at the latest around 1420. This enters into contradiction with the information of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long recorded on the

aforementioned stele. For Đinh Phúc Tiên, the second brother, was born in 1477, whereas Đinh Phúc An, the fourth and youngest, would here have been born at the latest around 1420 (?).

- The admiral Dương Sơn hầu Đinh Đam: son of Đức Giang Hầu. Years of birth and death unknown.
- Thái bảo Hùng Quận công Đinh Phủ: son of Dương Sơn Hầu. Year of birth unknown. Died around 1600.
- Thượng Tế Lộc Quận công Đinh Văn Tả: son of the Hùng Quận công Đinh Phủ. Born in Thanh Hóa in 1599. Orphaned of his father before the age of one. According to the information of the aforementioned works, the Hùng Quận công died at his headquarters established at Yên Trường (today Đông Sơn District, Thanh Hóa Province), and not in battle at Hải Dương as the information of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long indicates.

According to the information of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, Đinh Văn Tả is the descendant of the 4th generation of Đinh Phúc An. According to the information of the works and the review cited, Đinh Văn Tả is the descendant of the 5th generation of Đinh Phúc An.

To find proofs convincing enough to establish whether or not the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang is linked to the other Đinh branches of ours is, in truth, very difficult. For the account of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long is thus, but that of the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang presents a measure of divergence. However, here, all the genealogies and all the accounts handed down from generation to generation in the four lineages agree on one point: we are all descendants of the general Đinh Điền.

III. HISTORY OF THE LINEAGE AND ACCOUNTS OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS FIGURES OF THE ĐINH NHO LINEAGE

1. Overview of the history of the Đinh Nho lineage

Our Đinh Nho lineage was formed at An Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province), from the years 1543–1546, by the founding Ancestor (first ancestor) Đinh Phúc Diên, a native of Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình, who fled the troubles of the Mạc dynasty to come and settle there. Through nearly 500 years from the founding Ancestor down to today, the year 2023, our lineage has perpetuated itself to the 20th and 21st generation. And the descendants reside today in every region of the country, and even abroad.

The genealogy does not specify the year of birth of the founding Ancestor. But according to the genealogy of the Đinh Văn of Nghi Long, Đinh Phúc Tiên, younger brother of Đinh Phúc Diên, was born in 1477. Thus, the founding Ancestor of our lineage, Đinh Phúc Diên, was born around 1475 at the latest. This accords with the logical deduction: the Ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân was born in 1602; from the 1st to the 6th generation, the average interval between generations is about [(1602 – 1475) : 5 =] 25 years. And if it is so, when he came to An Ấp, the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên was already about 68 to 71 years old, or even more. The genealogy indicates that he reached the venerable age of 93. It does not say whether he came alone or with his family, but he assuredly came with his family, and already had at least a grandson, that is, our Ancestor of the 3rd generation. For if the founding Ancestor had taken a

wife and begotten only after his arrival in 1543, the Ancestor of the 6th generation could not have been born in 1602 [(1602 – 1543) : 5 = 11.8 years; the average interval between generations cannot be only 12 years].

From the founding Ancestor to the 6th generation, our lineage was "độc đinh" (that is, in each generation a single son ensured the descent; however, according to the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương cited above, around the 3rd generation, a member of our lineage is said to have already set off for Trung Lương and to have founded the Đinh lineage there (?)). In the 7th generation, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công had 12 children, of whom 6 were sons. Thus, from the Ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công, our lineage began to produce examination laureates and to break with the "độc đinh" condition; the descendants became more and more numerous and many were received at the examinations at a high rank.

Among the 6 sons of the Ancestor of the 7th generation, 4 had male descent and formed the 4 branches of the Đinh lineage, namely:

The two senior branches: the eldest son of the first wife, the Ancestor head of lineage Đinh Nho Trạch, and the eldest son of the second wife, the Ancestor head of lineage Đinh Nho Thận, remained on the land of Hương Sơn and formed there the two branches of the Đinh Nho lineage. These two branches today render worship to the ancestors in common at the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage. Thereafter, descendants of these two senior branches settled some at Sơn Châu Commune, others at Sơn Tân Commune, forming the offshoots of the Đinh Nho lineage of these localities.

The third branch, issued from the second son of the second wife, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Thường, reached Thiên Lộc District, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today Can Lộc District, Hà Tĩnh Province; Thiên Lộc became Can Lộc because in the 15th year of Tự Đức (1862), the king decreed that any place-name containing the character "thiên" [heaven] must be changed out of respect toward Heaven), then Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân District, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân District, Hà Tĩnh Province), and formed there the Đinh branch of Cương Gián. The course by which the descendants of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Thường rediscovered and reconnected their genealogy to the originating genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, down to organizing, on 14 April 2022, a ceremony and the copying of the genealogy at the hamlet of Song Long, Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân District, Hà Tĩnh Province, was an arduous but exciting course, led by Mr. Đinh Quang Tích, a son of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián (we have also reproduced his article on this subject in this book).

The fourth branch, issued from the third son of the second wife, the Ancestor commander general (Tổng binh Đốc lĩnh) Marquis of Hương Nghĩa, Đinh Nho Côn, reached Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Giang District, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương District, Nghệ An Province) and formed there the Đinh branch of Thanh Liên. The great-grandson of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Côn is the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận (1815–1866), a renowned man of letters of the Nguyễn dynasty. During his lifetime, the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận had come to recognize himself as kin at the temple of our Đinh Nho lineage and had recopied the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of the Ancestor of the 12th generation Đinh Thái Lăng, to make of it the originating genealogy of the Đinh branch of Thanh Liên. Today, the genealogy of the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận, which includes a part recopied from this *Hương Yên phổ tự*, is

still preserved by the Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An. In the year Canh Dần (2010), the kinsfolk of the Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên deputed a delegation of 10 persons, led by Mr. Đinh Viết Hiểu, to attend the commemoration of the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, on the 9th day of the first month, and offered the Đinh Nho lineage a photocopy of this genealogy in Chinese characters by the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận (already mentioned above).

Still according to the genealogy of the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận, the Đinh lineage of that place bore, according to the registers of the French, the name Nguyễn; it was only under the reign of Minh Mạng (1820–1841) that the king authorized its rectification to the name Đinh.

The two other remaining sons: that of the first wife, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Huân, died young; and the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn had no son.

Thereafter, our lineage still had descendants issued from the Ancestor of the 14th generation Đinh Nho Thiều, who settled at Thanh An, Thanh Chương District, Nghệ An. For a time, owing to material difficulties and other causes, they had to change their name to Võ, before re-establishing it thereafter as Đinh.

And today, the descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage are present in every region of the country, and some have even settled abroad. Without a close bond and/or without a careful recording of the origins, the descendants of the future generations will again have great difficulty in rediscovering their stock. According to information gathered by Mr. Đinh Quang Tích, an offshoot of our Đinh Nho lineage has settled in Phú Yên Province; we record it here so that the future descendants may seek one another out and recognize one another.

Under the feudal dynasties, our Đinh Nho lineage was a great and illustrious lineage. However, being a vast lineage, not all its families, branches, and offshoots had members received at the examinations; hence it could not avoid having families tried by the difficulties common to the whole society of that time. In the book *Memories of the Lieutenant General Nguyễn Đường*, the latter relates that his mother, Đinh Thị Mực, was of the Đinh Nho lineage but of a very poor condition. Đinh Thị Mực was the eldest of a family of 5 daughters and one son named Liên (later renamed Chân). The son of Mr. Liên, Đinh Nho Phúc, joined the army, reached the rank of lieutenant, retired, and lives in the native land of his wife at Mê Linh, Hanoi. We record it here too so that the future generations may seek one another out and recognize one another.

The present head of lineage, Đinh Hải Quân, belongs to the 19th generation. The 18 past heads of the Đinh Nho lineage are:

Generation	Head of lineage	Birth	Death	Commemoration date (lunar)	Age reached	Tomb at
Founder	Đinh Phúc Diên			9 / 1st month	93	Áng Phần
2	Đinh Phúc Trường			18 / 7	60	Lòi Chim Chim
3	Đinh Phúc Bảo			25 / 6	73	Unknown
4	Đinh			14 / 8	71	Áng Phần

Generation	Head of lineage	Birth	Death	Commemoration date (lunar)	Age reached	Tomb at
	Chính Tính					
5	Đinh Phúc Khánh			19 / 1st month	82	Trai Sơn
6	Đinh Hữu Luân	1602	1676	18 / 3	75	Lăng Kim Hoa
7	Đinh Nho Công	1637	1695	27 / 2	59	Lăng Kim Hoa
8	Đinh Nho Trạch	1656	1711	15 / 12	56	Áng Phần
9	Đinh Nho Thực	1679	1757	8 / 6	79	Ngọc Côn
10	Đinh Nho Tể	1705	1765	15 / 7	61	Thổ Vượng
11	Đinh Nho Quý	1722	1788	19 / 7	67	Áng Phần
12	Đinh Thái Lăng	1754	1809	21 / 7	56	Áng Phần
13	Đinh Nho Tự					
14	Đinh Nho Siêu					
15	Đinh Nho Tánh					
16	Đinh Nho Hành (Hồ)	1885	1945	17 / 6	61	Đồng Mậu
17	Đinh Nho Liên	1905	1946	27 / 12	42	Đồng Mậu
18	Đinh Nho Quỳ	1937	2022	30 / 5	86	

On the whole, under the Vietnamese feudal dynasties, from the epoch of the Later Lê — that is, the end of the Earlier Lê and then the restoration of the Lê (Lê Trung hưng) —, that is, from the beginning of the founding of the Đinh Nho lineage on the land of Hương Sơn down to the end of the feudal period (the end of the Nguyễn dynasty), our ancestors accorded great importance to study. Hence numerous were those who made a name for themselves.

1. The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Tiên [sic: read Đinh Phúc Diên], office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, vice-president of the Military Council (subordinate military class).

2. 2nd generation, Đinh Phúc Trường: received at the trial of the four examinations (ưu tứ trường) at 24, received at a high rank in the dissertation trial (xã sách) at 27.
3. 3rd generation, Đinh Phúc Bảo: received at the four examinations at 19; having failed the dissertation trial, he turned to the profession of physician.
4. 4th generation, Đinh Chính Tính: received at the four examinations at 20.
5. 5th generation, Đinh Phúc Khánh: received at the four examinations at 25.
6. 6th generation, Đinh Hữu Luân (1602–1676): received at the four examinations at 16 (1617), admitted from the age of 19 to the "bureau of Remarkable Letters" of his prefecture (1620). Troubles arising in the southern regions, he took part in suppressing them, then held the office of assistant to the sub-prefect (huyện tá) of Đông Ngạn.
7. 7th generation, Đinh Nho Công (1637–1695): received doctor of the third rank (đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ) at the examination of the year Canh Tuất (1670), office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử.
8. 8th generation:
   - Đinh Nho Trạch (1656–1711): received hương cống (licentiate) at 18.
   - Đinh Nho Hoàn (1671–1716): received doctor of the second rank (đệ nhị giáp đồng tiến sĩ) at the examination of the year Canh Thìn (1700), office of military governor (Đốc trấn) of Cao Bằng, office of Thượng Bảo Tự khanh, vice-ambassador of the tributary mission to the Qing; after his death, raised by the king to the rank of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites.
   - Đinh Nho Thường: office of sub-prefect (tri huyện). Founding ancestor of the Đinh offshoot of Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh.
   - Đinh Nho Côn: received first at the provincial examination (giải nguyên), office of sub-prefect of La Sơn Prefecture, office of commander general (Tổng binh), title of Marquis of Hương Nghĩa. Founding ancestor of the Đinh offshoot of Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An.
9. 9th generation:
   - Đinh Nho Gia: office of huyện thừa (assistant to the sub-prefect).
   - Đinh Nho Lâm: office of Câu Kê (an office in the bureaus of the seigniorial palace, under the Thiêm Tri phiên; rank chánh thất phẩm, seventh rank, principal class).
   - Đinh Nho Hoành: office of Triều liệt đại phu.
   - Đinh Nho Phiên: title of Marquis of Trung Doãn.
10. 10th generation:
    - Đinh Nho Tể (1705–1765): office of Hoàng Tín Đại phu Thái Bộc Tự khanh, title of Marquis of Văn Lĩnh.
11. 11th generation:
    - Đinh Nho Quý (1722–1788): office of Chỉ huy Đồng Tri, title of Marquis of Hoan Trung.
    - Đinh Nhật Thận (1815–1866): received doctor at the examination of the year Mậu Tuất (1838), office of prefect (tri phủ) of Anh Sơn (Đinh Nhật Thận is the great-grandson of the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Côn, Đinh offshoot of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An).

- Đinh Nguyễn Đôn: received hương cống at the examination of the year Kỷ Mão, the 19th year of the Cảnh Hưng era (1759). Đinh Nguyễn Đôn is the great-grandson of the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thường, Đinh offshoot of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, Nghệ An.

12. 12th generation:
    - Đinh Thái Lăng (1754–1809): office of Triều liệt Đại phu, lecturer-scholar of the Hàn lâm Academy.
13. 13th generation:
    - Đinh Khắc Tuy: office of Bá hộ, rank of the ninth degree.
    - Đinh Nho Tỉnh (Đinh Nho Tĩnh): office of Thái Bộc Tự khanh.
    - Đinh Nho Chân: received licentiate, office of prefect.
    - Đinh Nho Tân: received bachelor.
14. 14th generation:
    - Đinh Nho Quang: received licentiate, office of prefect (tuần phủ) of Phú Yên.
    - Đinh Nho Lệ, called Hàn Lệ: received bachelor, did not serve as a mandarin but opened a school (we, composer of this book, are the great-grandson of Đinh Nho Lệ).
    - Đinh Nho Điển (1846–1884): received doctor of the third rank (đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân) in the year Ất Hợi (1875), office of Hồng Lô Tự khanh.
    - Đinh Nho My: received licentiate.
15. 15th generation:
    - Đinh Nho Băng: licentiate in Sino-Vietnamese letters, sub-prefect of the districts of Nam Đàn, Nghi Lộc, Gio Linh, Cẩm Xuyên, Yên Định. After the revolution, president of the Liên Việt Front of his commune (from 1946), died on 15 December 1952.
    - Đinh Nho Kiên (1887–1956), commonly called “cụ Ấm Thuyên,” son of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang, revolutionary militant, died in 1956 [the genealogy of 2020 indicates in places the year 1950 (?)].
    - Đinh Nho Khôn (1888–1918): received licentiate in Sino-Vietnamese letters at the examination of the year Ất Mão (1915), sub-prefect of Hoài An, Bình Định. Son of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang.
    - Đinh Nho Kham (1889–1936): received bachelor in Sino-Vietnamese letters. Son of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang.
    - Đinh Nho Cẩn: received bachelor in Sino-Vietnamese letters. Son of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển.
    - Đinh Nho Nhượng: received bachelor in Sino-Vietnamese letters. Son of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển.
    - Đinh Nho Chấn (1863–1935), called “cụ Hàn Cống”: received bachelor in Sino-Vietnamese letters, author of the work *Trung Việt dược tính hợp biên* (Comparative Compilation of the Properties of Sino-Vietnamese Remedies), still preserved at the library of the Academy of Social Sciences of Viet Nam.
    - Đinh Nho Đường (1890–1960): office of Bá hộ, rank of the ninth degree.
    - Đinh Nho Đoan: received bachelor (“ông Tú Mậu”), engaged in revolutionary action in Siam (Thailand) in the pre-communist movement.

16. 16th generation, Đinh Nho Hàng: office of Tham tá Hồng lô Tự khanh. It should be added that Đinh Nho Hàng later engaged in revolutionary action within the communists, a contemporary of the secretary general of the Indochinese Communist Party Hà Huy Tập. However, when he came to militate at Saigon, his opinions and his conscience changed, and he no longer held to the ranks of the communists. On this point, we must respect his political opinions and his free individual choice.

Besides those who studied, were received at the examinations, or made some contribution to society, as the genealogy has been able to record, our Đinh Nho lineage also counted many notables and intellectuals engaged in the quest for national salvation within the revolutionary movements of national liberation, as well as persons who knew, later, a certain success.

Furthermore, a number of martyrs sacrificed themselves for the Fatherland. Thus, in the 15th generation:

- Đinh Nho Thục (Đinh Doãn Tế) and Đinh Nho Bộc (two brothers of the same blood) took part in the Patriotic School of Tonkin (Đông Kinh nghĩa thục); Đinh Nho Thục died at the penal colony of Côn Đảo; Đinh Nho Bộc died of illness in Laos on the way back toward Viet Nam, while traveling with the patriot Phan Bội Châu and another person. Đinh Nho Khôi, a cadre from before the insurrection, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Hà Nội mới*. Đinh Nho Vy (1894–1959), eldest son of the bachelor Đinh Nho Lệ and our grandfather, we, composer of this book, worked at the Residence of Pleiku, then was deputy director of the Roads Service (equivalent to the present Transport Service), owner of a transport company and a market (his private residence was then at Trà Phú Thương Commune, town of Gia Lai-Kontum, though one does not know to what address this corresponds today), while militating in the revolution as vice-president of the Administrative Committee of Resistance of Gia Lai Province; toward the end of 1947 or the beginning of 1948, unmasked, he brought his whole family back to the native land, and the local authority entrusted him, on the recommendation of the authority of Gia Lai-Kontum, with the office of deputy director of the Hydraulics Service of Hà Tĩnh. From the time when he worked at Gia Lai-Kontum, Đinh Nho Vy had sent money to the native land to build a large and beautiful house of three bays and two lean-tos in ironwood. But when he brought his family back to the country, for lack of anything to eat, he had to exchange the entire house for two quintals of rice. This house was dismantled and re-erected at Sơn Lễ Commune, where it still subsists today.

16th generation:

- Đinh Nho Đang (1911–1972): member of the Revolutionary Youth Association, member of the Indochinese Communist Party. Held the functions of president of Hương Sơn District, director of the School of Child-Soldiers of the ministry of Defense, political commissar of the military command of the town of Hải Phòng, president of the Military Procuracy of the 3rd Military Region — ministry of Defense.
- Đinh Nho Bát: colonel, head of the political department, deputy director of the Political Academy — ministry of Defense.
- Đinh Nho Hàm (1906–1955): former judge of the People's Court of Quảng Đà Province (Quảng Nam, Đà Nãng) under the resistance against France.

- Đinh Nho Liêm (1924–2008): former ambassador to Egypt, Laos, and the USSR; former first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.
- Đinh Nho Huề: engaged in the revolution before and after the insurrection (1945).
- Đinh Nho Khoách: engaged in the revolution before and after the insurrection, deputy secretary of the Party committee of Hương Sơn District.
- Đinh Xuân Bính: president of the Administrative Committee of Hương Sơn District…

17th generation:

- The patriot Đinh Nho Diệm (son of Đinh Nho Huề, elder brother of the professor and doctor of sciences Đinh Phạm Thái), that is, the poet Quỳnh Dao…

As for the studies and successes after the era of Confucian studies:

16th generation: the grandson of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển, the doctor Đinh Nho Hân. He was the very first doctor of chemistry graduated in France in all of Indochina. Unfortunately, the doctor Đinh Nho Hân died young. The holder of a master's Đinh Nho Bảng, deputy director of the Exchange Department of the State Bank of Viet Nam, vice-president and secretary general of the Gold Trade Association of Viet Nam.

In the 17th generation, the doctors: Prof. Đinh Dũng (doctor of sciences); the professor and doctor of sciences, poet and Emeritus Teacher of the People Đinh Phạm Thái (1937–2023); the associate professor and doctor of mathematics Đinh Nho Chương; the doctor Đinh Thị Khương; the associate professor and doctor of medicine Đinh Thị Thu; the associate professor and doctor of medicine Đinh Thị Phương Hòa; the doctor Đinh Thị Phương Hoa; the professor and doctor of sciences in mathematics Đinh Nho Hào, president of the scientific council of the Institute of Mathematics — Academy of Sciences and Technologies of Viet Nam; the doctor Đinh Thị Kim Oanh; the colonel and doctor Đinh Nho Hồng; the doctor Đinh Như Hà Bình; the doctor Đinh Nho Thanh; the surveyor engineer and licentiate in mathematics Đinh Thanh Tịnh, mastering 5 foreign languages, founder and director of an international translation company, co-author of 4 specialized dictionaries, author and translator of 3 specialized works of geodesy; the permanent deputy secretary of the provincial Party committee of Hà Tĩnh Đinh Xuân Việt; the doctor Đinh Nho Hải, deputy director of a nuclear power plant in Australia; the holder of a master's in human and social sciences and licentiate in the English language Đinh Việt Anh (a woman), who, though blind in both eyes from childhood, overcame with perseverance all the obstacles and difficulties to become useful to herself, to her family, and to society, holding today the function of vice-president of the Association of the Blind of Viet Nam.

In the 18th generation: the doctor Đinh Thị Yến, the doctor Đinh Nho Hùng, the doctor Đinh Nho Minh…

In particular, our Đinh Nho lineage also counts Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh, 16th generation, a researcher and collator in history, geography, fauna, and flora. He is renowned for his *Handbook of the Place-Names of Viet Nam* (*Sổ tay địa danh Việt Nam*), of 754 pages. Mr. Đinh Xuân Lâm, professor of history, is held to be one of the "four pillars" of historiography: Đinh Xuân Lâm, Phan Huy Lê, Hà Văn Tấn, and Trần Quốc Vượng. Mr. Lâm is a descendant of the offshoot of the Đinh Nho lineage that set off from An Ấp toward the land of Xa Lang (Sơn Tân); hence we do not know clearly to which generation he corresponds.

The count of the “đinh” (males) of the two branches, senior and cadet, of the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn, compiled from the genealogy, is the following (the branches of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, and of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, have no data to compile; the descendants of the two branches, senior and cadet, who set off to Sơn Châu and to Xa Lang (Sơn Tân), likewise have no data to compile here):

No.	Generation	Senior branch (A)	Cadet branch (B)	Total
1	1st generation	1	0	1
2	2nd generation	1	0	1
3	3rd generation	1	0	1
4	4th generation	1	0	1
5	5th generation	1	0	1
6	6th generation	1	0	1
7	7th generation	1	0	1
8	8th generation	3	3	6
9	9th generation	6	3	9
10	10th generation	8	9	17
11	11th generation	14	12	26
12	12th generation	24	16	40
13	13th generation	32	27	59
14	14th generation	29	39	68
15	15th generation	47	72	119
16	16th generation	82	119	201
17	17th generation	130	134	264

No.	Generation	Senior branch (A)	Cadet branch (B)	Total
18	18th generation	128	69	…
19	19th generation	49	…	…
20	20th generation	8	…	…

Thus, in essence, our lineage has a relatively complete list of the “đinh” from the 1st to the 17th generation.

It still remains, however, to update and complete it, for here and there, in various generations, kinsfolk have gone off to settle far away and have multiplied without yet having been reconnected, or without there subsisting enough information to reconnect them to the genealogy of the ancestors. In particular, the generations from the 18th onward still present great lacunae.

As for the temples, there exist today two that render worship to the divinities of our Đinh Nho lineage:

1. The temple of Gôi Vỵ (temple of the Virtuous Woman, also called the temple of the Woman of Duty) honors the 4 tutelary divinities of the Đinh Nho lineage, namely a father and his children: Đinh Nho Công (the father), Đinh Nho Hoàn (the son), Phan Thị Viên (the daughter-in-law, secondary wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn), and Đinh Nho Côn (the son). In addition, the temple of Gôi Vỵ honors the divinities of the mountain and the soil, the tutelary genius of the village of Gôi Vỵ, and the Ngoại giáp Đinh Điền, the distant ancestor of Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình, of our Đinh Nho lineage.
2. The temple of the lord Hường, that is, the temple of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển.

Besides these two temples, there exists yet another temple whose accounts relate to the Ancestor of the 8th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công: the temple of Thịnh Xá (temple of Bạch Vân).

As for the ancestral temples, the two branches, senior and cadet, of Hương Sơn today render worship to the ancestors in common at the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage, at the hamlet of Đồng Vực, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province. The two branches of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh, and of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An, have their own temples.

As for the funerary complexes, our lineage today counts five:

1. The tomb of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, at the cemetery of Kỳ Ông Trường, Nghi Long Commune, Nghi Lộc District, Nghệ An Province.
2. The funerary complex of Áng Phần: 16 tombs of the founding Ancestor and of the following generations.
3. The tomb of Lòi Chim Chim (Mount Điểu Lĩnh): tombs of the ancestor and his wife of the 2nd generation.

4. The tomb of Trai Sơn (Mount Trai): tombs of the ancestor and his wife of the 5th generation.
5. The mausoleum of Kim Hoa: tombs of the ancestor and his wife of the 6th generation, and tomb of the ancestor of the 7th generation.

In addition, the branches of Cương Gián and of Thanh Liên, as well as the later offshoots and branches, possess their own funerary complexes and cemeteries.

On the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn, the newspaper *Hà Tĩnh* of 17 April 1999 published an article entitled *The Đinh Nho Lineage of Hương Sơn*, of which here is an extract:

"… The Đinh Nho lineage is a great, illustrious, and aristocratic lineage of Hương Sơn and of the land of Nghệ… This lineage has brought forth many famous figures, in the examinations, in the mandarinal career as in arms."

2. The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên

Our Đinh Nho lineage has its origin in the Đinh lineage of Gia Viễn, Ninh Bình; it descends from the Ngoại giáp Đinh Điền.

As said above, the founding Ancestor of our Đinh Nho lineage is Đinh Phúc Diên, the eldest of the 4 brothers who, with their aged mother dame Hoàng Quý and their family, fled the troubles of the Mạc dynasty from the North (the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage says "from Gia Viễn") toward the land of Hoan Châu (present-day Nghệ An, Hà Tĩnh), around 1527. The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên and his family came to settle at An Ấp, Hương Sơn (present-day An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province) between 1543 and 1546, when he was already about 68 to 71 years old, or even more. He reached the age of 93. He died on the 9th day of the first month; his years of birth and death are unknown.

Each year, the Đinh Nho lineage makes of the commemoration day of the founding Ancestor its great ceremony. In the native land, or for the kinsfolk who return there on this occasion, they gather at the temple of the great lineage to offer the fragrant incense, to accomplish the great ceremony, to contemplate the merits of the ancestors, and together to raise the cup of spring. The scene of the temple in these moments is full of the affection of blood; the ancestors surely have their hearts warmed by it. The families living far from the country, in the years when they cannot return, likewise burn incense on the altar of the ancestors, their hearts turned toward the country, and remind their children: today is the commemoration day of the ancestors, and together they revisit the glorious tradition of the illustrious forebears.

In his time, the Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên was a military mandarin, a lieutenant of Lê Tuấn Mậu. He held the office of Tả Hiệu điểm, rank of the second degree, vice-president of the military class (subordinate military class). After bringing his family back to the land of Hoan Châu, he joined his forces to those of Phạm Phúc Kính (founding ancestor of the Phạm lineage of Sơn Băng, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh) to pursue the work of supporting the Lê and annihilating the Mạc. After the restoration of the Lê, considering his merits, the king further granted him the title of Marquis of Công Tây (the title of marquis (Hầu) is the second of the five titles: Công, Hầu, Bá, Tử, Nam; the second degree is the second of the nine degrees, from the first to the ninth).

Thus, the full name, office, and rank of the founding Ancestor are: Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, of the second degree, subordinate military class, Đinh Phúc Diên.

The poem *The Founding Ancestor*, by the associate professor and doctor of mathematics Đinh Nho Chương (descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 17th generation), former dean of the mathematics department of the Higher Normal School of Hanoi, which his grandfather had him learn by heart from the age of 6 or 7 (1940, 1941), and which he recorded on the site Hodinhvietnam.com, says thus of the founding Ancestor of our Đinh Nho lineage:

> **The Founding Ancestor** Our Đinh lineage has its stock in the land of Gia Viễn, The troubles have scattered it toward Hoan Châu; Four men were four founding ancestors, The aristocracy shines there with a gleam of old-fashioned nobility. In Nam Đàn District, sparse and dispersed, In the land of Nghi Xuân, in places still inscribed, Toward Nghi Lộc it is reflected little by little, At Hương Sơn likewise: two powerful branches. The founding Ancestor of the land of Hương transmitted his lineage, A house poor and pure, of the name of Phúc Diên; At the hamlet of Bình Hòa he resided, it is still recorded, At Cây Đồng the traces are transmitted to this day. At the place called Thác Lác, each day, he cleared the land, By thrift and effort, he turned the wheel toward prosperity; Later, having the talent to repel the enemy, The title of Marquis of Công Tây was granted him by the sovereign. At ninety-three, he opened the lineage of longevity, For ten thousand generations he transmitted the lineage to the land of Hương; On the 9th day of the first month, according to custom, One makes memory of the Ancestor's day, on the land of Hương, in the native country.

"Toward Nghi Lộc it is reflected little by little / At Hương Sơn likewise: two powerful branches." In truth, the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn and the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, are indeed powerful. The Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy, Đức Thọ, is also very brilliant. The Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang is more glorious still. However, as indicated above, there is no sufficient basis to conclude that the Đinh lineage of Hàm Giang is linked to ours.

The tomb of the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên was first established at the hamlet of Cống, Sơn Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province. In application of the local policy of regrouping the tombs in the lands reserved for cemeteries, on 10 February 1974, the Đinh Nho lineage transferred the tomb of the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên to the funerary complex of the Đinh Nho lineage at Áng Phần.

The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên had two wives. The first, of the Đào clan, reached 85, died on 5/4. The second, whose name is unknown, as are her years of birth and death.

The tombs of the two wives were likewise established at Sơn Thịnh; today, the lineage has transferred them to the funerary complex of Áng Phần, with that of the husband.

The funerary complex of Áng Phần comprises the 16 tombs of the ancestors:

1. The founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên;
2. The first wife of Đinh Phúc Diên, of the Đào clan;
3. The second wife of Đinh Phúc Diên, of unknown name;
4. The Ancestor of the 4th generation Đinh Chính Tính;
5. The wife of Đinh Chính Tính, of the Dương clan;

6. The first wife of the Ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công, of the Đặng clan, named Đô;
7. The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Trạch;
8. The wife of Đinh Nho Trạch, of the Đặng clan, named Giản;
9. The Ancestor of the 8th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Hoàn;
10. The first wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn, of the Lê clan, named Vệ;
11. The second wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn, of the Phan clan, named Viên;
12. The first wife of the Ancestor of the 8th generation, the commander general Đinh Nho Côn;
13. The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thận;
14. The Ancestor of the 9th generation Đinh Nho Thành;
15. The Ancestor of the 12th generation Đinh Thái Lăng;
16. The wife of Đinh Thái Lăng, of the Trần clan, named Bảng.

This funerary complex of Áng Phần comprises tombs that had been buried there long ago, but also tombs that the descendants later regrouped there from various dispersed locations.

The funerary complex of Áng Phần was restored and embellished by the descendants and the kinsfolk of the lineage in 1993. The gate of the complex bears the parallel couplet:

進為義士退為良農 *Tiến vi nghĩa sĩ Thoái vi lương nông.*

This couplet is drawn from the text engraved on the stone stele that the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Hoàn had erected in 1715 to instruct his descendants, when the king had authorized him to return to settle his family affairs before setting off on an embassy to the Qing (present-day China).

Approximate translation:

> When one advances, let one be a man of duty; When one withdraws, let one be an honest peasant.

3. The Ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường

The Ancestor Đinh Phúc Trường was the only son of the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên. The genealogy does not record the daughters; hence one does not know whether the Ancestor of the 2nd generation had sisters. In his childhood, Đinh Phúc Trường studied under a master of the Trần clan, at Châu Ái (that is, present-day Thanh Hóa). At 24, he was received at the trial of the four examinations (ưu tứ trường); at 27, he was again received at a high rank at the dissertation trial (xã sách). Although the sources diverge on these trials, all agree in saying that they were selection examinations of the candidates admitted to the provincial examination (thi Hương) for the choice of the bachelors and the licentiates. Although his successes at the examinations were not of a high rank (he was not received bachelor), he offered the servants and people of his house (that is, his employees) the means to study and instructed them with care, so that many succeeded.

The genealogy does not record his years of birth and death; it indicates only that he reached 60, commemorated on 18/7. His wife, of the Lê clan, reached 73, commemorated on 13/9. The

genealogy of 2020 indicates that the tombs of the husband and the wife were both established at Lòi Chim Chim (hamlet of Yên Nghĩa, Hữu Băng Commune, today Sơn Băng Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province).

Tradition relates that the famous Chinese geomancer, master Ngô (Ngô tiên sinh), who had come to help the Ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân to choose the locations of the tombs of the ancestors so that the descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage might prosper from generation to generation, indicated to our Đinh Nho lineage two locations:

- A location at Lòi Chim Chim (hamlet of Yên Nghĩa, Hữu Băng Commune, aforementioned);
- A location at Rú Trai (present-day Sơn Tiến Commune).

Of these two locations, it was said: “From generation to generation, the examinations succeeded; from century to century, without interruption.”

The location of Rú Trai will be evoked further on.

The location of Lòi Chim Chim is the place where our Đinh Nho lineage buried the Ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường. This location was shared with the tomb of the ancestor Nguyễn Dư of the Nguyễn lineage of that place.

However, to keep the tombs secret, after the burial, the traces of the two tombs of the two lineages were effaced. One is today ignorant of the precise locations where the ancestors were buried at Lòi Chim Chim.

To make memory of it and to have a place for incense and for visiting the tombs, in 1994, the descendants of the two lineages Đinh and Nguyễn (the Nguyễn lineage of Sơn Băng) agreed together to build a mausoleum common to the two ancestors; it was restored in 2022. The tablet of the common mausoleum bears, in Chinese characters and in Sino-Vietnamese transcription (to be read by columns, from top to bottom, running successively from the right-hand column toward the left):

諱丁諱阮阮忌族忌族及七安五肇丁月邑月基族十大十第之八宗八三祖日第日大陵壬二宗墓寅世第年祖四夏考世季丁祖再福考造長阮2022餘

Continuous reading (Sino-Vietnamese transcription):

“*Nguyễn Tộc Cập Đinh Tộc Chi Tổ Lăng Mộ — Nguyễn Tộc Triệu Cơ Đệ Tam Đại Tôn Đệ Tứ Thế Tổ Khảo Nguyễn Dư Húy Kỵ Ngũ Nguyệt Thập Bát Nhật — Đinh Tộc An Ấp Đại Tôn Đệ Nhị Thế Tổ Khảo Đinh Phúc Trường Húy Kỵ Thất Nguyệt Thập Bát Nhật — Nhâm Dần Niên Hạ Quý Tái Tạo.*”

That is:

> Mausoleum of the Nguyễn and Đinh lineages. Nguyễn lineage of Triệu Cơ, third branch, fourth generation, Nguyễn Dư. Commemoration day: 18th day of the 5th month. Đinh lineage of An Ấp, senior branch, second generation, Đinh Phúc Trường. Commemoration day: 18th day of the 7th month. Restored in the summer of the year Nhâm Dần (2022).

The parallel couplet at the gate of the mausoleum:

鳥岭鍾靈地銀水造化天 *Điểu Lĩnh chung linh địa Ngân Thủy tạo hóa thiên.*

Our approximate translation:

> Mount Điểu Lĩnh was formed by the concentration of the spiritual veins; The Ngân Thủy came to be through the metamorphoses of the Creator.

Điểu Lĩnh is Mount Điểu Lĩnh, that is, Lòi Chim Chim. Ngân Thủy is the "silver river," designating the "bàu Bạc" (the pond of Silver) of this locality. The dictionary glosses "bàu" as a pond, a large pool. But, according to the reality of the communes of Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh, which have "bàu," "bàu" also designates, in our view, the name of river-arms, of small watercourses.

According to the genealogy of 2020, the tomb of the wife of Đinh Phúc Trường was likewise established at Lòi Chim Chim, as said above, but the tablet above does not mention her.

4. The Ancestor of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh

The genealogy records that the Ancestors of the 3rd generation Đinh Phúc Bảo, of the 4th generation Đinh Chính Tính, and of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh, of old, were received only as far as the four examinations.

The Ancestor of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh later entered religion at the pagoda of Thanh Uyên, on the territory of the village of Mân Xá. We do not know to what place the village of Mân Xá corresponds today. The *Hương Yên phổ tự*, quốc-ngữ version of Đinh Nho Dật, records:

"Formerly, the Phố River (that is, the Ngàn Phố River — note by us, composer of this book) set out from Phúc Dương Commune (Sơn Trung), passed before the pagoda of Thanh Uyên, then ran straight toward the territory of the village of Mân Xá…"

The genealogy does not record his years of birth and death, indicating only that he reached 82, commemorated on the 19th of the first month. His wife, of the Nguyễn clan, daughter of a lettered house, reached 74, commemorated on 20/2. The tombs of the husband and the wife were buried together at Rú Trai, present-day Sơn Tiến Commune.

The old account relates this. The Ancestor of the 6th generation of our Đinh Nho lineage was Đinh Hữu Luân. In his childhood, he studied diligently and made a name for himself very early. At 16, he was received at the four examinations (1617). At 19, he took part in the affairs of the prefecture of his native land. Troubles arising in the southern regions, he took part in suppressing them to save the country. For his merits, the king appointed him assistant to the sub-prefect (huyện tá) of Đông Ngạn. The huyện tá was the mandarin assisting the sub-prefect. In his district, he never neglected public affairs, took great care of the people, and was renowned for his integrity. The husband and the wife, full of humanity and rectitude, were respected and admired by the inhabitants. Once, the merchant ship of a Chinese trader having been wrecked, he rescued it, helped it, and provided it with victuals and means so that this group of Chinese might return to their country. To acquit this profound debt, seven months after their return, they brought with them a skilled geomancer and thanked him in these terms:

“Grateful for your benefaction which has, so to speak, brought us back to life, we do not dare offer gold and jade to your so-pure heart; hence we bring you this master of our country to spread happiness upon many, but above all to give thanks to the beneficent virtue of your house. Please accept!”

Filled with joy and gratitude, he at once left his office and welcomed master Ngô into his native land so that he might watch over the eternal prosperity of his descendants.

At that time, nearly a hundred years had elapsed since the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên had brought his family to An Ấp (present-day An Hòa Thịnh, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh), and our lineage remained still “độc đinh,” that is, in each generation a single son ensured the descent, and no one had yet been received at the examinations at a high rank (one did not surpass the four examinations and the dissertation; no one had attained the grade of bachelor).

He said to master Ngô:

“My modest house arrived here from Châu Ái nearly a hundred years ago, ‘độc đinh’ from generation to generation, sons and daughters late. Moreover, in each generation, one applied oneself to study, but no success at the great examinations came to reward the toil. I would wish that the Master might provide for it in one way or another: it would be a great happiness for my modest house!”

The geomancer searched throughout the whole region. After more than a month of searching, he indicated two locations. The location of Lòi Chim Chim, where the Ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường and the ancestor of the Nguyễn lineage were buried together, as said above. And the location situated at the summit of Mount Trai (in the local speech, Rú Trai), present-day Sơn Tiến Commune, Hương Sơn District; he advised the Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân to bury there together his parents, the ancestor and his wife of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh, saying: “This is a place that will bring success at the examinations from generation to generation, without ever an interruption through the dynasties!”

According to the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ, it is called Mount Trai (“mussel”) because this mount has the aspect of a sea mussel holding a pearl in its shell.

The Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân followed the advice of the geomancer and buried his parents there together. Then the Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân was taught by master Ngô the art of geomancy (phong thủy).

Some time later, the grandson of the Ancestor Đinh Phúc Khánh, that is, the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, was received doctor of the third rank (Đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân). The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công begot 6 sons and 6 daughters, breaking from then on with the “độc đinh” condition of the lineage.

On 23 July 2020 (that is, the 3rd day of the 6th month of the year Canh Tý), the descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage, under the direction of the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ, celebrated the ceremony of the opening of the worksite for the restoration and embellishment of this mausoleum of Rú Trai. However, as for the mausoleum of the Ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường, this mausoleum has only a symbolic value, for of old, after the burial, the tomb was effaced. And on 30 August 2020 (that is, the 12th day of the 7th

month of the year Canh Tý), the lineage celebrated the ceremony of the completion of the works.

The tablet of the mausoleum today bears, in Chinese characters (the Sino-Vietnamese transcription does not figure on the stele; we add it to facilitate reading and understanding):

墓祖族大儒丁 *Mộ Tổ Tộc Đại Nho Đinh*

第第五五世世祖丁墓正字室福阮慶氏祖墓

Venerable age of 80 — Comm.: 19/01. Venerable age of 78 — Comm.: 02/12.

In our view, the order of the characters of this tablet is not entirely correct and should be corrected.

The tablet should be rectified to be exact and complete as follows (reading by columns, from top to bottom, from the right-hand column toward the left):

"*Đinh Nho Đại Tộc Chi Tổ Lăng Mộ — Đệ Ngũ Thế Tổ Khảo Đinh Phúc Khánh Húy Kỵ Nhất Nguyệt Thập Cửu Nhật Thượng Thọ Bát Thập Niên — Đệ Ngũ Thế Tổ Tỷ Đinh Chính Thất Nguyễn Thị Húy Kỵ Lạp Nguyệt Sơ Nhị Nhật Thượng Thọ Thất Thập Bát Niên — Canh Tý Niên Quý Hạ Mạnh Thu Tái Tạo 2020.*"

That is: Ancestral mausoleum of the great Đinh Nho lineage. The ancestor of the 5th generation is named Đinh Phúc Khánh. Commemoration day: 19 of the first month. Venerable age: 80. The ancestress, first wife of the ancestor, of the Nguyễn clan. Commemoration day: 2nd day of the 12th month. Venerable age: 78. Restored in the 6th and 7th lunar months of the year Canh Tý 2020.

And it would also be fitting to engrave the meaning in everyday Vietnamese given above, so that contemporaries as well as future generations may understand it.

Of old, after the Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân had buried his parents there, this mausoleum of Rú Trai, although its traces had been effaced and its precise location was not known, the descendants erected there a symbolic tomb, a place to visit the tombs and burn incense. Toward the beginning of 1947, a person outside the lineage, having believed a certain geomancer who had told him that, to make his fortune, he must transfer the tomb of his parents to establish it with the ancestral tomb of the Đinh lineage at Rú Trai. At this news, the Committee of Representatives of the Đinh Nho lineage assembled: on the one hand, it addressed a request to the Administrative Committee of Resistance of Tuần Tiến Commune (that is, present-day Sơn Tiến Commune) to solicit its intervention; on the other, it formed a team of young men to stand guard and protect the tomb. The team for the protection of the tomb of the ancestor and his wife of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh numbered 20 persons, among them Messrs. Đinh Nho Cơ, Đinh Nho Tứ (that is, Đinh Nho Dương), Đinh Nho Chiêm, Đinh Nho Tiu (that is, Đinh Nho Toản), Đinh Tuấn Lợi… In particular, Mr. Đinh Nho Nghiêm (commonly called "cố Viêm," "cố" meaning "forefather" in the local speech), then very aged, did not hesitate, in all weathers, to climb the mount, resolved to protect the ancestral tomb. Thanks to the intervention of the local authority and the determination of the descendants, the attempt upon the tombs of our ancestors by this stranger to the lineage failed. Thereafter, the lineage agreed to honor "cố Viêm" and to reward him with two "phương" of rice as a token of encouragement (the

genealogy indicates that the “phương” was a unit of measure of that time. We do not know today to how many kilos of rice (paddy) it corresponds).

The parallel couplet at the gate of the mausoleum of Rú Trai, composed by the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ:

起始猶靈地開元繼世科 *Khởi thủy do linh địa, Khai nguyên kế thế khoa.*

Our approximate translation:

> The beginning comes from the sacred land; The origin opens the succession of examination successes, from generation to generation.

5. The mausoleum of Kim Hoa

As said above, the Ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân had been taught the art of geomancy by the Chinese geomancer, master Ngô. It is because he knew this art that the Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân discovered that at Phúc Đậu there was also a location of “fertile land, propitious to the descent” (“địa cát”: good land; “bồi nhân”: which increases the descent). Phúc Đậu belongs today to Kim Hoa Commune, Hương Sơn District; hence the kinsfolk of the lineage call it today the mausoleum of Kim Hoa. The Ancestor Đinh Hữu Luân recommended to his descendants that after the death of the two spouses and of their eldest son, they be buried there together.

Thus, the ancestor and his wife of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân, and their eldest son, the ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, were buried there together. And after the burial, the tomb was likewise effaced.

The ancestor of the 6th generation, the assistant to the sub-prefect of Đông Ngạn Đinh Hữu Luân (1602–1676), commemoration day: 16/3 lunar. The ancestress of the 6th generation, of the Lê clan, reached 82, commemoration day: 19/9 lunar. The ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor of the third rank Đinh Nho Công (1637–1695), commemoration day: 27/2 lunar.

On the 13th day of the 7th month of the year Tân Sửu (2021), under the presidency of the head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ, the descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage celebrated the ceremony of the restoration of the “dragon’s vein” (long mạch) and of the placing of the tombs of the mausoleum of Kim Hoa, after its arrangement and its embellishment.

The wood serving to erect the house of the mausoleum of Kim Hoa was recovered from the old wood during the renovation of the temple of Gôi Vỵ by the State. This was proposed by Mr. Đinh Nho Công (descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 17th generation, Branch B), with the agreement of the local authority and the assistance of a few kinsfolk of the lineage.

To protect the funerary complex of the ancestors, from ancient times, the family of Mr. Đinh Nho Ngạch, descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 15th generation, Branch B, had come from Sơn Hòa Commune (today An Hòa Thịnh) to settle at Phúc Đậu (today Kim Hoa). Hence the mausoleum of Kim Hoa is found today within the enclosure of the garden, above and behind the dwelling house of the son of Mr. Ngạch, Mr. Đinh Nho Mạo, 16th generation, Branch B.

The parallel couplet of the mausoleum of Kim Hoa, composed by Mr. Đinh Nho Thanh, 17th generation, Branch B:

万世明星嬰仟秋靈脈存 *Vạn thế minh tinh chiếu, Thiên thu linh mạch tồn.*

Our approximate translation:

> For ten thousand successive generations, the bright star shines; For a thousand successive autumns, the spiritual vein subsists.

6. The Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công

6.1. The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công

The doctor of the third rank Đinh Nho Công 丁儒功 (1637–1695).

From the founding Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên down to the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, each generation of our Đinh lineage of An Ấp had only one son. The Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công was the one who inaugurated the successes at the examinations and also broke with the "độc đinh" condition of the lineage. And from then on, our Đinh lineage took the name of Đinh Nho lineage (however, it is quite possible that in the 3rd generation another ancestor set off for Can Lộc, then Trung Lương, and formed there the Đinh lineage, as the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Trung Lương that we evoked above records, and that the lineage was therefore not entirely "độc đinh").

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công was received doctor of the third rank (đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân) at the examination of the year Canh Tuất (1670), the 8th year of the Cảnh Trị era, under the reign of King Lê Huyền Tông. His name is today preserved on the stele of the doctors at the Temple of Literature, the Quốc Tử Giám of Hanoi. The stele, erected on the 2nd day of the 3rd month of the year Đinh Dậu, the 13th year of the Vĩnh Thịnh era (1717), records the 31 received at the great examinations of that year: 2 doctors of the first rank (đệ nhất giáp tiến sĩ cập đệ), 2 doctors of the second rank (đệ nhị giáp tiến sĩ xuất thân), 27 doctors of the third rank (đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân); his name figures at the 19th place out of 31, that is, at the 15th place out of 27 in the list of the doctors of the third rank.

After his success at the great examinations, he was entrusted with the office of Giám sát Ngự sử of the bureaus of Rites and of Public Works (the Giám sát Ngự sử has the rank chánh cửu phẩm, ninth rank, principal class). This office belonged to the Court of Censors (Ngự sử đài). Since the reign of Lê Thánh Tông (1460–1497), the Court of Censors comprised the following offices: a supreme head, the Đô Ngự sử; a second, the Phó Đô Ngự sử; a third, the Thiêm Đô Ngự sử (second assistant); and below them, the Giám sát Ngự sử. The Court of Censors was the organ assisting the king in denouncing the faults of the sovereigns as of the mandarins of all ranks; hence only upright, frank men, daring to speak the truth, were chosen for it. This is why to serve at the Court of Censors was very perilous, especially when one had to "stroke the tiger's whiskers," that is, to admonish the sovereign; and those who, for having spoken frankly, were dismissed or sent back to the native land were not rare, for "loyal words wound the ear."

As Giám sát Ngự sử, when he went to the provinces to exercise there, he always maintained an equitable administration.

Toward the villagers of his native land, as there was at An Ấp a public granary and the people suffered from the corvées of transport, he drew up a request to obtain transport by waterway, which was approved by the court; hence the villagers were very grateful to him for it.

He was then sent on a mission to the lands of Kinh Bắc and Sơn Tây, to assist the governor mandarin there; sent also to examine the men of letters.

Touched by his rectitude, the king granted him four characters: "*Ngôn ngữ phong lăng*" [A speech imposing and keen].

Then he was entrusted with the office of Tham chính of the land of Sơn Nam. Returning to the capital, he held the office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, rank chánh ngũ phẩm (fifth rank, principal class) (according to the work *Lê triều quan chế*, Institute of History and Publishing House of Culture and Information, Hanoi, 1977, rubric "Mandarinal System of the Imperial Dynasty — Part II, Court of Censors," the office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử has the rank chánh ngũ phẩm). According to the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, the 2020 version, he held the office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử for 4 years before dying.

According to the site Zaidap.com, the article *Stele Text of the Doctors of the Examination of the Year Canh Tuất, 8th Year of the Cảnh Trị Era (1670)* indicates, in a note, that he held the office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử then, having committed a fault, was demoted to Tự khanh — but without citing its sources. In the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage as in the official histories, we have searched but have found no document recording this fact. Moreover, the offices of Tự khanh (Tự khanh is the office of head) of the six "tự" and of the various subordinate offices (Đại Lý Tự khanh, Quang Lộc Tự khanh, Thái Bộc Tự khanh, Thượng Bảo Tự khanh) have, in the aforementioned *Lê triều quan chế*, the same rank chánh ngũ phẩm as the office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, and not a lower rank that would lead one to conclude a demotion had he been transferred to this office.

After his death, under the Cảnh Hưng era (1740–1786), he was raised by the king to the rank of 英毅大王 Anh Nghị Đại vương. Approximate translation: the great dignitary talented, resolute, and full of energy, with the title of vương. On the Internet, many articles devoted to the temple of the doctor Vũ Phi Hổ — likewise raised by the king to the rank of Anh Nghị Đại vương some 300 years after his death, at the hamlet of Tân Tiến, Lê Lợi Commune, Hoành Bồ District, Quảng Ninh Province (today the town of Hạ Long, Quảng Ninh Province) — cite Professor Hoàng Giáp, of the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research, translating "Anh Nghị Đại Vương" as "the one who has merits toward the people and the nation"; we consider that this translation is not exact. None of the characters Anh, Nghị, or Anh Nghị in Chinese means "the one who has merits toward the people and the nation."

Under the Nguyễn dynasty, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công was again honored by the king with the title of 端肅翊保中興福神 Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần. These are beautiful titles whose meaning, approximately, is: the blessed divinity, upright and dignified, who assists at the prosperity. Through the vicissitudes of history, these patents of investiture could not be preserved to this day.

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công died at the hour of Dần on 27/2 of the year Ất Hợi (1695), at the age of 59. The tomb of Đinh Nho Công was buried with those of his parents, the ancestor and

his wife of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân, at the place called Cây Hóp, Phúc Đậu Commune, today the mausoleum of Kim Hoa, Kim Hoa Commune, as said above.

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công had two wives, both of the Đặng clan. The first, named Đô, died at the hour of Tuất on 17/10 of the year Đinh Hợi (1674), at the age of 40, when their third son, the Ancestor of the 8th generation, the doctor of the second rank Đinh Nho Hoàn, was only 3. The tomb of the first wife was at Cồn Xếp (An Ấp), today transferred to the funerary complex of Áng Phần. The second wife: name, date of death, and place of burial unknown.

6.2. The formation of the 4 branches of the Đinh lineage

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Công had 12 children, of whom 6 sons, but only 4 had male descent. The other sons of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công: the Ancestor Đinh Nho Huân, gifted for study but dead young, and the Ancestor doctor of the second rank Đinh Nho Hoàn, without a son. Thus our Đinh Nho lineage formed 4 branches:

- The two senior branches, at Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh:
  - The senior branch descends from the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Trạch (1656–1711), eldest son of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công and of his first wife. Đinh Nho Trạch was received hương cống (licentiate) at 18. In his time, he was compared to an Immortal. He died at the hour of Thân on the 15th day of the 12th month of the year Tân Mão (1711), at the age of 56. His descendants are designated in the genealogy by the letter A.
  - The cadet branch descends from the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thận, eldest son of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công and of his second wife. His years of birth and death are unknown. He died on the 7th day of the 12th month; his tomb, at Mount Ngọc Sơn, has been transferred to the funerary complex of Áng Phần. His wife, of the Bùi clan, died on 1/7, tomb at the summit of Rú Chó. The genealogy records him as "Quan viên tử" (son of a mandarin), a term glossed in the *Hương Yên phổ tự* as "son of a mandarin." His descendants are designated in the genealogy by the letter B.
- The third branch, at Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh: The fifth son of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công, and second son of the second wife, who reached Can Lộc, Hà Tĩnh, then Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh, and gave birth there to the Đinh lineage, is Đinh Nho Thường. Đinh Nho Thường, a man of letters received "trúng thức," held the office of sub-prefect. "Nho sinh trúng thức," according to the gloss of the *Hương Yên phổ tự*, means: "the son of a mandarin admitted to study at the Chiêu văn quán or the Tú lâm cục, received at the three trials of the metropolitan examination, is said to be 'trúng thức.'" The Đinh lineage of Cương Gián later counted the Ancestor Đinh Nguyễn Đôn (great-grandson of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Thường), received hương cống (licentiate) and mandarin Tham tri Bố Chánh at Quảng Bình.
- The fourth branch, at Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương District, Nghệ An: The son who set off for Thanh Liên Commune is the sixth son of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công, and third son of the second wife: the first at the provincial examination (Giải nguyên), commander general Marquis of Hương Nghĩa, Đinh Nho Côn. His descendant of the 4th generation (great-grandson), Đinh Nhật Thận (1815–1866), was received doctor of the third rank in the year Mậu Tuất (1838). The doctor Đinh Nhật Thận is a renowned man

of letters of the Nguyễn dynasty, author of the poem *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm* (Nostalgic Lament of a Traveler on an Autumn Night), famous to this day, and doubtless for ten thousand generations to come. After his successes, the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận returned to Hương Sơn to recognize himself as kin and recopied the *Hương Yên phổ tự*, the genealogy in Chinese characters of our Đinh Nho lineage, begun by the Triều Liệt Đại phu Đinh Thái Lăng, 12th generation (already mentioned above).

6.3. The legend of the temple of Bạch Vân

The temple of the village of Thịnh Xá, An Ấp Commune, Đức Quang Prefecture, land of Nghệ An (today An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province) is called the temple of Thịnh Xá and also the temple of Bạch Vân (temple of the White Cloud).

Among the people of several communes of the left bank of the lower course of the Ngàn Phố River, one still hands down today the legend of the success of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công and the legend of the temple of Bạch Vân. The online press also preserves many articles relating these legends.

The account handed down orally from generation to generation relates this (each teller relates it with some variants, but with nothing essential; the thread of the account remains the same). In his childhood, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công studied diligently and, at 14, was received at the trial of the four examinations; but owing to family difficulties, he had to interrupt his studies and devote himself to the labors of the fields.

Approaching thirty, one morning as he was plowing at the place called Thác Lác, an old woman of benevolent aspect, with hair white as silk, approached and said: “Sir, go home and attend to your studies; why remain here plowing?” This said, the old woman disappeared. Astonished, he returned to tell his mother, who encouraged him; from then on, he nourished great ambitions and applied himself to study. He went to the capital Thăng Long to seek a master there. There, he formed a friendship with a brilliant and intelligent man of letters, a scholarship-holder (giám sinh, pupil of the Quốc Tử Giám) of the Trần clan, a native of Thanh Hóa. Some say he was called Trần Toản; the genealogy records him as Trần Công — without one knowing whether he was named Công, or whether it is the manner the ancients had of designating a deceased person, namely: the surname, the middle name (“mạnh” for the eldest, “trọng” for the middle cadet, “quý” for the youngest; here, not knowing whether he was eldest, middle, or youngest, one has none of these middle characters), then the character “công,” then the character “tự,” then finally the name. For example, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công is “Đinh Mạnh Công Tự Nho Công” (Chinese does not distinguish capitals and lowercase).

In the 3rd month of the year Kỷ Dậu (1669), he took leave of Trần Công to return home to sit the examinations. On the day of the examination, having reached Mount Eo Trèo (territory of the village of Văn Giang, Sơn Thịnh, present-day An Hòa Thịnh Commune), he suddenly saw Trần Công come to him, take his hand, and say: “I returned to heaven more than a month ago. I rejoice for you: next year, you will be received doctor; I will protect you and assist you in the examination hall, but once received, do not forget me!” Overwhelmed, he answered: “How could I forget an old friend? But how, later, shall I find you again?” Trần Công answered: “After your success, burn incense and call me; then, where you see a white cloud gather, raise me an altar.”

Indeed, the following year, he was received doctor.

After the day of the glorious return to honor the ancestors, remembering his promise, he burned incense and invoked Trần Công; suddenly, he saw in the sky a white cloud gather and come to rest at the mound of Mai. He at once raised there an altar to Trần Công, called the altar of Bạch Vân. This location is today the temple of Thịnh Xá — so named because it is at the village of Thịnh Xá. Besides this name, the temple is also called the temple of Bạch Vân (temple of the White Cloud), in memory of the ancient legend of the white cloud that gathered.

7. The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Hoàn

7.1. The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn

The doctor of the second rank (Hoàng giáp) Đinh Nho Hoàn 丁儒完 (1671–1716).

The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Hoàn, of literary name Mặc Trai, of social name (tự) Tồn Phác, was born on 5/10 of the year Tân Hợi, the 9th year of the Cảnh Trị era (7 November 1671). He was received doctor of the second rank (Hoàng giáp) at the examination of the year Canh Thìn, the 21st year of the Chính Hòa era (1700). His name is today preserved on the stele of the doctors at the Temple of Literature, the Quốc Tử Giám. The stele was likewise erected on the 2nd day of the 3rd month of the year Đinh Dậu, the 13th year of the Vĩnh Thịnh era (1717), like the one that records the name of his father, the doctor Đinh Nho Công. That year, 19 received at the great examinations: 1 doctor of the first rank (đệ nhất giáp tiến sĩ cập đệ), 3 doctors of the second rank (đệ nhị giáp tiến sĩ xuất thân, that is, hoàng giáp), and 15 doctors of the third rank (đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân). His name figures at the 4th place out of 19, that is, at the 3rd place in the list of the doctors of the second rank. He was the third of 6 brothers (he had 12 siblings) of the Ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công. His mother died when he was only three. The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn had two wives but no son, only two daughters.

After his reception at the second rank, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn was appointed Hàn lâm viện hiệu lý, rank chánh thất phẩm (seventh rank, principal class) (Hàn Lâm viện hiệu Lý, rank chánh thất phẩm — the aforementioned *Lê triều quan chế*), for about 2 years. In the following two years, the year Nhâm Ngọ (1702), the court appointed him to the office of Tham chính of the land of Sơn Tây. The Tham chính xứ is a mandarin superior to the sub-prefect, of the rank tứ phẩm (fourth rank) (the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage records him as Tham chính of the land of Sơn Tây; however, the stele he left — of which we shall speak further on — says only “sent on a mission to the land of Sơn Tây” without specifying the office to which he was appointed). Then, two years later, the year Giáp Thân (1704), he was appointed military governor (Đốc trấn) of Cao Bằng (equivalent to the function of president of a province today; however, the scope of the task was smaller, but the power greater, for he had full powers of decision over all things).

At the time when he was military governor of Cao Bằng, he composed the collection *Hoán tỉnh châu dân từ* in the nôm script, a long chant of 148 verses in the “lục bát” meter calling upon the local population to do good and forsake evil so as to live in peace after the end of the war between the Lê-Trịnh feudal coalition and the Mạc, and the defeat of the Mạc. He composed besides ten poems describing the beautiful landscapes of Cao Bằng, entitled *Cao Bằng thập thủ* (Ten Poems of Cao Bằng). *Cao Bằng thập thủ* is, according to the author Nguyễn Thị Lâm, of the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research: “under the brush of Đinh Nho Hoàn, the landscape of

green mounts and azure waters of this frontier march appears with very lively, attractive traits, deeply imprinted with the character proper to the land of Cao Bằng. Man and landscape merge into one another: here and there loom an old citadel, a temple with wreaths of incense, the indigo silhouette of the ethnic groups' garments entering the caves, the temple bell resounding in the night, the melodious flute of the fishing village, the woodcutter's song on the slope, freshly whitewashed houses, the animation of the market on the river quay… It is a realistic picture of a life reborn little by little after a long period of troubles."

At the time when he was military governor of Cao Bằng, he had many works carried out to develop the economy, for the benefit of the nation and the people: repairing the roads, having the rocks of the Bằng Giang River broken to facilitate the circulation of the boats and commerce.

At that time, the Chinese merchant ships came up the Bằng Giang River in great numbers to trade, but navigation was difficult; the formalities, the searches, and the payment of taxes were long. He had the rocks broken to open the channel as far as the frontier, ordered that the searches and formalities be swift, and reduced the taxes to encourage commerce. To make memory of his benefactions, the Chinese merchants raised funds to erect a stele before the gate of their Guild House (Hội quán), celebrating the merits of the governor Đinh Nho Hoàn, called the *Đức chính bia* (Stele of the Virtuous Administration). The content of the *Đức chính bia* was translated as follows (according to a few articles on the Internet, the original stele of Cao Bằng is said to subsist still today (?); this translation is recorded in the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage):

"From all time, one celebrates the merits of great mandarins ordinarily after their departure from office; or else one builds a temple, one erects a stele, and the fervor of admiration, even years later, is not too late.

Now the military governor has been at Cao Bằng only 5 months, and already we, foreign merchants, celebrate him; for he has a heart loyal, upright, magnanimous, and equitable, which touches us. This cannot wait years; hence we erect a stele before the Guild House to record his merits, as follows:

He is from Nghệ An Province, from generation to generation lettered, from generation to generation doctor. Received doctor of the second rank, a mandarin within as without, endowed besides with a decisive talent. Soldiers and people are all indebted to him. We, merchants, did not know it; we knew only the songs filling the roads, the praises filling the markets.

As for our debts of gratitude, here they are:

Formerly, the river of Giang Tây was very perilous. In the middle grew bamboos, rocks jutted out; the boats that approached them knew to avoid them, but in case of high waters and violent current, for lack of being able to avoid them in time, they capsized and the goods sank; the annual losses were incalculable. On his arrival, he came on horseback to inspect the place, hired workers to break the jutting rocks and clear the bamboos from the riverbed. Since then, the boats that pass there no longer have to avoid or capsize. Our people, arriving there, point to the riverbed and say to one another: 'It is thanks to his strength!' — There is a first merit.

Formerly, on the arrival of our ships, the governor of the citadel questioned us and taxed us with excessive rigor, forcing us to stop. Today, these abuses have all been abolished. Formerly, our goods arrived at the tribunal were not inspected and spoiled in the waiting. Today, as soon as the ship arrives, the inspection is done, the silks are sealed without delay. On departure, the pass is delivered at once, and the guardians of the market no longer dare to trouble us — there are two merits.

At the mouth of Mục Thành, the water flows, the frost comes; at the end of winter or in spring, the waters fall and navigation is difficult: one must sometimes follow the frozen channel for 12 days to reach the market, and if one does not run aground on the rocks, one becomes stuck in the sand. At the end of summer and in autumn, the high waters and the violent current are more toilsome still. If one does not break the anchor, one breaks the boat-hook: it is dangerous and slow. Yet the taxes were not reduced, for the scale, fixed long ago, took no account of us. He alone had compassion on the merchants and, because of these perils, reduced their taxes. We are deeply grateful to him for it. He also sealed a document that he handed to us, so that in future the tax-collectors might no longer trouble or wrong us; there one sees the justice of his virtuous administration — there is a merit.

We see that his heart is clear as a mirror, pure as a painting. From all time, mandarins have loved the people, but none has loved the merchants as he. Formerly, the lord Dương Thúc Tử, in robe and cap, full of calm, was loved by all the people; at Mount Nghiễn Sơn a high stele was left. Today, he is likewise a lord Thúc Tử, and Mount Nghiễn Sơn is this Guild House. His loyalty moves even the beasts; his virtuous administration keeps the grasses still green. We respectfully wish him high offices and great dignities. How we, foreign merchants, look upon him and admire him!"

Five years after leaving the office of military governor of Cao Bằng, in 1715, while he was on the way to Yên Kinh (present-day Beijing), on the way, on the territory of the Qing (present-day China), learning of the passage of the ambassadorial mission, a merchant native of Fujian came to ask to meet him and converse with him. He recorded this fact in verse in the collection *Mặc Ông sứ tập*, and this tells how much he had lived and exercised with virtue and amiability, for this merchant to be so touched by his heart. In this perfectly accomplished poem, in seven syllables and eight verses, 遇福建客丘鼎臣來訪 *Ngộ Phúc Kiến khách Khâu Đỉnh Thần lai phỏng* (Meeting of Khâu Đỉnh Thần, of Fujian, come to visit), figure two verses of a sublime brush that, on moonlit nights, we love to recall and to hum alone:

銀散滿城遊子月，金吹千里故人風。 *Ngân tán mãn thành du tử nguyệt, Kim xuy thiên lý cố nhân phong.*

Translation of the meaning:

> The moon, like a traveler, spreads the silver throughout the town; The wind of the friend of old blows the gold over a thousand leagues.

(Note: transcription and translation of the meaning by Prof. Ngô Đức Thọ.)

Our translation in verse:

> The silver spread throughout the town, moon of the wandering traveler; The gold sown everywhere, wind of the heart's friend.

And, feeling that we had not managed to render all the spirit of this poem, we retranslated it thus:

> The moon, like a young traveler, Spreads the silver throughout the town; The wind of the friend of old, through the limpid night, Blows the gold over a thousand leagues.

And, feeling ourselves powerless, we resign ourselves merely to humming: *Ngân tán mãn thành du tử nguyệt, / Kim xuy thiên lý cố nhân phong.*

He was military governor of Cao Băng until around 1710, then the court recalled him to the capital and appointed him Thượng Bảo Tự khanh, keeper of the seal of the Hàn lâm Academy (the Thượng Bảo Tự khanh is the head of the Thượng Bảo office — the office in charge of the acts, seals, and decrees of the king).

Let us return to the embassy.

In the year Ất Mùi, Vĩnh Thịnh era (1715), Đinh Nho Hoàn was designated vice-ambassador of the tributary mission of our country to the Qing (present-day China; formerly one named China after its dynasties: the Zhou, the Qin, the Qing…; the name of "China" is later). His embassy journey is clearly recorded by the *Đại Việt sử ký tục biên*: "Year Ất Mùi (Vĩnh Thịnh), 11th year (1715) (54th year of Kangxi of the Qing). In spring, the first month, the ambassadors Nguyễn Công Cơ, Lê Anh Tuấn (of Thanh Mai Commune, Tiên Phong District), Đinh Nho Hoàn (of An Ấp, Hương Sơn District), Nguyễn Mậu Áng (of Kim Sơn Commune, Gia Lâm District) were sent to the Qing." The *Cương mục* also records the functions in the mission: "The chief ambassadors were the Tả thị lang of the ministry of Finances Nguyễn Công Cơ and the Thái bộc Tự khanh Lê Anh Tuấn. The vice-ambassadors were the Thượng bảo Tự khanh Đinh Nho Hoàn and the Lại khoa Cấp sự trung Nguyễn Mậu Áng."

Alas, having reached Yên Kinh (present-day Beijing), after accomplishing the mission of the embassy, Đinh Nho Hoàn fell ill and died before he could return. He died on the 27th day of the 12th lunar month. The histories do not say whether he died before or after the audience with the Qing emperor; they record only that he died on the way (without specifying on the outward or return journey). The *Hương Yên phổ tự* records that once the mission was accomplished, he took cold and died. The funeral oration that the emperor Kangxi had pronounced (translation of the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research):

On the 27th day of the 12th month of the 55th year of Kangxi (year Bính Thân — 1716), the emperor sent the Viên ngoại lang of the ministry of Rites, raised one degree, named Cam Lai, to make the funeral oration of the tributary vice-ambassador of An Nam, Đinh Nho Hoàn, in these terms:

"… You came on embassy to our court to bear witness to great rectitude; the sovereign has compassion on the deceased — this is the profound benevolence that extends to distant lands: on the order of the king of your country, from a distant land, you crossed seas and mountains; at Lake Dongting you gave thanks contemplating the sky; this task hardly accomplished, why have you already left this world? I mourn you infinitely; I grant you most especially this funeral offering, to gladden your soul in the realms of Darkness. Alas! Mounts and rivers separate us; you journeyed through desolate relays; loyal even to the sacrifice of your life, your

soul returns to the ancient land. If your sacred soul still lingers nearby, deign to receive respectfully this offering."

"… O you, man of our Nam Giao! Why should you not live? To live makes successes at the examinations; to live is glory. O you, man of our Nam Giao! Who then does not die? To die for the affair of the nation — that death is like life. I offer you three cups of the wine of the oration; if your soul is sacred, return to enjoy them!"

(Note: "An Nam" is the name that the Qing court gave to our country. Our country was then called Đại Việt.)

"This task hardly accomplished" may be understood of the embassy and the audience accomplished.

The remains of the Ancestor were, on the order of the emperor Kangxi, embalmed, placed in a coffin and a sarcophagus, and brought back to the native land by the ambassadorial mission. It should be added that bringing the remains back to the native land was a very great effort of the mission, as well as a remarkable aid from the local administrations of the Qing court all along the way. For at that time, the embassy journey, on the outward as on the return, was very toilsome: one had to cross passes and torrents, to go on foot, on horseback, by boat, and it took some 8 to 10 months to reach the destination. However, according to the content of the poems of the collection *Mặc Ông sứ tập* that he left, the mission did not travel all in one go: on the way, it rested, was received by the local mandarins or invited to their homes to rest, be feasted, meet wives and children… and to compose poems together.

In the course of the embassy journey, before the landscapes and the sentiments that he encountered, he recorded everything in verse. After his death, his son-in-law, the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường (of the village of Trung Cần, Thanh Chương District, today the hamlet of Trung Cần, Nam Trung Commune, Nam Đàn District, Nghệ An), "in his grief, searched the Ancestor's coffer," gathered the poems and texts he had composed on the way, and assembled them into one volume, the *Mặc Ông sứ tập*. This work is today preserved at the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research, but there remain of it only 103 pieces in Chinese characters; the pieces in nôm have not been found. The collections *Hoán tỉnh châu dân từ* and *Cao Băng thập nhị thủ* aforementioned are likewise preserved at the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research.

In the preface of the *Mặc Ông sứ tập*, the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường wrote: "In the year Ất Mùi (1715), my father-in-law received the order to set off on embassy to the country of the North (the Qing). In all the places he passed through, he composed poems. The poems in the national language (nôm) and the poems of Tang form illuminated one another's meaning; sometimes in five syllables, sometimes in seven, they differed, but as to genres, they were very complete. In sum, they did not stray from the two great guiding threads: loyalty toward the king and filial piety toward the parents. Alas, by misfortune, he gave up his soul outside Yên Kinh!" Of the Ancestor's poems, the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường said: "They recall Li Bai and Du Fu." And the associate professor and doctor of Sino-Nôm Ngô Đức Thọ considers: "Most rank among the famous poems; the ancients said that the wild goose flies afar, and that the imprint of its feet remains printed on the sand; the transmitted versions of the *Mặc Ông sứ tập* of Đinh Nho Hoàn, bequeathed to posterity, are like that imprint of the wild goose!"

The descendant of the 16th generation of the Đinh Nho lineage, the first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs Đinh Nho Liêm, in collaboration with the associate professor and doctor of Sino-Nôm Ngô Đức Thọ, as well as with a few kinsfolk of the lineage and collaborators, had the meaning and the verses translated and published the work *Mặc Trai sứ tập* (Publishing House of Literature, 2009). This *Mặc Trai sứ tập* presents 93 poems in Chinese characters among the 103 of the aforementioned *Mặc Ông sứ tập*.

When the remains of the Ancestor were brought back to the country, the court charged the Hữu thị lang of the ministry of Rites, Thượng bảo Tự khanh Tạ Đăng Huân — received at the same examination as the Ancestor — to make the funeral oration, and awarded him posthumously the office of Kim Tử Vinh Lộc Đại phu, Tả thị lang of the ministry of Rites, Viscount of Thọ Sơn (Thọ Sơn Tử). Under the Cảnh Hưng era (1740–1786), he was raised to the rank of Đặc Đạt Đại vương. Under the Nguyễn dynasty, he was honored with the title of Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.

The funeral oration of the Lê court (translation of the Institute of Sino-Nôm Research):

On the 10th day of the 10th month of the 12th [13th] year of Vĩnh Thịnh (year Đinh Dậu — 1717), the emperor most especially charged the Kim Tử Vinh Lộc Đại Phu, Thượng bảo Tự khanh Tạ Đăng Huân to make respectfully the funeral oration before the coffin of the Thượng bảo Tự khanh Đinh Nho Hoàn, in these terms:

“The subject does not prevail by himself; the king’s servant devotes all his loyalty to the fatherland. In view of the consecrated rites, to bear witness to one’s heart at the court entails the just reward of grace and of duty. Let us remember him! Issued from a lineage of the world, with a name raised in the examinations; at the court of the Yu, he assisted with gravity and respect at the elaboration of the king’s great designs; on the road of the Zhou he journeyed, thinking that one must apply oneself to the affairs of the nation; he went afar to make his merit shine — how could he have thought that on the return would come the day of the end? One watched for the urgency of his itinerary, the ambassador’s carriage returning in all haste; who would have believed that on arriving at the palace gates, the envoy’s snow-banner would gleam, solitary, lowered? Hardly heard the announcement of his death — would the farewell then be so easy? We raise today this offering to gladden your soul. O you, return to enjoy it!”

He is also called “Đại vương tử” (son of a Grand King) because his father, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công, was likewise raised under the Cảnh Hưng era to the title of Đại vương, called “Đại vương phụ” (father Grand King).

He was buried at the mausoleum of Sản Trà, at the village of Gôi Mỹ, canton of An Ấp (present-day An Hòa Thịnh Commune).

On 7 March 1976, in application of the local policy, the Đinh Nho lineage transferred his tomb to the funerary complex of Áng Phần. On 24 April 1985, his tomb was again transferred.

The mausoleum of Sản Trà was formerly a garden of age-old trees, for the inhabitants held the tomb of the Ancestor to be very sacred and no one dared to fell the trees there. But from 1953, a few members of our Đinh Nho lineage, besides dismantling and selling the temple of Đinh Nho Hoàn, the temple of the cadet branch, a part of the temple of the great lineage — and even nearly selling the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage (we shall return to this) —, also felled

the mausoleum of Săn Trà and sold its age-old trees, so that the tomb of the Ancestor thereafter remained isolated on a fallow plot.

This contempt for the spiritual and for the worship of the ancestors was a problem common to the whole society of an epoch, and not proper to a few members of our Đinh Nho lineage. Hence, regrettable as it is, we must blame no one.

Let us add a word on his son-in-law, the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường (1681–1735). In the 3rd year of Long Đức (1734), the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường received the order of the court to set off on embassy to the Qing; on the return, having reached Hankou, he unfortunately fell ill and died. This fact, omitted by the official history, is recorded in the *Lịch triều đăng khoa lục* and the *Nghệ An ký*. Remarkably, the son and the grandson of the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường — that is, the grandson and the great-grandson through the women of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn — were likewise received doctors and sent on embassy to China. The site baonghean.vn, on Monday 22 June 2015, in the rubric *In the Land of Nghệ*, the article *Ancient Traits of the Village of Trung Cần*, contains this passage:

“The Nguyễn Trọng lineage, proud of its ‘tam thế ngũ hoàng hoa’ (three generations, five embassies), is renowned for its three — father, son, grandson: the Tả thị lang of the ministry of Officials, Marquis Nguyễn Trọng Thường (1681–1735), the Hữu Thị lang Nguyễn Trọng Đương (1724–1786), the Hàn lâm viện Hiệu thảo Nguyễn Trọng Đường (1746–?). The three Nguyễn Trọng doctors of the Lê epoch were all sent on embassy to the Qing, and all had their names engraved on the stelae of the Temple of Literature, the Quốc Tử Giám, in the capital Thăng Long…”

As said above, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn had no son, only 3 daughters. Before setting off on embassy to the Qing, he returned home to settle his family affairs. He instituted the youngest son of his elder brother (his elder brother being the Ancestor Đinh Nho Trạch), Đinh Nho Hoành, as continuing son (successoral heir). He raised an altar, made a gift to the village of 15 mẫu of rice fields and 100 quan of coin for the worship at the four seasons. He erected a stele to instruct his descendants.

One does not know where the altar he raised was. Some think he perhaps raised it beside the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage. Others advance the hypothesis that it would be the altar-tower at the rear of the Upper Sanctuary of the temple of Gôi Vỵ, which still subsists today (?).

The genealogy also records that the king decreed to send him on embassy to China and granted him 2 poems Ngự thi quốc âm (imperial poems in the national language). However, these 2 poems no longer exist today.

7.2. The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the villagers, the descendants, and the lineage

The genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage records:

“In the 11th year of Vĩnh Thịnh (1715), he was designated by the king vice-ambassador to the Qing to maintain concord and avoid the scourge of arms.

Receiving the royal decree, he asked to return home to watch over the worship of the ancestors, accomplish the worship, manage the estate, and instruct his descendants. He made a gift to the village of 15 mẫu of rice fields and 100 quan of coin, raised an altar to the divinities to wish the

village a growing prosperity. He further made a gift of rice fields and coin to the ‘giáp’ for the worship of spring and autumn. In particular, he erected a stele engraved on a stone lithophone, still preserved today at the temple of the village of Gôi Mỹ, Sơn Hòa Commune, Hương Sơn. This done, he set out…”

The stele by which the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn made a gift of rice fields for the worship at the ancestral temple, engraved and erected in the year Kỷ Sửu 1709 — that is, the 5th year of Vĩnh Thịnh (translation of the phó bảng Nguyễn Cự, called “cụ Bố Cự,” father-in-law of Mr. Đinh Nho Dật, 16th generation, Branch A; we cite it from the genealogy):

“This modest Mặc ông, from generation to generation applied himself to agriculture, and from generation to generation to study. Ordinarily, he confined himself to keeping the village customs without knowing how to make fine letters, keeping long still the simple heart of heaven and earth. My father, who kept his house with rule, was received doctor at the examination of the year Canh Tuât at 34. He was a mandarin up to the office of censor (Ngự sử). In the year Ât Hợi, at 59, he ascended to the Immortals. In the province and the district, all praised him for his rectitude. At the approach of his death, having changed his mat, he recommended to his descendants: nothing strange, a single word: one must have loyalty and filial piety, that is all.

Of twelve children born, I am the youngest. At 30, at the examination of the year Canh Thìn, I was received doctor of the second rank. In the 8th month of the year Nhâm Ngọ, I was appointed Tham chính in the land of Sơn Tây (according to Mr. Tông Trần Tùng, the stele indicates only ‘sent on a mission to the land of Sơn Tây’ without specifying the office; in our view, the cụ Bố Cự may have translated freely from the genealogy — note by us, composer of this book). In the 7th month of the year Giáp Thân, I was appointed military governor of the province of Cao Bằng. This province borders China, with a glacial climate; to look toward the native land, it was but a grain of rice, the road, long by more than three thousand leagues; turning my eyes toward the distant mounts and silver clouds, in the desolate autumn wind, news from home was rare.

Reflecting well on it, if my father and I have acquitted our debt toward study, it is also because the ancestors, from generation to generation, did no evil, and little by little good scions grew; it is not the strength of one man alone that has allowed it. I therefore agreed with my elder brother to make a gift to the lineage of a thousand ‘thước’ of rice fields, and to make a gift to the village of five thousand ‘thước’ of land for an annual worship. Although a handful of fragrant glutinous rice is not sure to be accepted by the forebears, a sincere heart is imprinted for a thousand autumns; may it gladden my late father at the Yellow Springs. Hence I have had this engraved in stone from this 4th [5th] year of Vĩnh Thịnh.”

The stele by which the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn instructed his descendants at the founding of the altar, before setting off on embassy to the Qing, engraved and erected in 1715 (translation of the associate professor Ngô Đức Thọ, Institute of Sino-Nôm Research):

“Whoever is a descendant of the Mặc ông must be: loyal and filial, sincere, upright, diligent and thrifty, content with his poverty; when he advances, let him be a man of duty; when he withdraws, let him be an honest peasant; let him be neither proud nor debauched, let him not offend his superiors, let him neither dispute nor litigate, let him not gamble. Thus only will he be able to approach my altar.”

(Note: “kiêu dâm”: arrogance; “tranh biện”: litigation — note by us.)

The aforementioned stelae are today in the stele pavilion of the temple of Gôi Vy. In view of the content of the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage and of the stelae translated above, there is no need to say more: we know the heart of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn toward the villagers, his descendants, and the lineage.

8. The Ancestor Phan Thị Viên

8.1. The Ancestor Phan Thị Viên

The secondary wife of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn was named Phan Thị Viên, of the village of Do Lễ, Hưng Nguyên Prefecture, land of Nghệ An.

As for the first wife of the Ancestor, she was of the Lê clan, named Vệ, of Hữu Băng Commune (today Sơn Băng Commune, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh). According to the account that, in our childhood, the elders often related to us, the condition of Đinh Nho Hoàn’s father, the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, was in no way easy. Hence the studies and the success of Đinh Nho Hoàn were greatly supported, materially, by his first wife and her family, so that he might devote himself wholly to study. And his first wife lived as a very virtuous, measured woman, in good understanding with the second wife; in the hamlet as in the village, all praised her.

Let us now speak of the Ancestor, his second wife (that is, his secondary wife).

The old account relates that, when the father of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, holding the office of Giám sát Ngự sử, was exercising in the land of Nghệ An, a natural calamity arising, he received the king’s order to examine the prisons to see whether there were innocent men there. There was then in the dungeon a keeper of registers (Thủ bộ) of the Phan clan, incarcerated for a long time, whom the mandarins of the citadel held to be an unpardonable prisoner. The Giám sát Ngự sử carefully re-examined the affair, found the injustice, and ordered at once his release. Grateful to owe him his life, the keeper of registers asked to enter his service.

Some time later, the wife of the keeper of registers gave birth to a daughter. When this daughter was three, the keeper of registers fell ill; knowing himself condemned, he called his wife and his child and sighed: “I owe to the lord Thiêm Đô of the Đinh clan — who, when he was Giám sát Ngự sử, re-examined my prison and freed me — to be as if resurrected; this benefaction is vast as the sky and the sea, and I shall hardly be able to acquit it. Might my daughter help me to do so?” This said, he closed his eyes.

Thereafter, because of the troubles, the wife of the keeper of registers took her daughter to Thăng Long and opened a stall there to live. One day, the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn, then Hàn lâm viện hiệu lý, entered the stall by chance. Seeing him suddenly, the wife of the keeper of registers, startled, questioned the soldiers of his suite and learned that he was the son of the Thiêm Đô Ngự sử. She then related to Đinh Nho Hoàn the last words of her husband and wished that her daughter might enter his service. By a union decided by Heaven, the Ancestor married her as secondary wife.

The Ancestor Phan Thị Viên entered her husband's house at 16; the four virtues — work (công), bearing (dung), speech (ngôn), conduct (hạnh) — were all perfect in her. In particular, she was very versed in letters, gifted for poetry, and knew how to conduct herself with men, so that the first wife cherished her and the house lived in good understanding.

When her husband set off on embassy, the Ancestor accompanied him as far as the relay of Lã Côi (present-day Yên Viên, Gia Lâm) and composed at a single stroke 10 poems to "offer them to the lord, that he might contemplate them on the way as though your servant accompanied him." In return, on the point of departing, the Ancestor removed the silk tunic ("áo là," doubtless like a coat of today) that he was wearing to offer it to the Ancestor.

Of the ten poems that the Ancestor offered her husband, the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage today preserves only 3.

Extract from the genealogy:

Poem 1: > *Hành hành bất thị cố quan san > Kỷ hử u tình dục thoại nan > Vi thẩm hồi văn hà nhật ký > Khuyến quân vô cửu bắc thiên hàn.*

Translation of the meaning: At each step, mounts and rivers are strangers to you. To confide my intimate sentiments is difficult to say entirely. A day will come when I shall learn the "brocade of returned words" to offer you for your return, so that you may not remain long in China, where it is so cold.

Poem 2: > *Đậu Mục Lưu Thần kỳ ngộ dị > Tô Khanh Phú Bật hữu nhân nan > Nã ông vật dị thuyền quyên cố > Đai đắc trung lương nhị tự hoàn.*

Translation of the meaning: For Dou Mu and Liu Chen, to meet a fairy was an easy thing. For Su Qing and Fu Bi, to accomplish an embassy was a harder thing. Let the lord not concern himself with having in me a young wife. Let him rather bring back the two characters "Loyalty and Rectitude" (Trung Lương).

Poem 3: > *Kim triều thành thị do Nam Quốc > Dị nhật y quan thị Bắc triều > Liệt Nhật, thu sương quân phận nội > Thiếp tương thùy vị trọng yêu kiều.*

Translation of the meaning: Today, the city is still under the sky of the country of the South. Another day, robe and cap will already be those of the court of the North. Your duty as ambassador must be like the burning sun and the cold autumn wind. As for your young servant, she has no need to ask anyone to adorn her beauty.

One day, the Ancestor returned to visit her maternal family; her mother wished to keep her. She said (extract from the genealogy):

"My husband is on embassy by distant and toilsome roads; how I worry and grieve over it! How could I stay here to amuse myself? This very day, I ask to return to the first wife, to show her with one heart respect and deference."

When the remains of the Ancestor were brought back to the native land, the Ancestor remained very calm, without weeping. But after having, with the first wife, completed the funeral of the Ancestor, she composed the funeral oration of her husband, a farewell letter to her aged mother, a farewell letter to the first wife, then, with the silk tunic that her husband had once

given her, she hanged herself, sacrificing herself to follow her husband, keeping intact the "three obediences and four virtues" (tam tòng, tứ đức). She was then only 19.

Content of the orations and farewell letters of the Ancestor (recopied from the genealogy, 2020 version):

Funeral oration for her husband:

> *Ô hô! Phu quân hà chi Hà hữu vọng nhi vô quy Hà tiết mao hề cự lạc Hà kỳ vị hệ sậu kỳ Y! Hướng giả khinh cừu phì mã / Kim yêu đan triệu tổ nhi Hướng giả tràng đình tặng cú / Kim yêu phi lộ ai từ Liêu liêu nhạn tín / Vọng vọng thiên nhi / Hồn tiêu loan cánh / Trường đoạn la y Y! Sinh ư khoa giáp / Danh thọ bảng bi / Tử ư quốc sự / Chí thù cách thi Giả vinh giả ai / Hà xá hà bi / Thiếp khi bất tri / Sự nan khắp chuyển / Vạn lệ hà tỳ Thiếp khi bất tri / Trần gian nhất nhật / Minh phủ thiên kỳ Y! Uyên loan thất ngẫu / Nhi nữ tình si / Bạo vu trù bạn / Phiếm bách trù y Túng giao thiên thọ / Bách dị vi kỳ / Chung thương bổ liễu / Đồ mai chung quỳ Dự kỳ khế khoát / Hạ tự truỵ tuỳ / Vi tỵ dực điêu / Viên liện lý chi Y! Sinh nhi cân trất / Hạnh vô duỵ lỵ / Cửa nguyên hữu phụ / Hà bất tiển di Ỷ lư hữu mẫu / Hà bất tâm di / Cam tâm minh mục / Dị nhi dị nhi Ô hô phu quân! Giám tỵ giám tỵ / Ô hô! Y hi.*

Translation of the meaning:

> Alas! My husband, where have you gone? Gone without ever returning, leaving your servant in affliction. This embassy banner, why has it fallen so soon? This fatal reckoning, why has it come so early? Alas! Formerly in glory, mounting a horse, clad in fur; today in mourning, white carriage and red banner; formerly at the farewells, we offered one another verses; today the funeral chants, the laments of grief. The wild goose's news, I watch for it in vain; at the edge of the sky, where then to seek you with my eyes? Before the phoenix mirror, I lose my senses; at the sight of the silk tunic, my entrails break. Alas! To live makes successes at the examinations; stele and tablet keep the name of it; to die for the affair of the nation, the will is accomplished, even separated from the body. Life and death, it is thus; what use to lament? How could your servant not know that death does not resurrect, and that what use is it to weep? How could your servant not know that one day in the world of the living is worth a thousand ages in the underworld? Alas! Duck and phoenix, in an instant parted from the pair; tender heart of a woman, overwhelmed with solitude; on the solitary and icy pillow, to whom shall I complain? Barque of cypress adrift, with whom shall I deliberate? Even if Heaven granted me longevity, to the age of a hundred, my humble lot of willow and reed would but bury my fidelity in vain. To live apart — better to die to follow you, to become birds with joined wings, to become trees with entwined branches. Alas! To have served you, holding the cushion, bearing the handkerchief, from one end to the other, in one same fidelity; my father, at the Yellow Springs, will, I believe, have his heart satisfied by it; and even if my mother still hopes, I believe she will share my sentiment. I close my eyes with a resolved heart; this existence is done. O my husband! Deign to enlighten the heart of your servant. O grief, O grief!

Farewell letter to the first wife, dame Lê:

Thiếp niệm thiếp / Thân thể phù bình / Phong tư bồ liễu Hàn môn tiều tuỵ, cảm văn quê tú giai nhân / Cù mộc huỵ oanh, cửu mộc hà chu nhã hoá Hà hạnh thước sào đông Phúc Khánh / Thực đa chung vũ quảng bao dung Tự tòng nhân bí sàng chinh thiếp dự quân / Tử cộng nhiễm hoài nhân chi mộng Nhất đán tiết mao tuyết lạc, thiếp dự / Quân tử đồng canh phiến bách chi thi Tự thi mỹ tha, các thành ngô chí / Ngã gia hương hoả / Tu quân tử hề thi tảo tần Để sở ỵ quan / Nguyện thiếp thân hề cung thị phụng / Tăm thậm tràng nhi phác thậm đoản Cảm tích châu trầm / Tử chi nhật do sinh chi niên / Hạnh duỵ đan chiểu.

Translation of the meaning:

Your servant thinks within herself: My body is but floating foam, my constitution a frail willow and reed, of a humble and puny house — I dared to boast of a fine alliance; in the shade of the great tree, I received your teachings, O first wife. Sharing the couch, we evoked the verses of Sào and of Thước; your indulgence recalled to me the song of Chung Tử. Since the day when the horse's hooves took the road, you and I kept with one heart the dream; and when the embassy banner fell like snow, you and I had to wander, barques of cypress adrift. We had sworn to serve our husband a whole lifetime; but now our two roads diverge. To burn incense at the ancestral temple, to you, first wife, it falls to watch over the worship and the offerings, to mend the garments; to serve beside the lord of Jade, it falls to me; without my death, who would serve him? The heart is long but life is brief; the jade that sinks, how should I regret it? The day of my death is like the year when I was still living. Deign only to enlighten my heart.

Farewell letter to her mother, dame Phan:

Bất năng tất hạ thừa hoan, tốt tiết sảnh ôn chi luyến / Vỵ học đình tiền hý thái, cự tình lỵ biệt chi thư Như hà như hà, tri tội tri tội / Như chất đàm uyển chuyển, tiểu thâm khuê cô Vô đoạn hiệp mộng hủỵ xà, hà hành tịch đầu loan phụng / Trinh kỳ kỷ hi, thượng vô phụ mẫu duỵ lỵ Xuân mộng vi viên, thúc nhi công gia bất tại / Thệ bất Lý thê, Trương phụ tự sài tục nữ gia lưu Cẩu truyền tuyết tháo băng tâm, hạnh viết ngã gia hữu tử / Tư duỵ đồng huyệt / Nguyện thỉ mỵ tha Huyết lệ hòa đô / Liêu đại quỵ minh chi cáo / Đan thần vị tử / Tràng mình vọng cực chi ân (Sở hữu ngân can lượng phụng vi từ mẫu thọ)

Translation of the meaning:

Not having been able, at my mother's feet, to offer her the joy of my services, I grieve to warm her no more nor to refresh her; not having yet sketched the dance of the orchid before the court, now a farewell letter comes to me. The crime is such, but the sentiment, what is to be done? Your daughter, of weak and feeble constitution, has but aggravated the solitude of her chamber. The dream of the serpent and the tiger made me born a girl; the destiny of the phoenix, by chance, made me meet a man. This fortuitous meeting hardly lasted, but happily spared me the reproach even to my mother. The spring dream was still confused, and now a heavy affair strikes the husband. Alone, your daughter is not like others: I swear not to imitate the daughter of Trương nor the wife of Lý. The duty of a daughter is to keep herself pure; may one praise in me a worthy descendant. Today, I ask to die to follow my husband; I swear

not to have a divided heart. A few words of tears of blood, I send them as a farewell from beyond the grave. A heart of vermillion not yet extinguished, in memory of an infinite grace. (I have therefore a few ounces of silver that I send in homage for the longevity of my tender mother.)

End of the extract from the genealogy.

The *Đại Việt sử ký tục biên* (1676–1789) — Institute of Sino-Nôm Research, translated and annotated by Ngô Thế Long and Nguyễn Kim Hưng, revised by Nguyễn Đổng Chi, p. 75, article 9:

“Honoring of the woman of virtue and duty, dame Phan. Dame Phan, of Do Lễ Commune, Hưng Nguyên District (Nghệ An), was the secondary wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn. Nho Hoàn, having set off on embassy to the North, died on the way. After he had been brought back and buried, dame Phan, in her grief, hanged herself. The affair reached the ears of the court, which charged the mandarins to grant her votive rice fields, awarded her the title of Á Thận nhân, had a temple built (today, at An Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District, the sanctuary still subsists) and granted her a gold tablet engraved with the two characters ‘tiết phụ’ (virtuous woman), hung to honor her.”

According to the author Đào Tam Tỉnh, in his article *Rectification of an Error on Dame Phan Thị Viên — Wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn in the Translation of the “Nghệ An ký,”* published on the site of the social and human sciences of Nghệ An (khxhnvnghean.gov.vn), SSH notebook no. 9/2015, on 5 October 2015:

“The work *Bách thần sự tích* (Accounts of the Hundred Divinities) records on Đinh Nho Hoàn and his secondary wife of the Phan clan the following:

Original text in Chinese characters:

弘信大夫陪從尚寶寺卿禮部左侍郎壽山侯丁相公特達大王靈神廟一所在香山縣安邑社原是本社人奉黎朝進士弟入侍王府府僚陪從奉使北國死節方功奉方敕封特達大王命立廟祀潘氏貞一亞慎夫人靈祀廟一所在香山縣安邑社原是興元縣由禮社人姓潘諱圓十六歲歸禮部左侍郎壽山侯為側室纔一年壽山侯奉使北國損故及歸骸骨到家夫人年十九歲發棺詳記隨節自縊伊族以事洞達奉有敕封為亞慎夫人贈節婦侀三金字并給本社田貳畝村族人奉祀.

Sino-Vietnamese transcription:

Hoằng tín Đại phu Bồi tụng Thượng bảo Tự khanh Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Thọ Sơn Hầu Đinh tướng công Đặc Đạt Đại vương linh thần: Miếu nhất sở, tại Hương Sơn huyện, Yên Ấp xã, nguyên thị bản xã nhân. Phụng Lê triều Tiến sĩ đệ. Nhập thị Vương phủ phủ Liêu Bồi tụng, phụng Sứ Bắc Quốc. Tử tiết hữu công, phụng hữu sắc phong Đặc Đạt Đại Vương, mệnh lập miếu tự.

Phan Thị Trinh Nhất Á Thận phu nhân linh từ: Miếu nhất sở tại Hương Sơn huyện, Yên Ấp xã, nguyên thị Hưng Nguyên huyện, Do Lễ xã nhân, tính Phan, húy Viên. Thập lục tuế quy Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Thọ Sơn Hầu, vi trắc thất tài nhất niên. Thọ Sơn hầu, phụng Sứ Bắc Quốc tôn cô, cập quy hài cốt đáo gia. Phu nhân niên thập cửu tuế phát quan tường ký, tùy lang tự ải, ỵ tộc dĩ sự đồng đạt, phụng hữu sắc phong vi Á Thận phu nhân, tặng Tiết phụ, đồng tam kim tự. Tinh cấp bản xã, điền nhị mẫu, thôn tộc nhân phụng tự.

Approximate translation:

The sacred divinity: the Hoằng tín Đại phu, Bồi tụng, Thượng bảo Tự khanh, Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites, Marquis of Thọ Sơn, the lord Đinh, Đặc Đạt Đại Vương: a temple, at Yên Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District, a native of that commune. Received doctor under the Lê dynasty. Designated Bồi tụng at the seigniorial palace, sent on embassy to the country of the North. Dead by fidelity to duty and full of merit, he was invested with the title of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương, and by decree a temple was built to honor him.

The sacred temple of dame Phan Thị, Trinh Nhất Á Thận phu nhân: a temple at Yên Ấp Commune, Hương Sơn District, a native of Do Lễ Commune, Hưng Nguyên District, of the Phan clan, named Viên. At 16, she entered as secondary wife of the Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites, Marquis of Thọ Sơn, for one year. The Marquis of Thọ Sơn died while he was sent on embassy to the country of the North; after the funeral, his remains were brought back to the house. The lady, then aged 19, after completing the placing in the coffin, hanged herself to follow her husband, without warning the lineage of it; she received the title of Á Thận phu nhân, was honored with 'Tiết phụ' and 3 gold characters. In addition, 2 mẫu of rice fields were granted to the commune, so that the people of the hamlet and the lineage [might draw the revenues in order to acquire the offerings] and render her the worship."

According to the aforementioned work *Bách thần sự tích*, there are two temples: one dedicated to the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the other to the Ancestor, the woman of virtue and duty, Phan Thị Viên. And this is indeed the case in reality.

The temple of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn was formerly called the temple (sanctuary) of the "Son of the Grand King" (Đức Đại vương tử). This temple, dedicated to the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, was built on the left side of the enclosure of the temple court, seen from the Upper Sanctuary looking outward.

However, toward the post-1953 period, this temple was sold by the Đinh Nho lineage (we shall return to this in detail further on, in the part devoted to the temples).

As for the temple of the Ancestor, the woman of virtue and duty Phan Thị Viên, according to the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage and according to the deep consciousness (the sentiment and perception rooted in the unconscious) of many generations of inhabitants of the region, it is precisely the temple of Gôi Vỵ (also called the temple of the Woman of Duty, and which many name the temple of the Virtuous Woman), still existing today.

Under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê, the Ancestor was raised to the rank of: Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân. Under the Nguyễn dynasty, Gia Long honored her with the title of: Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.

The account of the Ancestor was famous in its time. The woman of letters Đoàn Thị Điểm (1705–1748), relying on this real fact, composed the tale *An Ấp liệt nữ* (The Valiant Woman of An Ấp), today on sale in the bookshops and which one may also find on the Internet. However, as it is a tale, it comprises much fiction; moreover, at that time, travel and the collection of documents must have been difficult, so that the characters of the tale and those of reality present too many divergences.

The tomb of the Ancestor Phan Thị Viên was buried beside that of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, at the mausoleum of Sản Trà. To this day, our Đinh Nho lineage has also transferred her tomb to the funerary complex of Áng Phần, with those of the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn and of the first wife.

8.2. The temple of Gôi Vỵ today

By good fortune, the temple of Gôi Vỵ served for a time as the seat of the People's Committee of Sơn Hòa Commune, which has allowed it to subsist to this day. Without that, its fate would have been that of the temples of Bình Hòa and of Tuy Anh of the village of Bình Hòa (Sơn Hòa Commune, today An Hòa Thịnh), of the pagoda of Rú Tháp, of the pagoda of Bục Bục… and of many other cultural and historical edifices of the locality, razed because held to be vestiges of the feudal regime.

According to the tablets on the altars, the temple honors not only the Woman of Duty, but also:

- Four natural divinities: Cao Sơn Cao Các Mạc Sơn Đại Vương; the tutelary genius of the village: Kim Đồng Ngọc Nữ; the genius of the Soil.
- Five human divinities:
  - The Đại tư đồ, Duke Đinh, Đinh Điền (Ngoại giáp Đinh Điền — one of the four trusted lieutenants of the emperor Đinh Tiên Hoàng);
  - Anh Nghị Đại vương, Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần Đinh Nho Công;
  - Đặc Đạt Đại vương, Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần Đinh Nho Hoàn;
  - Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân, Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần Phan Thị Viên; and:
  - Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần Đinh Nho Côn.

The tablet dedicated to the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn at the temple of Gôi Vỵ, Mr. Tông Trần Tùng has recopied its original text in Chinese characters as follows:

前黎正和庚辰科正進士尚寶寺寺卿奉使贈禮部左侍郎壽山子丁相公謚簡靜靜字存樸號默齋加封特達大王欽封俊良諒直端肅翊保中興福神位.

And Mr. Tông Trần Tùng transcribes it:

Tiền Lê Chính Hòa Canh Thìn khoa Chính Tiến sĩ, Thượng Bảo tự Tự Khanh phụng sứ tặng Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Thọ Sơn Tử Đinh Tướng công thụy Giản Tĩnh, tự Tồn Phác, hiệu Mặc Trai, gia phong Đặc Đạt Đại vương, khâm phong Tuấn Lương, Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần vị.

Our approximate translation of the meaning:

Tablet dedicated to the venerable forebear, doctor of the examination of the year Canh Thìn under the Lê, Chính Hòa era, Tự Khanh of the Thượng Bảo office (that is, head of the organ charged with the king's secretariat, keeper of the seals, copyist of the decrees and edicts, or of the memorials and registers…); invested at posthumous title, by royal envoy, with the office of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites (equivalent to a vice-minister today of the ministry in

charge of the court's rites), with the title of Viscount of Thọ Sơn (the title of Tử/viscount is the 4th of the five titles, from highest to lowest: Công, Hầu, Bá, Tử, Nam); of posthumous name Giản Tĩnh (simple and serene), of social name Tồn Phác (ever of a preserved simplicity), of literary name Mặc Trai (the silent study); raised by the king to the title of Đặc Đạt Đại vương (Grand King of many successes and prosperities), and honored with the title of Tuấn Lương, Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần (a divinity upright, honest, dignified, courteous, and beneficent, who assists at the prosperity).

After the August Revolution of 1945 and until around the year 2000, under the idea that temples, pagodas, sanctuaries, and palaces were vestiges of the feudal regime and of superstition, they were destroyed, abandoned, or assigned to other uses. Thus the temples of Bình Hòa and of Tuy Anh, at the village of Bình Hòa (present-day An Hòa Thịnh Commune), were demolished. The temple of Gôi Vỵ was no exception: it served for decades as the seat of the People's Committee of Sơn Hòa Commune. Then, once the new seat of the committee was built, the temple was again left in abandonment for several decades.

We can blame no one in particular for it. One can only deplore an unreflecting epoch.

Fortunately, in 2005, the temple was classified a vestige of provincial level; on 5 March 2018, by decision no. 618/QĐ-BVHTTDL, the minister of Culture, Sports, and Tourism Nguyễn Ngọc Thiện signed the classification of the temple of Gôi Vị (Gôi Vỵ) as a historical and cultural vestige of national level.

Beforehand, before the intervention of the authority, out of grief for this place of worship of the village and the commune, where their own ancestors were honored, a few kinsfolk of the Đinh Nho lineage, foremost among them Mr. Đinh Nho Công (17th generation, Branch B), with the support of the head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ and of the local authority, spent a relatively large sum to restore the temple. But it was a drop of water, for the cost of the restoration was considerable, the temple being too gravely damaged. If the temple is today so imposing (in 2023), it is because, after its classification as a national vestige, the State invested in its restoration and embellishment.

Before the gate of the temple there formerly stretched rice fields; Mr. Đinh Nho Bảng (16th generation, Branch B) proposed, and the local authority authorized, that a few descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage, foremost among them the aforementioned Mr. Đinh Nho Công, invest to arrange them into a pool before the temple, which has notably enhanced the beauty of the temple's landscape.

Let us now speak of the present state of the temple. For this part, we rely in large measure on the article by Mr. Tống Trần Tùng published on his personal Facebook page.

(1) Overview

The temple of Gôi Vỵ rises within an enclosure of about 2,000 square meters. The enclosure comprises a three-entrance gate (tam quan) at the front and a surrounding wall all around. The temple faces west, looking toward the vast plain on the side of Sơn An Commune (today merged with Sơn Hòa and Sơn Thịnh to form An Hòa Thịnh Commune). Before the gate, separated by a wide square pool, passes the great road linking hamlets and communes, so that today passers-

by, on the outward as on the return, can contemplate the majesty and the splendor of the temple.

Mr. Tống Trần Tùng writes:

“At the top of the pillars of the main gate, two unicorns (nghê) face one another, finely chiseled. On either side of the main gate, two secondary arched gates, full-centered, serve as access. Barring the entrance of the main gate stands a screen-wall, called ‘tắc môn’ 塞門 (‘tắc’ means here ‘to mask’), built in the form of a stylized scroll like a curtain, pierced in its middle with six-sided lozenge alveoli that increase its lightness. Formerly, behind this screen-wall stretched a lawn, a flower garden, and ornamental plants. Until the 1960s, after the lawn, a wall separated it from the paved court of the temple. This wall was built as an inner enclosure of the temple, pierced in its center with a gate leading to the paved court. Above the two pillars of the gate, a vault formed a ‘scholar’s scroll’ (cuốn thư). At the two ends of the flowered wall stood two smaller pillars, surmounted by a glazed lantern sheltering a candle or an oil lamp for the lighting of ceremony days. This wall and these four pillars no longer exist, but the foundations of the four pillars are still found beneath the grass that covers them. On either side of the paved court are the two lateral pavilions (Tả vu and Hữu vu), very damaged and fallen into ruin. At the center of the court, there was formerly a small rectangular pool; at the two inner corners, two stone elephants (today transferred to the court of the Upper Sanctuary), and at the two outer corners, two stone dogs (today disappeared). The main edifices of the temple — Lower Sanctuary, Middle Sanctuary, Upper Sanctuary, as well as the stele pavilion and that of the lithophone — are less damaged. Today, the temple is in the course of restoration by the competent organs of Hà Tĩnh Province. The main gate, the secondary gates, the outer enclosure wall… are in the course of repair and restoration.

A first survey shows that the temple preserves objects and historical documents of inestimable value: the gold tablet, the stone stelae, the stone lithophone with Chinese inscriptions still very clear, as well as the parallel couplets and the molded inscriptions on the scholar’s scrolls…”

To this day, the temple has been restored and has recovered in part its original aspect.

The parallel couplet in Chinese characters re-engraved on the inner face of the two pillars of the main gate is:

姓字壽江山雙庚虎榜英靈恒今古四道鸞書 *Tính tự thọ giang sơn, song canh hổ bảng Anh linh hăng kim cổ, tứ đạo loan thư.*

Our explanation of the meaning:

“Song canh hổ bảng”: the two successes at the gold tablet, the year Canh Tuất (1670) of the doctor Đinh Nho Công and the year Canh Thìn (1700) of the doctor Đinh Nho Hoàn; hence “song canh” (the two Canh). “Loan thư”: doubtless the patents of investiture. “Tứ đạo loan thư” would designate the 4 patents of investiture granted by the king, corresponding to the 4 divinities: Đinh Nho Công, Đinh Nho Hoàn, Phan Thị Viên, and Đinh Nho Côn.

One may therefore translate the meaning:

> The name remains forever with the country, twice inscribed on the gold tablet; The sacred soul subsists through the ages, four times received the patents of investiture.

Of this couplet, the translation of Mr. Tống Trần Tùng differs somewhat; we reproduce it below.

As for the parallel couplet in Chinese characters re-engraved on the outer face of the two pillars of the main gate:

兩途史入名臣傳三字人鈔節婦香 *Lưỡng đồ sử nhập danh thần truyện Tam tự nhân sao tiết phụ hương.*

Translation of the meaning by Mr. Tống Trần Tùng:

> The history of the two ways records the account of the Illustrious Servants; whoever knows a few characters venerates the Woman of Duty.

In our view, "the history of the two ways records the account of the Illustrious Servants" designates here the civil way (the illustrious servants Đinh Nho Công, Đinh Nho Hoàn) and the military way (the illustrious servant Đinh Nho Côn).

(2) The altar-tower

On the garden plot located just behind the center of the Upper Sanctuary stands an altar-tower (tháp am). Today, the network of roots of the age-old sacred banyan at the rear of the temple covers it entirely, giving it a very mysterious and sacred aspect.

(3) The Upper Sanctuary

The Upper Sanctuary comprises 3 bays.

- Central bay:
  - Above the central bay, a lacquered and gilded panel bears 3 Chinese characters: "節婦門 — Tiết Phụ môn." One may understand it as "the house of the Woman of Duty Phan Thị Viên." To note that, formerly, to take a husband was to follow the husband, to become the spirit of the husband's house; hence the house of the Woman of Duty is that of her husband, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, and not that of her parents. These three characters concord with the tablets honored in the central bay. One does not know whether they were granted by the king or not, for the *Đại Việt sử ký tục biên* says that the king granted 2 characters Tiết Phụ, and not 3 as on this panel. However, the *Bài tán 4 vị Phúc thần họ Đinh* (Eulogy of the 4 tutelary divinities of the Đinh lineage) by the Ancestor of the 13th generation, Thái Bộc Tự khanh Đinh Hy Tăng (Đinh Nho Tĩnh / Tỉnh), says: "… The panel 'Tiết Phụ' bears in gold three characters, / the rice field of Tàm Tang furnishes the incense for a thousand springs…" This means that this panel bears 3 characters, and that the rice field from which the revenues for the millennial worship are drawn is that of the place called Tàm Tang.
  - On the altar of the central bay are set 4 tablets: that of the Đại Tư Đồ, Duke Đinh, Đinh Điền (one of the 4 trusted lieutenants of Đinh Bộ Lĩnh, and stock of the Đinh Nho lineage); that of Anh Nghị Đại Vương Đinh Nho Công — the Father Grand King, Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần (the father); that of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương Đinh Nho Hoàn — the Son Grand King, Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần (the son); that of the

commander general Marquis of Hương Nghĩa Đinh Nho Côn — Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần (the younger brother).

As for the exact graphy of the characters on the tablet of each divinity, and their legibility, we shall study it to record it in another writing (at the time of composing this book, we were not in the native land, but resided and worked in Quảng Ninh).

Mr. Tống Trần Tùng writes:

- On either side of the throne of the central bay subsists today the couplet:

一門作述倡隨風聲長在千古塔庵碑磬法物如新 *Nhất môn, tác, thuật, xướng, tùy, phong thanh trường tại Thiên cổ, tháp, am, bi, khánh, pháp vật như tân*

Approximate translation:

One house: filial piety, fraternity, concord — its good renown remains forever; a thousand ages: tower, altar, stele, lithophone, ritual objects — as new.

On the two outer lateral columns of the Upper Sanctuary, two couplets:

1) 洋洋乎如在其上其左右斷斷兮能保我民我子孫 *Dương dương hồ! như tại kì thượng kì tả hữu Đoán đoán hề! Năng bảo ngã dân ngã tử tôn*

Approximate translation:

How immense! It embraces the lofty sky, the right and the left; how magnanimous! It protects our descendants, our good people.

2) 奧宅神皋环地千年秀氣科名宦業仙山第一高峰 *Áo trạch thần cao, hoàn địa thiên niên tú khí Khoa danh hoạn nghiệp, tiên sơn đệ nhất cao phong*

Approximate translation:

The temple of the genius to the west, land of jade, for a thousand years, remarkable fluid; successes at the examinations and high offices, mount of the immortals at the first and highest summit of purity.

- Right bay (hữu): On the altar of the right bay: the tablet of the Woman of Duty Phan Thị Viên — Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân — Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung Hưng Phúc Thần.

- Left bay (tả): On the altar of the left bay:
  - The tablet of Cao Sơn Cao Các Mạc Sơn Đại Vương.
  - The tablet of the tutelary genius of the village: Kim Đồng Ngọc Nữ.
  - The tablet of the genius of the Soil.

(4) The stele pavilion

One calls it a “pavilion,” but the pavilions of the stelae and of the lithophone are very small and cramped.

The left wing of the Upper Sanctuary is the stele pavilion. There are erected 3 stelae, but set without care, without symmetry, and without sufficient space to read their faces. These three stelae, seen from outside, are:

- Left stele: engraved and erected in the year Kỷ Sửu (1709). The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn composed it while he was still military governor of Cao Băng, returned to the country to "huân mộc trùng tu" (restore), without one knowing which edifice was restored, nor where. Huân mộc trùng tu is the inscription engraved on the stele, meaning "to fast and purify oneself by ablutions to undertake the restoration." The reverse of this stele records the votive rice fields evoked above, in the rubric *The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the villagers, his descendants, and the lineage*.
- Right stele: engraved and erected in the year Nhâm Thìn (1712). The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn composed it while he was Thượng bảo Tự khanh and entrusted the engraving and erection of it to his first wife, dame Lê Thị Vệ.
- Central stele: engraved and erected in 1715. The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn composed it and had it erected when he returned to the country to settle his affairs before setting off on embassy to the country of the North, making a gift of 15 mâu of rice fields and 100 quan of coin for the worship of the four seasons, and instructing his descendants. The content of this stele of instruction, we have already evoked in the rubric *The Ancestor Đinh Nho Hoàn, the villagers, his descendants, and the lineage*.

(5) The lithophone pavilion

Facing the stele pavilion, that is, to the right of the Upper Sanctuary, is the pavilion of the lithophone Mặc Trai. The lithophone was engraved in 1712. The content of the inscription (the "minh") engraved in Chinese characters on the lithophone Mặc Trai is the following (translation of the associate professor Ngô Đức Thọ — Institute of Sino-Nôm Research):

"Every object, left at rest, is silent; struck, it resounds. But the sound emitted differs from one object to another. The sound of the lithophone is limpid and rhythmic, light and clear, high and resonant, as if it had the elevation of man. Hence, loving the sound of the lithophone, I have spent money to make one, hung to the left of the altar, and named the lithophone Mặc Trai, so as to increase my will.

It is today, under the reigning imperial dynasty, a lucky day of the month of deep autumn (the 8th month) of the year Nhâm Thìn (1712), the 8th year of the Vĩnh Thịnh era of the ten thousand years.

He whom the king has gratified with the title of doctor of the second rank at the examination of the year Canh Thìn, of Hương Sơn District, châu Hoan, Đinh Nho Hoàn, of social name Tồn Phác, has respectfully composed it."

However, according to Mr. Tống Trần Tùng, the inscription engraved on the stone pillar forming the suspension frame of the lithophone bears a Chinese mention specifying that it was erected in the 17th year of Cảnh Hưng (1756). Now, according to the inscription above, the lithophone was made and "hung to the left of the altar" in 1712. Where was the altar? One is ignorant of it to this day. One does not know whether it is the altar-tower at the rear of the Upper Sanctuary, mentioned above. Doubtless the lithophone was transferred to the temple

only in 1756; or else it had been transferred there beforehand, but in 1756 a restoration of the temple remade the suspension frame, the old one being damaged (?).

(6) The Lower Sanctuary

According to Mr. Tống Trần Tùng: "The facade of the Lower Sanctuary presents Sino-European architectural lines, a motif of Chinese architecture imitating European architecture, fairly in vogue in the South and the Center of Viet Nam in the 1920s."

According to the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage: "In 1922 (Nhâm Tuất, under Khải Định), according to the inscription still recorded at the gate of the lineage's temple, the temple was restored by a team of artisans from the village of Trung Cần (today Nam Trung, Nam Đàn, Nghệ An), at the same time as the temple of Gôi, for the facade presents identical motifs."

Mr. Tống Trần Tùng continues:

"Formerly, the Lower Sanctuary had three entrances; today, the two lateral entrances have been transformed into windows, surmounted by fan-ornamented arches. At the center of the facade, right at the top, a scholar's scroll bears re-engraved the words of instruction of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn to his descendants (already engraved on the four-faced stele of the stele pavilion), of which here is the content:

尊神碑訓忠孝扑厚清儉樂貧進为義士退为良農勿驕淫勿犯上勿爭訟勿賭博方可近茲庵. 啟定乙丑岁 ...? ... 恭進

Tôn thần bi huấn. Trung hiếu phác hậu, thanh kiệm lạc bần, tiến vi nghĩa sĩ, thoái vi lương nông, vật kiêu dâm, vật phạm thượng, vật tranh tụng, vật đổ bác phương khả cận tư am. Khải Định Ất Sửu tuế... ? ... cung tiến

Approximate translation:

> Stele of the instructions of the venerated divinity. Loyal and filial, simple and good, upright and thrifty, content with his poverty; when one advances, let one be a man of duty; when one withdraws, let one be an honest peasant. Let the proud and greedy, those who despise their superiors, those who love disputes and litigation, those who love gambling, not be able to approach this altar. (This inscription evokes again the altar founded by the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn before his embassy.) Khải Định, year Ất Sửu (1925) ... ? ... respectfully offered

Before the two characters 'Cung tiến' (respectfully offered) should figure the characters indicating the identity of the one who offered the molding of the scholar's scroll and the re-engraving of these instructions of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn; but, one does not know why, these characters no longer exist today.

On the 4 feigned columns of the facade of the Lower Sanctuary, two couplets:

1) 父作子述夫倡婦隨萬古綱常標準的天寶物化地靈人傑億年宅里樹風聲 *Phụ tác tử thuật, phu xướng phụ tùy, vạn cổ cương thường tiêu chuẩn đích Thiên bảo vật hóa, địa linh nhân kiệt, ức niên trạch lý thụ phong thanh*

Approximate translation:

The work of the father, the son continues it; the word of the husband, the wife follows it — the ‘three bonds’ remain forever the norm. Grace of Heaven, metamorphosis of things; sacred land, men of elite — for a hundred million years, the dwelling establishes the good renown.

2) 清忠節烈一門柱賴以尊維賴以立文物聲名此地山不在高水不在深 *Thanh, trung, tiết, liệt, nhất môn trụ lại dĩ tôn, duy lại dĩ lập Văn, vật, thanh, danh, thử địa sơn bất tại cao, thủy bất tại thâm*

Approximate translation:

Purity, loyalty, fidelity, valor — by them, the family tradition is solid. Letters, science, renown, glory — in this land, the mount has no need to be high, the water has no need to be deep.”

The first verse of this couplet takes up the idea of the verse: “The earth, by it, is established; the pillar of the sky, by it, rises” from the *Chính khí ca* (Song of the Upright Energy) by Wen Tianxiang. The second takes up the idea of the verse: “The mount has no need to be high: if it has an immortal, it is famous; the water has no need to be deep: if it has a dragon, it is sacred” from the *Lậu thất minh* (Inscription of the Humble Study) by Liu Yuxi.

Some other related couplets

In the genealogy of the Đinh branch of Thanh Liêu (today Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An), composed by the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận, great-grandson of the Marquis of Hương Nghĩa Đinh Nho Côn, around the beginning of the 20th century — and whose initial part recopies the *Hương Yên phổ tự* begun by the Triều liệt Đại phu Đinh Thái Lăng (1753–1809), then completed and updated —, the part devoted to the 神祠对聯 (“thần từ đối liên”: couplets of the temples of divinities), on page 85, records 4 couplets. These couplets were perhaps formerly engraved on the columns of the gates of the inner flowered wall mentioned above. They are recorded in the genealogy in the following order:

1) 两途史入名臣傳三字人欽節婦香 *Lưỡng đồ sử, nhập danh thần truyện Tam tự nhân, khâm tiết phụ hương.*

Approximate translation:

The history of the two ways records the account of the Illustrious Servants; whoever knows a few characters venerates the Woman of Duty.

(This couplet is engraved on the pillar of the temple gate, as said above.)

2) 歸讀世開黃榜券威靈地起白云祠 *Quy độc thế, khai hoàng bảng khoán Uy linh địa, khởi Bạch Vân từ*

Approximate translation:

A generation of study opens the page of the gold tablet; a majestic and sacred land raises the sacred temple of the White Cloud.

The *Dossier of the Vestige of the Temple of Bạch Vân* indicates that, “according to Mr. Nguyễn Chưởng who reread it, and transcribed and translated by the researcher Thái Kim Đỉnh,” this couplet, belonging to the temple of Bạch Vân, is:

> *Thần bút hà niên hoàng bảng trợ Linh từ chung cổ Bạch Vân lưu*

And translated into Vietnamese:

> The divine brush, last year, made the gold tablet; the ancient temple, for a thousand ages, keeps the trace of the White Cloud.

Now, at the very temple of Thịnh Xá (temple of Bạch Vân), one finds nowhere this couplet engraved. The verse “The ancient temple, for a thousand ages, keeps the trace of the White Cloud” has even been taken up by a few authors as the title of their articles.

3) 姓字寿江山双庚虎榜英靈恒今古四道鸞書 *Tính tự thọ giang sơn song canh Hổ Bảng Anh linh hằng kim cổ tứ đạo Loan Thư*

Approximate translation:

> The name remains with the country, twice acquitting its debt by the glory of the examinations; the sacred soul, eternal through the ages, cultivating the heart by the four ways, equals the Loan Thư lineage.

(This couplet is engraved on the pillar of the temple gate. This translation by Mr. Tống Trần Tùng differs in a few points from ours, given above, concerning the couplet engraved on the inner face of the gate, at point 1, Overview.)

4) 譜存本何敢忘驩爰二州經世代族同地亦非異鴻藍千古一江山 *Phả tồn bản, hà cảm vong, Hoan Ái nhị châu kinh thế đại Tộc đồng địa, diệc phi dị, Hồng Lam thiên cổ nhất giang sơn*

Approximate translation:

> The genealogy keeps its stock — would one dare forget it? Hoan and Ái, the two châu, through so many generations; the lineage shares the same land — how could it be a stranger? Hồng Lam, for ten thousand ages, one and the same country.

According to a few sources, this couplet is that of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp (1882–1953), of the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê (today Nghi Long Commune, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An), offered to the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage at the village of Gôi Mỹ, canton of An Ấp (today Sơn Hòa Commune, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh).

In the extract from Mr. Tống Trần Tùng’s article above, we have pruned his notes referring to his reference sources, for the sake of concision.

8.3. The loss of the ancient bronze bell

Besides the loss of the two stone dogs of the two outer corners of the temple court, the temple of Gôi Vụ has also lost a sacred treasure: its ancient bronze bell.

The course of the ancient bronze bell of the temple of Gôi Vẹ before its disappearance was the following.

After the requisition of the temple of Gôi Vẹ as the seat of the People's Committee of Sơn Hòa Commune, the local authority transferred the ancient bronze bell of the temple to the pagoda of Bục Bục (also called the pagoda of Ngọc Sơn). Some time later, the pagoda falling into ruin, the bell was brought back to be hung at the communal house of hamlet 11, that is, at the crossroads near the present Cultural House of the hamlet of Đông Mỹ. The communal house having deteriorated, the bell was hung on the large neighboring kapok tree. After a time of bad weather, the bell was brought back to its place of origin, the temple of Gôi Vẹ, and disappeared without anyone noticing. It was only on the 6th day of the Têt of 1982 (or 1983?), when the organizations of the commune gathered at the People's Committee — that is, at the temple of Gôi Vẹ — for the beginning-of-year festival, that the disappearance of the bell was discovered. Yet, according to Mrs. Đinh Thị Phương, who held the key of the temple — that is, the key of the committee at the time —, the lock was still intact.

This bell was about the size of a water jar, that is, the girth of one and a half armspans of a person.

8.4. The loss of another ancient bronze bell

But it was not only the bell of the temple of Gôi Vẹ. The district of Hương Sơn then lost a total of 5 ancient bronze bells: 2 for Sơn Hòa Commune, 3 for Sơn Băng Commune.

The three bells of Sơn Băng Commune, we do not know. As for the second lost bell of Sơn Hòa Commune, it was more than the girth of two armspans, that is, much larger than that of the temple of Gôi Vẹ, and very beautiful. In our childhood, that is, from the time when the bell still existed, we murmured with admiration that it was of "black bronze," very precious. However, the bell had a crack, so that its timbre was a little raspy (the crack came doubtless from its too-great size and the repeated manual transports). Here is the history of this bell.

This bell was that of the pagoda of Trạng Trùa, on Mount Tháp. The pagoda was to the south of Mount Tháp; its vestiges subsist to this day.

When the pagoda of Trạng Trùa was transferred to the aforementioned pagoda of Bục Bục, this bell was also transported there. After the Land Reform, the bell was transferred to the temple of the village of Bình Hòa (location of the present Lý Chính Thắng lycée) around 1960. After the demolition of the temple of Bình Hòa, the bell was transferred to the temple of Gôi Vẹ — then the seat of the People's Committee of Sơn Hòa Commune, as said above. Then the bell was again hung on a tree branch before the annex house (nhà lậm, that is, a lateral house) of Mr. Tham Loan, for at that time, the whole property of Mr. Tham Loan (who owned the only wooden two-story house covered with tiles, the most beautiful of the region at the time) had been bought back by the authority and assigned to the seat of the agricultural cooperative of Sơn Hòa Commune. Toward 1982–1983 also — that is, at about the moment of the discovery of the disappearance of the bell of the temple of Gôi Vẹ —, after a training session of the cadres of 6 communes (Sơn Ninh, Sơn Thịnh, Sơn Hòa, Sơn An, Sơn Lệ (Sơn Lễ), Sơn Tiến) held in that place, the bell flew off without wings.

9. The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thường

The article of this rubric is by Mr. Đinh Quang Tích, of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune. Here it is:

THE FOUNDING ANCESTOR OF THE ĐINH LINEAGE OF CƯƠNG GIÁN COMMUNE, NGHI XUÂN DISTRICT, HÀ TĨNH, IS THE SUB-PREFECT ĐINH NHO THƯỜNG, SON OF THE THIÊM ĐÔ NGỰ SỬ ĐINH NHO CÔNG.

Since 2013, after the Đinh branch of Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân District, Hà Tĩnh, brought its genealogy to the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage at Sơn Hòa Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh, to recognize itself as kin, and after confrontation of the two genealogies of the two places, which proved perfectly identical, it was established that the Đinh branch of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh, is an offshoot issued from the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh.

The question remained: which ancestor had carried the Đinh name from Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, to Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân? To answer it, we posed these questions:

1 — Why does the genealogical part of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, record only from the 1st generation, the Ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, down to the 7th, the doctor Đinh Nho Công, without recording anything of the following generations? Then comes directly the founding Ancestor Đinh Đại Lang.

2 — What then is the true name of the Ancestor Đinh Đại Lang in the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn? To which generation of the Đinh Nho lineage does he belong, he who, since the separation of the offshoot, has begotten a descent of 12 or 13 generations?

3 — In what year was the Ancestor Đinh Đại Lang born, he who had as great-grandson Đinh Nguyễn Đôn, received hương công at the examination of the year Kỷ Mão, the 19th year of Cảnh Hưng (1759), under King Lê Hiển Tông, and who was Tham tri of the châu of Bố Chính (the châu of Bố Chính is the region of present-day Quảng Bình)? This detail deserves great attention, for this datum is exact, recorded by the national history, and today the works *The Examination Laureates* and the *Dư địa chí Nghi Xuân* (Monograph of Nghi Xuân) still record very clearly the name, the native land, and the era of the examination. The genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián also records clearly the detail of the success and the office of Đinh Nguyễn Đôn.

From the fact that Đinh Nguyễn Đôn was received hương công in 1759, and that he was the great-grandson of Đinh Đại Lang, a simple reasoning allows one to deduce that the year of birth of Đinh Đại Lang is situated around 1678–1680. Đinh Đại Lang is therefore indeed the younger brother of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn. One concludes that Đinh Đại Lang, founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, is precisely Đinh Nho Thường, fourth son of the Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, the doctor Đinh Nho Công (to note that if one takes as a landmark the moment when Đinh Nho Thường left the land of Hương Sơn to settle elsewhere, and one calculates a century before or after, only Đinh Nho Thường and Đinh Nho Côn left the native land to settle far away; but one already knows the descendants of Đinh Nho Côn, the Đinh

branch of Thanh Liên, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An, and only Đinh Nho Thường remained the one whose descendants' whereabouts were unknown).

We observe that, of all the members of the Đinh Nho lineage who set off to settle elsewhere, only Đinh Nho Thường had the requisite age to have a great-grandson received hương cống in 1759. The other members of the Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn who set off to settle elsewhere had not the age to have a descendant of the 4th generation received and appointed mandarin in 1759. Once the name of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián was found — Đinh Nho Thường —, the answers to the first two questions become easy and logical.

To the first question — why the genealogy of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián records its origins only down to the 7th generation, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Công —, it is that Đinh Nho Thường, of the 8th generation, held for ancestors only the generations prior to the 7th; the 8th generation (however more titled) being of the same rank as Đinh Đại Lang — Đinh Nho Thường, he did not record it among the ancestors.

To the second question, one sees that Đinh Đại Lang begot 13 generations of descendants; if he is of the 8th generation, his descent of the 13th generation at Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, is equivalent to the 20th generation at Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, for 13 + 7 = 20. Now, at Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, one is today only at the 20th and 21st generation; the three branches of Hương Sơn and of Nghi Xuân are therefore at the same number of generations.

Another question calls for an answer: why does the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, indicate that Đinh Nho Thường reached the region of Thuần Thiện Commune, Can Lộc District, Hà Tĩnh? On the road from Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, to Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, did Đinh Nho Thường leave descendants at the stage of Thuần Thiện, Can Lộc?

To answer it, we went to Thuần Thiện, to Thiên Lộc, and to the neighboring communes of the former chief town of Thiên Lộc District, to seek there the traces of members of the Đinh lineage. We found there a Đinh branch at Thuần Thiện; but after contact and examination of its genealogy, it proved that this Đinh lineage had no link with Đinh Nho Thường, and we found no link of origin with our Đinh Nho lineage. Moreover, in view of the geographical situation, the regions of Thuần Thiện, Thiên Lộc (Can Lộc) and of Cương Gián (Nghi Xuân) are all near one another. Although the two communes belong to two different districts, they share a same administrative boundary (a slope on one side, a slope on the other); the mount not being very high, the inhabitants of the two communes traded daily. From all time, they married their children to one another. The Đinh lineage of Cương Gián has had and still has many daughters-in-law native of Thuần Thiện, Thiên Lộc, Hồng Lộc. Because of this geographical proximity and these intense economic and cultural exchanges, it was very normal and logical that Đinh Nho Thường should emigrate with his whole family from Thuần Thiện, Can Lộc, to settle at Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, in this period of the end of the Lê and the beginning of the Nguyễn.

On the other hand, from the time he left his native land of Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn (around post-1700) until his settlement at Cương Gián (around pre-1740, since a great-grandson, received hương cống in 1759, is registered as being of Cương Gián Commune, Nghi Xuân), in less than 40 years, and at about 60 years old, that Đinh Nho Thường should have taken all his descendants to Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân, without leaving any at Can Lộc, is a logical and understandable thing.

One may conclude with assurance that all the descendants of Đinh Nho Thường settled entirely at Cương Gián, Nghi Xuân District, Hà Tĩnh. Many mysteries remain about Đinh Nho Thường, founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián; but the research, the discoveries, and the scientific analysis have allowed the descendants to know the essential of the history of their founding ancestor. May, in future, when science has progressed, someone decipher other mysteries about him, remaining today without answer. Having clarified their ancestral origins, his descendants make the vow to unite and to strive to develop the lineage and to obtain many successes, worthy of the merits of their venerable ancestors.

10. The Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Côn

The Ancestor of the 8th generation, first at the provincial examination (Giải nguyên), sub-prefect, commander general Marquis of Hương Nghĩa Đinh Nho Côn, founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên Commune.

As said above, the Ancestor Đinh Nho Côn was the youngest son of the 6 sons of the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công.

The genealogy records:

“Beforehand, he was sub-prefect of La Sơn Prefecture, commander of the troops at Đông Thành and Lương Sơn. He had the merit of suppressing the Ngô rebels at Võ Xương, then received the office of ‘commander general Marquis of Hương Nghĩa,’ commonly called ‘the commander mandarin.’

He was also versed in letters and in arms, and had merits toward the people and the nation. He reformed the administration in conformity with the institutions, in accord with the heart of the people, avoiding troubles to the population.

Thereafter, he settled on the land of Thanh Chương (Nghệ An Province). Most of his descendants succeeded, among them his great-grandson, the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận, a man versed in letters and in arms, of an extraordinary character.”

…

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Côn died on the 3rd day of the 12th month. The place of his burial is unknown.

Touched by his merits, the Nguyễn dynasty raised him posthumously to the rank of “Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần,” honored at the temple of Gôi Vỵ.

…

His wife was of the Văn clan, her tomb buried at Áng Phần. According to the genealogy of the Đinh branch of Thanh Liên (Thanh Chương), found thereafter and composed by Đinh Nhật Thận, when he reached Thanh Chương, his first wife was already dead; he took another wife and developed the branch there.

11. The Ancestor of the 11th generation Đinh Nhật Thận and the *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm*

The Ancestor Đinh Nhật Thận, of the Đinh offshoot of Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương District, Nghệ An Province. He was the great-grandson of the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Côn.

The article below is drawn from the site diendan.vnthuquan.net, on 25 July 2010.

"**THU DẠ LỮ HOÀI NGÂM** (Nostalgic Lament of a Traveler on an Autumn Night)

Đinh Nhật Thận, of social name Tử Quý, of literary name Bạch Mao Am, was born in the year Ất Hợi 1815, died in 1886, of the village of Thanh Liêu, today Thanh Tiên Commune, Thanh Chương District, Nghệ An Province. He was received first of the doctors of the third rank (tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ) at the metropolitan examination of the year Mậu Tuất (1838), the 19th year of Minh Mệnh; the court appointed him prefect (tri phủ), but after some time, he was dismissed for unknown reasons.

In 1843, he was reinstated, but excused himself for reason of illness and declined. Of a free character, he loved to practice medicine, compose poems, and travel here and there, holding friendship, near or far, as precious.

He was the intimate friend of Cao Bá Quát (Bắc Ninh) and of Nguyễn Hàm Ninh (Quảng Bình). After the uprising of Mỹ Lương led by Cao Bá Quát, he was compromised; the court arrested him and kept him under close surveillance. Knowing him a man of great learning and great talent, Tự Đức resolved to keep him at the palace, first to keep him in check, then so that he might teach the imperial princes.

Living in constraint and discouragement, he bore ceaselessly the weight of nostalgia for the native land. On a silent autumn night, drinking alone, moved by the landscape, he wrote at a single stroke the *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm*. This lament concentrates all the thoughts and all the sentiments for his family, his native land. The work reached the ears of the king. Out of admiration for the talent and the virtue of an elevated character, King Tự Đức decreed his pardon.

The *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm* is the major work that made the name of Đinh Nhật Thận in the history of Vietnamese literature. The work counts 136 verses in Chinese characters. The version we print here is, it is said, translated by the author himself.

The *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm* is the love and the nostalgia for the native land and the family of a man imprisoned without reason, who, though at the heart of the capital, always has his heart empty, icy, and foreign.

The *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm* is also a lament quite singular by its genre. A work in Chinese characters, it is nevertheless written in the 'song thất lục bát' meter — an eminently Vietnamese poetic form, and apt to pour out the states of the soul.

In choosing to print the *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm* in *Thanh Chương, Yesterday and Today*, we wish that the reader may approach in its entirety the work of a talented poet of our country, whose life and work have entered the public as legends.

The editors"

(Sino-Vietnamese transcription):

Thu dạ tĩnh thiên quang ẩn ước / Cách sở liêm đạm chước kim lôi Thiên thời nhân sự tương thôi / Phù sinh nhược mộng kỷ hồi vi hoan? Nhân đối cảnh hoa gian nguyệt chiếu / Cảnh liêu nhân, thọ diểu phong xuy Giá ban liệu thiểu nhân tri / Nhàn lai phong nguyệt dữ thuỳ vi thu? Thi tứ tuyệt di du nhã ái / Tửu tam bôi tiêu sái li hoài Đăng tiền độc đối thư trai, / Thương tâm khách địa hữu hoài cố nhân! Hương thuỷ ngoại hốt văn ngư vận / Tùng hà lai trạo tán giang biên? Bôi hồi nguyệt dạ sương thiên, / Hàn sơn cánh nhận khách thuyền cánh phi. Khúc giang thuỷ, hà thì Đại Đỗ? / Nhất cô châu hệ cố viên tâm Thời lưu bát thủ thi ngâm / Linh nhân lữ tứ chuyển thâm hương tình. Tích ngã văng thanh thanh liễu nhứ, / Lưỡng tam thanh sơ ngữ hoàng oanh Nhi kim cúc dĩ hàm anh / Liễu âm đình ngoại hàn minh lưu thiền. Tích ngã khứ phiên phiên đào kiểm, / Lưỡng tam chi sơ chiểm đông phong, Nhi kim lan dĩ thành tùng, / Đào yêu hiên ngoại lạc tòng hàn sương. Hồ vi hồ thê lương khách xá? / Nhật ưu du kỷ cá quan đồng! An năng dạ dạ thư phòng? / Ba tiêu khấp lộ, côn trùng minh thu. Hồ vi hồ di do lữ quán? / Tuế thoan tuần dĩ bán sương yên! An năng mộ mộ tây hiên? / Phong dao đình trúc, nguyệt huyền ốc lương. Bất thị tố hà lang đầu bút / Tương trung can vị quốc tùng quân. Thử thân không tự phong trần, / Toạ trung hư thị tẩm thần đồ văn! Bất thị tố hà nhân phủng hịch, / Tương hiểu tâm ly thích tùng quan Tha hương hà sự bàn hoàn? / Bạch vân phi xứ mãu đan khai thần. Kim nhật tự hải tần viễn cố, / Nhật khinh phàm trực độ quy lăng. Hương hồn phất phất như tăng, / Trực phàm hốt dĩ phá từng từng ba. Minh nhật tự sơn gia viễn thiểu, / Phiến cô vân đái hiểu phù không. Hương tâm niểu niểu như bồng / Tuỳ vân hốt dĩ quá trùng trùng san. Hà xứ thị hương quan nhạn tín / Du tai nan tả tận tâm tình Dạ văn Diệu Đế chung thanh / Hải môn cổ hưởng Ngự thành pháo thôi. Giang khúc khúc trường hồi khúc khúc, / Cảnh du du dạ phục du du. Tiêu điều quán lữ đình thu / Lân gia thung chữ, giang đầu tạo thanh. Ta khách địa vu oanh tâm sự, / Thán khuê nhân tình tự khả liên. Canh thâm đăng diệt án tiền / Hàm tình yểm phiến không huyền nguyệt minh. Cô chẩm lý tam canh ngụ mị / Phiến u hoài thuỳ thị vi lân? Tình đầu dạ bán vô nhân. / Thuỵ lai báo điệp, tỉnh thần minh kê. Hữu thời hoặc hương khuê tịch chiếu / Hạ đường lai dục tạo hoa lâu. Hốt kinh yến tráp nê sào / Loan tu chiếu kính phượng sầu lại sơ. Hữu thời hoặc chức cơ dạ tĩnh / Hô đồng lai, sơ chính đăng minh Hốt văn nhạn độ giang thanh / Cơ dung túc đạp, thoan đình thủ phao. Khả lân dạ phần cao đạt đán / Dạ trầm trầm bất kiến giai âm Trịch thoan vọng vọng đình âm / Sương hàn tất suất thỉnh ngâm thanh sầu. Vọng bất kiến du du ngã độc / Cô khuê môn tái phục ngôn hoàn Thính gia kê xướng tây lan / Hàm tình ỷ kỷ khiêu tàn cô đăng. Khả lân nhật đăng đình tự tảo / Nhật tà tà bất đáo hồi thư Lãm y bộ bộ khang cù / Thiền minh dương liễu đái sầu mi khan. Vọng bất kiến phiên phiên ngã độc / Cô cầm hiên cưỡng dục vi tình. Hốt chiêm điệp hí lan bình / Hàm thê xuyên cược phục hành tây viên. Kim tất vị thu thiên tĩnh hảo, / Ngã lương nhân tương đáo qui kỳ Hoàng tri thế lộ nghiêu khê! / Quan sơn thiên lý vị kỳ hạt lai! Kim tất vị ngã ly vĩnh cửu / Tự Trường An hoặc bão khâm trù. Phong tình quán tự phong lưu / Phồn hoa thần hữu hoàng châu đế thành. Cầu phi hữu nhân tình dã giả / Hồ nhi xuân nhi hạ nhi thu Do lai tử các hồng lâu / Anh hùng bất trú trượng phu nan trì. Như thử giả, thuỳ tri chi giả? / Yên ba trung sử ngã tâm sầu! Ngang tàng khởi thiểu niên du / Phong lưu cựu thái, giang hồ cố gia. Lữ cảnh mỗi tùng nga lý thống / Hương hồn không hướng mộng trung du Giang sơn khách diệc tri hồ / Tình trung

cánh thiết lộ đồ gian nan. Tuy viết dĩ tảo tần phụ sự, / Nội tề gia thượng tự tổ tiên. Giản mao hoàng thuỷ vi kiển, / An tri chủ quỹ năng hiền phụ nhân. Khả tri giả thập phần gia ấu, / Nhất môn trung cộng bảo vô nguy. Biệt thời chính tại hài nhi / Niên lai tưởng dĩ phát thuỳ nha sinh. Khả ái giả kỳ huynh chi tử / Niên thập tam, thập tứ trung lai Ngô huynh diệc viết hạnh tai / Để kim vị giác thuỳ khai học đường. Khả tư giả đồng song nhị khế / Chi lan hương tề tề do văn Mã bôi tự ấp khinh trần / Vị thành thử hậu cố nhân diệc tử. Bất tri hậu Bắc kì khởi phỉ / Nhị ngô huynh dĩ vị hồi thần Ta tai đồng bệnh tương lân / Nhất Tiêu Tương, nhất hướng Tần, nhất phương. Tương hà nhật cánh tương đối ngữ / Tự khuê tình hựu tự khách trung Nhi kin thu nguyệt thu phong / Thu ngâm thu ẩm tình trung giả thuỳ? Đối lỵ cảnh lệ thuỳ song nhãn, / Cô hương quan lộ hoạn trùng san, Tửu tàn độc ỷ lan can / Giác lai nhãn khán dạ hoàn thê lương!

Translation (said to be translated by the author himself) — rendered into English:

> The autumn night is silent, the sky's clarity barely perceptible; behind the thin curtain, I pour a cup of golden wine. "The time of Heaven and the affairs of men press upon one another"; this floating life is like a dream — how many times does one know joy? Man faces the landscape: among the flowers, the moon shines; the landscape mocks man: the treetops, the wind stirs. This state of soul, who then knows it? With whom, in this leisure, to share the moon, the wind, and the autumn? Four verses of tender elegance, I let them flow; three cups of wine to dispel the grief of separation. Before the lamp, alone, in my study, my heart grieved in a foreign land, I think of my friends of old! Beyond the Hương River, I suddenly hear the song of the fishermen; whence comes this boat that rows along the river? My heart troubled, in the moonlit night, under the sky of frost, at the icy mount, I think I recognize a traveler's boat — but no! At the winding river, I think of old Du Fu; mooring my solitary boat, my heart turned toward the native garden. Seized by autumn, I write eight poems, which plunge the traveler into a deeper nostalgia for the country. When I set out, the willows were green; the yellow oriole warbled two or three notes. Today, the chrysanthemums have already blossomed; in the shade of the willows, before the court, the cicada sings in the cold. When I set out, the peach showed its delicate cheeks; two or three branches had just captured the east wind. Today, the orchid has become bushy; before the awning, the peach blossoms fall under the cold frost. Why then this sadness in a foreign land? By day, at the relay, I seek to divert myself; but there are nights when, in the shade of the setting sun, the sound of frost weeps on the leaves, and the breeze calls the insects. Why then this cold of the travelers' inn? The year, little by little, ends half in the frosty mist; there are nights when I keep vigil in my study, the wind stirring the bamboos, the moon hung on the beam. It is not like the one who cast down his brush, for his king taking up arms with good heart; in vain have I given my life to the world's dust; seated, I am ashamed before eyes; lying, ashamed before ears! It is not like the one who received an order, who, for his own, accepted to go far; why, in a foreign land, this torment that does not cease? There where the white cloud flies, the maternal peony opens at morning. Today, standing, I contemplate the vast sea; a light sail heads straight for the shore. The heart of the country boils up suddenly, and, following the sail, crosses in an instant a thousand waves of the open sea. Tomorrow, standing, I shall contemplate the deep mounts; a

morning cloud will float in the sky. The heart of the country flies off like a down, and, following the cloud, crosses in an instant a thousand distant mounts. Where then to find the news of the wild goose from home? These sentiments, who will know how to express them? At night, at the pagoda of Diệu Đế, the bell resounds; the drum rumbles at the gates of the sea, the cannon thunders at the city of gold. The river twists; my entrails twist the more. The landscape is desolate; the night is more so. At the travelers' relay, in the desolate autumn court: the pestle in the hamlet, the sound of oars at the river's edge!… The body in a foreign land, the soul overwhelmed with thoughts, I now pity her whom I left at home. Late in the night, by moments clear, by moments confused, thinking of her sheltering the fan, awaiting in vain the moonlight. Five watches long, I dream on the pillow; this intimate sentiment, to whom to tell it? Alas, the deserted night, with no one: asleep, the butterfly warns me; awake, the cock calls me. Sometimes, in the evening shade in the chamber, I descend the steps, then wish to go back up. Suddenly, I hear the swallow's plaintive cry: the comb grieves to dress my hair, the mirror to reflect my face. Sometimes, casting the shuttle in the night, I call the servant who has just lit the lamp. Suddenly, I hear the cry of the goose crossing the open sea: the foot lets go the loom, the hand suspends the shuttle. Alas, there are nights when I wait on half the pillow; the night ends, and no letter arrives. Setting down the shuttle, I go out to stand near the awning: the ear hears the cricket that weeps the frost. Seeing nothing, overwhelmed, I sigh; turning toward the chamber, I wish to retrace my steps. Whose cock crows to the west, in snatches? Thinking of her, leaning on the pillow, I revive by hand the lamp. Alas, there are days when I watch the six watches; the day ends, and no letter comes. Descending the steps, I go out to stand at the roadside: my eyebrows sad as willow leaves, that weep the cicada. Seeing nothing, I come back to wait standing; turning toward the music pavilion, I wish to pluck the strings. Whence comes this butterfly that teases the screen? My heart sad, I put on my sandals and go to the west garden. Now she doubtless says to herself: "The sky has grown cool, my beloved must soon return…" How would she know how steep are the roads of the world, and that a thousand leagues of passes and mounts are not crossed easily? Now she perhaps says to herself that I linger, that, embracing my blanket, I have perhaps found another? That, my soul free, already accustomed to pleasure, I have tasted the prosperity and the gallantry of Tràng An! If it were not that, why this endless torment, the spring done, the summer come, then the autumn? The rose pavilion, the forbidden palace — could it be that? The hero, the great man — who then renounces it? All that, now, who knows it? Contemplating the mist on the waves, my heart overflows with grief. Am I then no longer young? Gallantry of old, wandering life of yore. At the landscape of the journey, my verses sob; the image of the native land floats, confused, before my eyes. O country, does the traveler know it? The heart remains attached to it, but the road is distant. Although one says she is an industrious wife, caring for the forebears, governing the house; vegetables from the stream, water from the spring, no matter: I, far away, know not how she lives at home. I know only that the children, one and the other, in the family, all live in peace and in joy. When I set out, the little ones hardly knew how to laugh; over the years, they have become, I believe, big reasonable children. A few nephews, by grace of Heaven, do not fare so ill: this year, they must already be grown. The happiness of the house, I am discreetly glad of it for my

> brother; but this year, with whom then do they study? Companions of study, one or two confidants, the perfume of the orchid embalmed the whole house. Since the day we raised the cup of farewell, it was Vị Thành, then Dương Quan. Then, I know not whether, beyond the North, my two brothers have soon returned home. Alas, companions of one same ill, we lament to one another: one toward Tần, the other toward Tiêu Tương, each under a sky. When then shall we sit to converse again, to tell of the love of the country to the life of exile? And today, neither moon nor wind, neither poem nor wine — with whom to share them? The grief of separation overflows from my two eyes; the image of the native land recedes a thousand leagues. The wine spent, alone, leaning on the balustrade, I wake from the dream: the night ends, and returns the autumn…

(According to *Hán văn tinh tuý* — Publishing House of Hồ Chí Minh City — 1992.)

12. The Ancestor of the 14th generation Đinh Nho Điển

The Ancestor of the 14th generation, doctor of the third rank (Đệ tam giáp đồng tiến sĩ xuất thân) Đinh Nho Điển (1846–1884), and the temple of the lord Hường.

The article of this rubric, we published it on the site nghiencuulichsu.com on 11 October 2022, under the title “The doctor Đinh Nho Điển (1846–1884).”

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển was born on the 17th day of the first month of the year Bính Ngọ (1846), the 6th year of the Thiệu Trị era. He died on the 5th day of the 4th month of the year Giáp Thân (1884), the first year of the Kiến Phúc era (dates of birth and death according to the lunar calendar).

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển was born into a lettered family of four children, two boys and two girls. His father was the Ancestor of the 13th generation, the Thái bộc Tự khanh Đinh Nho Tỉnh (Tỉnh or Tĩnh — the speech of Hà Tĩnh not distinguishing the tones hỏi, ngã, and nặng, the graphy may not be exact; of social name Đinh Hy Tăng). The Thái bộc Tự khanh was the head of the organ charged with watching over the horses and feeding them, guarding the teams of the imperial clan (the king and the princes), and managing the pastures (the horse-breeding meadows) of the entire country. This office belonged to the rank Tòng tam phẩm (third rank, secondary class).

The elder brother of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển was the licentiate Đinh Nho Quang (of social name Đinh Bảo Hiên, 1831–1907), a mandarin up to the office of prefect (Tuần phủ).

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển was received licentiate at the examination of the year Mậu Thìn (1868), the 20th year of Tự Đức, at only 22. Seven years later, the year Ất Hợi (1875), he was received doctor of the third rank (Đệ Tam giáp Đồng Tiến sĩ xuất thân), 3rd of the 11 received at the great examinations that year.

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển was a mandarin under four kings of the Nguyễn dynasty: Tự Đức (1847–1883), Dục Đức (1883), Hiệp Hòa (1883), and Kiến Phúc (1883–1884). From sub-prefect of Nghĩa Hưng, he became Trung Thuận Đại phu, Hồng Lô Tự khanh, Biện lý sự vụ of the ministry of Justice cumulating the direction of the seal of the Thông chính sứ ty, then was transferred Biên tu at the National Institute of History (Quốc sử quán) of the Nguyễn, took part

in the revision of the *Khâm định Việt sử thông giám cương mục*, Quang Lộc tự Thiếu khanh, Hàn lâm viện Thị độc.

Explanation of some of his offices:

- Sub-prefect of Nghĩa Hưng: head of the district of Nghĩa Hưng, doubtless the district of Nghĩa Hưng of the present province of Nam Định.
- Hồng Lô Tự khanh: office of the rank Tòng tứ phẩm (fourth rank, secondary class), head of the Hồng Lô Tự, an organ charged with the reception and protocol of the missions come from other dynasties or countries. In addition, the Hồng Lô Tự proclaimed the names of the new doctors.
- Biện lý sự vụ of the ministry of Justice cumulating the direction of the seal of the Thông chính sứ ty: the Biện lý sự vụ represented the ministry of Justice to instruct, prosecute, and indict the accused. The head of the seal of the Thông chính sứ ty directed the organ charged with the memorials to the throne, transmitting the acts of the court downward and receiving the requests addressed to the king. In this office, he belonged to the rank Chánh tam phẩm (third rank, principal class).
- Biên tu at the National Institute of History of the Nguyễn: member of the sole organ for the compilation of the official history of the court, which also took part in the compilation of works relating to the culture, the geography, and the men of Viet Nam.
- Quang Lộc tự Thiếu khanh: second of the Quang Lộc tự, an organ charged with furnishing and preparing the wine and the dishes of the worship ceremonies, the audiences, the court banquets, and the honor banquets of the doctors. This office belonged to the rank Tòng tứ phẩm.
- Hàn lâm viện Thị độc: third of the Hàn lâm Academy, charged with reading the books to the king.

On 25 May 1883, the court of Huế and the French colonialists signed the treaty of Harmand (Quý Mùi); on 6 June 1884, the treaty of Patenôtre (Giáp Thân), establishing the durable protectorate of the French over all Viet Nam and dividing the country into three “kỳ”: Tonkin and Annam under the regime of protectorate, Cochinchina under the regime of colony.

Before the loss of the country and the ruin of the homes, a man of letters loyal to the king and patriotic, he clearly manifested his refusal to cooperate; unable to bear the shame of the loss of the country, but powerless, he went on a hunger strike, and, consumed with indignation, fell ill and died at 39. At his death, Phạm Thận Duật, an illustrious dignitary of his time, a mandarin up to the office of minister of Finances cumulating the direction of the Quốc Tử Giám, composed a couplet to mourn the Biện lý of the ministry of Justice Đinh Nho Điển (translation of Nguyễn Văn Huyền):

> Toward the world, how could you have forgotten it! In these times of trial, you departed in haste to the Nine Sources; As for me, they already said me dead! Several times, in my visits, I started from my dream.

In the autumn of the year Kỷ Hợi (1899), the 11th year of Thành Thái, that is, 15 years after his death, remembering the merits of this loyal, diligent servant, rich in accomplishments, the king, in his affliction, granted a decree charging the inhabitants of the hamlet of Bãi Bè, village of Mân Xứ, Dương Trai Commune, canton of Đậu Xá, Hương Sơn District (today An Hòa Thịnh

Commune, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh) to build the temple of Đinh Nho Điển, also called the temple of the lord Hường ("Hường" is an alteration of his office of Hồng Lô Tự khanh: Hồng — Hường), to maintain there the incense day and night. Today, in the Upper Sanctuary of the temple, there still hangs the horizontal panel bearing four large Chinese characters 敕賜立祠, transcribed *Sắc tứ lập từ*, that is, "(the king) grants by decree the building of a temple."

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển had two wives and four children: two boys, two girls. From the first wife: the bachelor Đinh Nho Cẩn, and a daughter dead in infancy. From the second wife: Đinh Nho Nhượng, and a daughter married at Kẻ Trúa, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh.

The doctor Đinh Nho Điển had two sisters. One married the bachelor Trần Như Huệ, of Lương Điền Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An (today Thanh Liêm Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An). The other (dame Đinh Thị Hoan; the genealogy of 2020 gives her as younger sister, the article below as elder sister of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển) married the licentiate Đặng Thai Giai, sub-prefect, likewise of Lương Điền Commune, Thanh Chương, Nghệ An. The son of the licentiate Đặng Thai Giai and of dame Đinh Thị Hoan, Đặng Nguyên Cẩn, was received phó bảng (equivalent to today's master's). The phó bảng Đặng Nguyên Cẩn (who called the doctor Đinh Nho Điển "maternal uncle" — at Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh, the younger brother as the elder brother of the mother are said "cậu") was the father of Professor Đặng Thai Mai — Vietnamese pedagogue, writer, and literary critic, former minister of Education and first director of the Institute of Literature of Viet Nam.

According to the account of the great-grandson of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển, the teacher Đinh Nho Hoan (17th generation), of Yên Thành, Nghệ An, the father of Mr. Đinh Nho Hoan — that is, the grandson of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển — was the doctor Đinh Nho Hân, the first doctor of chemistry of all Indochina. Unfortunately, the doctor Đinh Nho Hân died young, when the teacher Đinh Nho Hoan was only 4.

The temple of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển has been classified by Hà Tĩnh Province a historical and cultural vestige of provincial level, by decision no. 124/QĐ-UBND of 13 January 2023 of the People's Committee of Hà Tĩnh Province.

The site huongson.hatinh.gov.vn, on 14 October 2022, in the article *The Doctor Đinh Nho Điển*, writes:

"The funerary tablet (mộc chủ — that is, the tablet, the wooden board on which the name and the information of the deceased are engraved for the worship; Đinh Nho Tĩnh is the father of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển, as said at the beginning of this article) at the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage, offshoot of Mr. Đinh Nho Tĩnh, at An Hòa Thịnh Commune, bears the original text in Chinese characters:

生於紹治丙午年正月十七日.大南故乙亥科同進士出身誥授中順大夫鴻臚寺卿辨理刑部事務兼管通政使司印篆丁府君諱典字儒典.

Transcription:

Sinh ư Thiệu Trị Bính Ngọ niên chính nguyệt thập thất nhật. Đại Nam cố Ất Hợi khoa Đồng Tiến sĩ xuất thân cáo thụ Trung Thuận đại phu, Hồng lô tự khanh, Biện lý Hình bộ sự vụ kiêm quản Thông chính sứ ty ân triện Đinh phủ quân, húy Điển, tự Nho Điển.

Translation of the meaning:

Đinh Nho Điển was born on the 17th day of the first month of the year Bính Ngọ (1846), the 7th year of Thiệu Trị. Late doctor of Đại Nam, received at the examination of the year Ất Hợi (1875), appointed by the king Trung Thuận Đại phu, Hồng Lô Tự khanh, Biện lý of the ministry of Justice cumulating the direction of the Thông chính sứ ty, the lord Đinh, of taboo name Điển, of social name Nho Điển."

On the pillars of the gate of the temple of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển figure 2 couplets in Chinese characters. But in our view, doubtless because of the repeated restorations, and each time by executants or foremen ignorant of the Chinese characters, the characters have been altered. Moreover, having in hand only a photograph taken from outside, the couplet on the two lateral faces of the pillars, which face one another, is a little oblique and hard to read. The couplet on the outer face of the pillars, seen from outside toward the temple, was perhaps engraved backward in the manner of today (to be read first from the left; our forebears read first from the right).

According to our reading:

皋 門 有 伉 敬 (face of the left pillar, seen from outside) 正 氣 長 存 天 (face of the right pillar, seen from outside) *Cao môn hữu kháng kính Chính khí trường tồn thiên.*

Meaning: unclear, for the characters cao 皋 and kháng 伉 of the first verse deprive it of sense.

We propose to correct to:

高 門 有 可 敬 (left pillar, seen from outside) 正 氣 長 存 天 (right pillar, seen from outside)

And to invert the two verses to respect the writing and reading of the ancients — by columns, from right to left —, that is:

高 門 有 可 敬 (right pillar, seen from outside) 正 氣 長 存 天 (left pillar, seen from outside) *Cao môn hữu khả kính Chính khí trường tồn thiên.*

Approximate translation:

> The noble and pure house is worthy of respect; the upright energy subsists forever.

For, indeed, the house of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển was very noble and pure. His father, and himself, were high mandarins at the court; his elder brother was a prefect. His upright energy was powerful and honest (he went on a hunger strike unto death when the court signed the treaty with the French).

We propose this correction because: the character "cao" before 門 is doubtless engraved 皋 ("to pray, to implore") and not 高 (which, with 門, forms "cao môn" 高 門, literally "high gate," as we propose). We consider that the two characters 皋 門 juxtaposed have no sense. And the character before 敬 being 伉 (kháng), the two juxtaposed as kháng kính 伉 敬 have no sense either; hence we propose to replace 伉 by 可 (khả) to form khả kính 可 敬, literally "worthy of respect."

13. The Ancestor, dame Đinh Thị Hoan, 14th generation

The Ancestor Đinh Thị Hoan, of the 14th generation, sister of the Ancestor of the 14th generation the doctor Đinh Nho Điển, was the wife of the licentiate Đặng Thai Giai, the mother of the phó bảng Đặng Nguyên Cẩn, and the grandmother of Professor Đặng Thai Mai [Professor Đặng Thai Mai (1902–1984)].

The article "Đặng Nguyên Cẩn — Man of Letters, Patriot, and Reformer," published on the site hodangmientrung.com on Monday 16 January 2017 — a reprint of the article by Nguyễn Cảnh Lâm that appeared in the review *Văn hóa Nghệ An*, in December 2016 —, says this of the Ancestor Đinh Thị Hoan:

"… Dame Đinh Thị Hoan, daughter of a noble family of the illustrious Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province, was the sister of the censor and doctor Đinh Nho Điển, who sacrificed himself when the citadel of Huế fell into the hands of the French. Dame Hoan was a lettered woman, intelligent, of great character and rich in love of the fatherland. In particular, she was renowned for the finesse of her repartee before the mandarins, indigenous as well as French, when they tested her or threatened her to shake the adversary's spirit.

When Tú Hứa, her son, asked his mother to depart secretly abroad to work for the salvation of the country and the people, she said to him gently: 'Yes, go. When you have recovered the country, come back to your mother.'

After the departure of Tú Hứa, one day, the judicial commissioner of Nghệ Province, a former fellow-student of her son Đặng Nguyên Cẩn, came to circumvent her. He said: 'Madam, I thought your son the bachelor understood that, in the present situation, loyalty is distant but filial piety is near; should you not advise him of it?'

She answered gently: 'Your Lordship says there a thing conformable to the books of the sages. But my son the bachelor, before departing, said to me: "Formerly, loyalty was loyalty toward the king. Today, one knows only loyalty toward the French, without ever thinking of the country. I ask you, mother, to allow me to strive to pay my debt toward the country, and to take loyalty for filial piety."'

Whereupon the judicial commissioner confessed himself defeated, bowed, and took leave.

Another day, Gạc Ne, a lieutenant, head of the post of Nhím (near the village of Lương Điền), a German legionary of French nationality (the inhabitants called him 'Một Ne'), came to find the lady, the wife of the sub-prefect Đặng. Feigning to render her a service, he informed her that her son the bachelor, destitute in Siam, had returned to the country to procure money illegally (that is, by brigandage — note by the author), had been surrounded and gravely wounded by a bullet, and was detained at Hà Tĩnh. Then he suggested that, if she wished to visit her son, he would furnish her the means to go there. She answered calmly:

'When my son the bachelor departed, he took with me this engagement: "When the country is returned to the people, then I shall return. If not, though I should die there, I shall be happy of it. If I cannot bring the country back to the people, never shall I return." Now here you say today, sir head of post, that he set off brigandage for money; had he been shot down and were he dying, I would not go to visit him.'

At these words, the head of post Một Ne merely shrugged, sketched a forced smile, bowed slightly, drew back, then leaped on his horse and galloped at a stretch to his post. Doubtless he could not help feeling humiliated."

The genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, 2020 version, cites the memoirs of Professor Đặng Thai Mai, at the passage on his grandmother, the Ancestor Đinh Thị Hoan:

"It is thanks to her, to her noble and firm qualities of a singular rarity, and above all to her immense love and her resolute and silent endurance before all the trials of life, that I understood and admired the hidden and extraordinary strength of the Vietnamese woman (p. 377 — Memoirs of Đặng Thai Mai)."

14. The Ancestor of the 14th generation Đinh Nho Lệ and the accounts relating to him

The Ancestor, the bachelor Đinh Nho Lệ, was the son of the bachelor Đinh Nho Tân, 13th generation, Branch B, mentioned above (we, composer of this book, are the great-grandson of Đinh Nho Lệ). Đinh Nho Lệ had 4 brothers: Đinh Nho Liên, Đinh Nho Lệ, Đinh Nho Tăng, and Đinh Nho Văn. Đinh Nho Văn had no child; Đinh Nho Tăng had no son, but 2 daughters. One of the daughters of Đinh Nho Tăng, Đinh Thị Hét, called "bà cu Ý," married a man of the Lê clan of the same Sơn Hòa Commune, and set off with her husband to work in Laos, in Cambodia, then to settle in Thailand (some of their children were born in Laos, others in Thailand). Thereafter, answering the appeal of President Hồ to return to take part in the resistance, dame Đinh Thị Hét, her husband, and her children Lê Hiếu, Lê Lợi, and Lê Thị Phương returned from Thailand to Cao Bằng in 1961. The eldest son, Lê Nuôi, already having a wife and children, remained in Thailand. Lê Hiếu was thereafter a physician of traditional medicine and had for wife the director of the Education Service of Cao Bằng. Another daughter (the younger sister of dame Hét) likewise married a man of the same Sơn Hòa Commune, of the Hà Học clan; she had for son Hà Học Quỳ, who joined the army and reached the rank of colonel.

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Lệ did not become a mandarin, but opened a school. The temple of Đinh Nho Lệ is today at the hamlet of Đông Mỹ, An Hòa Thịnh Commune. It was restored by his descendants in 2018, on the basis of the small ironwood house of 3 bays that Đinh Nho Lệ had bought in 1925 to receive his guests and render worship to the ancestors. This house was confiscated during the Land Reform and attributed to others; then the authority, correcting its errors, restored it.

The Ancestor Đinh Nho Lệ was formerly offered by his pupils 2 large inscriptions (đại tự: large characters; a large wooden panel lacquered red — the lacquer drawn from the sap of the lacquer tree of the forest — with gilded characters; hence "lacquered red, gilded"):

Inscription 1: Tam Lạc Dã 三 樂 也. That is: The three joys. This inscription subsists today, hung in the temple, at the central bay, above the altar. This inscription, his pupils drew the idea of it from the "three joys of the man of virtue." Mencius writes in the *Tận Tâm Thượng* 盡 心 上: "*Phụ mẫu câu tồn, huynh đệ vô cố, nhất lạc dã. Ngưỡng bất quý ư thiên, phủ bất tạc ư nhân, nhị lạc dã. Đắc thiên hạ anh tài nhi giáo dục chi, tam lạc dã.*" That is: That his parents be both living, that his brothers fare well, there is the first joy. To lift the eyes toward the sky without shame, to lower the head before men without blushing, there is the second joy. To receive and instruct the talents of the empire, there is the third joy: 父 母 俱 存、兄 弟 無 故、

一樂也。仰不愧於天、俯不怍於人、二樂也。得天下英才而教育之、三樂也. Tam lạc dã (the three joys)!

Inscription 2: Sư Như Huynh 師如兄. That is: The master is like an elder brother. This means that, though a master, he treated his pupils as an elder brother treats his juniors: advising them and instructing them with solicitude.

Although there subsists today (or there exists, or we know of) no document nor oral account relating how the pupils of Đinh Nho Lệ succeeded in their studies. But by these two inscriptions, we know how much, in his time, the pupils cherished the master Đinh Nho Lệ. And we understand somewhat his art of living, which reveals the character of a man of virtue.

The two couplets in Chinese characters engraved on the pillar-columns (the two front columns, on the two sides of the temple, square or round, often ornamented with motifs or couplets, called "cột đồng trụ"), composed by Mr. Đinh Nho Thanh, 16th generation, Branch B, grandson of Đinh Nho Lệ (Mr. Thanh is our father, we, composer of this book), were engraved and erected in 2018, but a few characters are faulty there (doubtless because the engravers of today, ignorant of the Chinese characters, seek them in the dictionary and choose them at random; we were not in the country at that moment):

- Couplet seen from the court toward the temple:

源陌千秋流聖地清名萬古此長存

With the engraved Sino-Vietnamese transcription: *Nguyên mạch thiên thu lưu thánh địa Thanh danh vạn cổ thử trường tồn.*

Our approximate translation:

> The source flows a thousand autumns in this sacred land; the good renown subsists ten thousand ages in this place.

In our view, one should replace mạch 陌 by mạch 脈 (for "dragon's vein"), and thanh 清 by thanh 聲 (for "renown").

- Couplet on the two lateral faces of the pillar-columns facing one another:

先景香靈多樂戍暘陳孫子鄧康榮

With the engraved Sino-Vietnamese transcription: *Tiên cảnh hương linh đa lạc thú Dương trần tôn tử đặng khang ninh*

Our approximate translation:

> In the land of the immortals, the souls (of the ancestors) know many joys; in the world of the living, the descendants obtain health, peace, and prosperity.

In our view, the character tiên 先 should be tiên 仙 (for "immortal"), and the character thú 戍 should be thú 趣 (for "joy").

The eldest son of Đinh Nho Lệ, Đinh Nho Vỵ, took for first wife dame Tổng Thị Thiện, of the Tổng Trần clan of Sơn Hòa. She was the great-granddaughter of the licentiate and prefect Đinh

Nho Quang, the granddaughter through the women of Đinh Nho Quê (called “cụ Hàn Nuôi,” eldest son of the prefect Đinh Nho Quang), and the daughter of dame Đinh Thị Hạng Nhất. The house of Đinh Nho Quê (and doubtless originally that of the prefect Đinh Nho Quang (?)) was a very beautiful ironwood house of 5 bays with “âm dương” tiles, with an annex house; confiscated during the Land Reform and shared among 6 families, one bay each, the last receiving the annex house. The central bay, where was the altar of the ancestors, was attributed (in reality left — one must acknowledge that this leader of the Land Reform team was a good-hearted man) to Mr. Đinh Nho Chiêm, adoptive son vowed to the worship of Đinh Nho Quê (Quê having no son, he adopted the son of his nephew to ensure the worship). Thereafter, one of the 6 families, that of Mr. Trần Trung (who had received the annex house), returning from the army and having money, bought back the shares of the 5 other families. This house subsists today, at its original location, that is, at the hamlet of Đồng Vực, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, near the temple of the Đinh Nho lineage. Mr. Trần Trung still lives and dwells there, aged today about 80.

Mr. Tổng Trần Lữ, grandson of dame Đinh Thị Hạng Nhất (his father was the younger brother of dame Tổng Thị Thiện, first wife of Đinh Nho Vỵ, mentioned above), former deputy headmaster of the specialized lycée of Hà Tĩnh, today retired at the town of Hà Tĩnh, sometimes returns to visit the house of his forebear, the father of his grandmother, and cannot help feeling grief and nostalgia at it. He has written:

> **RETURN TO THE HOUSE OF OLD** (On the rhymes of “Nostalgia for the Citadel of Thăng Long” by Bà huyện Thanh Quan) Returned to the country, the dust of the school imbues me; a hundred years of moon spread in the thick mist. Lowering my head, I seek the distant times; lifting my eyes, I contemplate the shadow of the setting sun. To see the landscape, to think of the beings, the heart softens; to look at the house, to contemplate the doors, the soul saddens. Is there a heart’s friend to whom to confide, to send a little of this heart-rending grief? 23/6/2018

Whereupon we, composer of this book, answered on the same rhymes:

> Whence then comes this heart-rending fate? The house built in the sun and the mist. The misfortune, who would have believed it, in the Full Moon; the ill-luck, who suspected it, under the Radiance of the Sun? The landscape of old, here it is: the heart is moved; the beings of yore, where are they? The throat tightens. The vicissitudes of the world are within a glance: is it not then but an entertainment, a scene of theater? 24/6/2018

The children of Đinh Nho Vỵ and of dame Tổng Thị Thiện all died young, alas. After the death of his first wife, Đinh Nho Vỵ took for second wife dame Nguyễn Thị Chắt, of whom he had Đinh Thị Lai, Đinh Nho Thanh, and Đinh Nho Ân.

Let us add a word on Mr. Đinh Nho Chiêm (1932–2018), son vowed to the worship of Đinh Nho Quê. Mr. Chiêm is of the 17th generation, Branch A, son of Đinh Nho Viêm (called “cụ Hàn Ty”). Đinh Nho Viêm was the son of Đinh Nho Thản (called “cụ Ấm Ba” — “Ấm” designating the son of a mandarin admitted to the hereditary privilege, that is, authorized to second his father in government and to be considered for an office after reaching a certain level). Đinh Nho Thản was the son of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang, and the consanguine brother (of another mother) of Đinh Nho Quê. Thus, according to the ranks of kinship, Mr. Chiêm was to

call Quê “grandfather,” Quê being the consanguine brother of Mr. Chiêm’s grandfather. Mr. Đinh Nho Chiêm joined the army up to the rank of colonel, head of the Finance Service of the 4th Military Region.

The third son of Đinh Nho Lệ, Đinh Nho Cự, married dame Thái Thị Huệ, of Sơn Long Commune, Hương Sơn. Dame Huệ was the granddaughter through the women of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang; she had for children Đinh Thị Hường, Đinh Nho Cận, Đinh Nho Thâm, and Đinh Thị Soa.

15. The Ancestor of the 15th generation Đinh Doãn Tế

The article on the Ancestor Đinh Doãn Tế (Đinh Nho Thục), 15th generation, Branch B, we recopy it from the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, 2020 version. According to the genealogy:

- This article figures in the work *Việt Nam nghĩa liệt sĩ* (The Valiant Martyrs of Viet Nam) by the composer Đặng Đoàn Băng, revised by Phan Thị Hán, translated and annotated by Tô Quang Phiệt, Publishing House of Culture, 1972;
- And according to the *Việt Nam Niên biểu* (Chronology of Viet Nam), the author of this article is Phan Bội Châu, who wrote it in Chinese characters and published it before 1920 in China.

The article:

“Đinh Doãn Tế was of Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province. Reflective, of few words, he was a true man of virtue. In the year Mậu Thân (1908), he entered the Đồng Văn institute of Japan; for lack of money to study, he had to set off for Siam and settled at Bangkok. In Siam, he resolved to return to the country to raise action there, but, suffering from his foot, he did not depart. It was then the spring of the year Canh Tuất (1910); I and Phan Bá Ngọc had a project at the frontier of Nghệ Tĩnh, and, passing through Siam, first through Bangkok, he met us and asked to come with us. Seeing his foot still ill-healed, I wished to prevent him, in vain; and we set off together. To climb the mounts, to ford the torrents, to sleep in the forest, to drink at the stream, to struggle against the miasmas — thus for more than a month. At the land of Phù Xa, his ill worsened violently. As our undertaking was becoming known, each scattered to hide. He too, his ill worsening, was near death; but, regretting nothing else, he called my name and that of Mr. Phan, and said: ‘Let us kill the French! Let us kill the French!’ — thus for 5 or 6 days. That day, Mr. Phan came; he rejoiced greatly at it, recovered his senses, sat up, and conversed with Phan about 6 hours, then died suddenly. He was then only 26.

Funeral poem:

> *Săt vũ khu phong tráng thử hành Quan sơn thiên lý cương nam chinh Mã từ lập vị ta hà nhật Kiếm hốt kỳ thao khái bán tình Bệnh đáo trầm kha tồn nhiệt huyết Nhân ư sinh tử kiến giao tình Cửu long giang thượng trào thanh cấp Nhất vọng mê ly tổng bất bình*

Translation:

> Chasing the wind, braving the rain, valiant was this journey, a thousand leagues of mounts and passes toward the South. The saddle hardly set, the horse waits — what day to depart? The sword drawn from the sheath, the impulse remains half unsated.

> The ill become grave, the burning blood remains; in life and death is revealed friendship. On the river of the Nine Dragons, the tide rises, pressed; as far as the eye can see, the trouble: all is but injustice.

Funeral couplet:

> *Bất năng tử hại bất năng sinh, triển chuyển bệnh tuỵ hồn quốc nạn cứu, thông sử đáo quân vô để thông Dữ cân xuất thuỳ dữ câu nhập, tiêu điều vong hậu kiếp thiên hư hão giác, bi trường nhậm ngã tự do bi.*

Translation:

> To die, you could not; to live, you could no more; turning and turning again in the ill, your soul tormented by the salvation of the country, the curse of the country and the hatred of the family — O my brother, your grief was beyond measure; together we set off, but with whom to return? The desolate fate after your death, the sky beyond the grave is but illusory void — my grief, infinite, I leave it free to tear me."

16. The Ancestor of the 15th generation Đinh Nho Bộc

The article on the Ancestor Đinh Nho Bộc, 15th generation, Branch B, we likewise recopy it from the Genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage, 2020 version. Here it is:

"Mr. Đinh Nho Bộc, of the village of Gôi Mỹ, Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh, a revolutionary militant alongside Mr. Ngô Quảng, was arrested on 31 August 1924 at Vinh, after having escaped the peril of Phù Xá, Hưng Nguyên, Nghệ An, and after the loss of 2 rifles and 14 cartridges, seized by the sub-prefect of Hưng Nguyên (Mr. Phan Đình Đồng gathered this document at the Security Service of Nghệ An on 25 June 1962); then the Ancestor Bộc was imprisoned at Côn Đảo. In prison, he kept intact his revolutionary integrity. He composed a poem sent home on the occasion of a visit by his wife to the penal colony. This poem was diffused only within the family; dame Đinh Thị Sâm (daughter of cô Nghi, consanguine brother of the Ancestor Bộc) still knows it today — there may subsist a few inaccuracies in it, but we record it here as a precious document for the study of the Ancestor Bộc. The poem was written around 1924.

> The Eastern Sea sobs by fits and starts; the step of the hero, often, lends itself to laughter. Entered, the doors close, the bolts are set; the cloud is contemplated, clear; the palaces intertwine. Over there, far from the district, is the Higher School; nine stories open, one walks straight toward the deep palace. The hero, then, recognizes the hero; today, I see the four seas gathered in one place. Face to face, the face brightens; one cries "ten thousand happinesses," the other "a thousand autumns." The palace snatches the moon, on all sides one trades; at the flower garden, a few rows of captive pines. The gates of gold, bolted, several times severe; the palace of civilization, a drop of full light. Outside, two rows of guards keep watch; within, a few young men at my service. Ever the rice distributed, the garment furnished, though it be to the four seas; ever the king's grace, the country's debt on my two shoulders. Face to face, in this world of dust, what more to say? I think: to be a man is to do honor to this face. First, I congratulate my mother-in-law, offering her the red flag; willow and peach with vivid flowers, the orchid with dense perfume. As for the son-in-law, he still treads the wind and the dust; safe and sound, thanks to the country

that watches above my head. Born in these times of European wind and Asian rain, I think: to be a man is to fulfill the ambition of the bow and the arrow. … The oar swears an oath to the country; more lively still, I withdraw toward the sea of Asia. The way of Heaven is there, but the heart of men is no longer in it; born in this time, I deplore it, so many hindrances. The country, everywhere, is the country; the country, everywhere, is also the home. Here is the man who calms himself for the empire: cultivating virtue, he perfects reason and sentiment. Come, let us turn away the face and keep silence; the courage of the valiant, I have already held it for little. To have wandered is to have tasted the savor of the world of men; the face of the hero reveals itself on the days of trial. Thus, I console myself with a single family; above, I give thanks; below, I exhort. Say to her who keeps the love of before and after: the way of the couple is the union of the three existences. So long absent, far from you, who knows that this land is the country of exile? In the evening, I contemplate the waters and the clouds that gather; your heart over there, mine here — who grieves more than the other? The way of the home, who has it not? Above, one or two kinsfolk whom I miss. The aged body, with hair of scattered frost; the child in infancy, still to be nursed and supported. Above, serve with one heart the filial piety; below, take upon yourself to bear the burden. Instruct and nourish the little ones; I beg you, occupy yourself first with the home. Think not of your own pains; there is, on high, the blue Heaven that has already decided!”

17. The pre-war poet Quỳnh Dao

(Article by Phạm Quang Đẩu, published on the site of the newspaper *Đại Đoàn kết*, rubric *Tinh hoa Việt*, under the title *The pre-war poet Quỳnh Dao — the revolutionary militant Đinh Nho Diệm*, on 4 June 2020, on Đinh Nho Diệm, 17th generation.)

“The poet Quỳnh Dao, of his true name Đinh Nho Diệm, was born in 1918, at the village of Gôi Mỹ, Sơn Hòa Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province. The Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn was, over many generations, a noble and illustrious lineage.

Over the last some 400 years, the founding ancestor was Đinh Phúc Diên, lieutenant of Lê Tuấn Mậu, supporter of the Lê against the Mạc. In the 7th generation recorded in the genealogy, Đinh Nho Công (1637–1695) transferred from Bình Hòa to the village of Gôi Mỹ. Đinh Nho Công, by dint of study, was received first at the provincial examination (Giải nguyên), then at the metropolitan and court examinations, and received doctor (Đồng tiến sĩ) at the examination of the year Canh Tuất, the 8th year of Cảnh Trị (1670), becoming the first examination laureate of the Đinh Nho lineage. The stele of the doctors of the examination of the year Canh Tuất is still preserved at the Quốc Tử Giám of Hanoi. Đinh Nho Hoàn (1671–1716), son of Đinh Nho Công, saw his name inscribed on the gold tablet of the Quốc Tử Giám at the examination of the year Canh Thìn, the 21st year of Chính Hòa (1700); received doctor of the second rank (Đệ nhị giáp tiến sĩ xuất thân, that is, Hoàng giáp), 4th of the 19 received at that examination. In 1715, he was designated vice-ambassador of the mission to the Qing, but, by misfortune, fell ill and died on the way. During the months of his embassy journey, he often composed poems; after his death, his son-in-law, the doctor Nguyễn Trọng Thường, gathered them into a collection entitled *Mặc Ông sứ tập*. The *Tổng tập văn học Việt Nam*, volume 6, epoch of the Trịnh-Nguyễn rivalry (Publishing House of Social Sciences, 2000) considers: ‘The poetry of Đinh Nho Hoàn is limpid,

suave, overflowing with sentiment, savor, and beauty, expressing an ardent love of the country and a national pride.'

The Đinh Nho lineage of Hương Sơn, with its founding ancestors gifted with the art of governing and serving the world, is a pride and a shining example for the generations of descendants. Doubtless, in the blood of a descendant of the early 20th century such as Đinh Nho Diệm, flowed also the overflowing stream of the literary tradition and the love of the country and the people of the predecessors. And today, on reviewing the whole of the work of the poet Quỳnh Dao — the revolutionary militant Đinh Nho Diệm —, one may say that these qualities of the forebears truly governed his life like a destiny.

Đinh Nho Diệm was the eldest son of a numerous family. His father, Đinh Nho Huề (1890–1966), a poor and patriotic man of letters, took part in the revolution as early as before 1930. He received the certificate of Merit toward the fatherland and the commemorative medal of the grateful fatherland in 1966. Recently, in 2017, the State awarded him posthumously the Order of Independence of the third class for his contribution to the revolution. In his childhood in the country, Đinh Nho Diệm was reputed an intelligent and lively boy. At 12, his father, a militant of a secret society, having been arrested and incarcerated, he brought him his meals each day; having learned French at home, he answered fluently in French the head of post, who admired him greatly — and it is perhaps why his father was released early. At that time, a retired doctor composed a poem celebrating his retirement. Many doctors, hoàng giáp, and licentiates of the region answered it in verse, without any being truly successful; to the general surprise, the 16-year-old adolescent Đinh Nho Diệm improvised the following poem, held to be the most accomplished:

> Honors and riches, that is enough; I meditate the savor of renown and profit, sweet or bitter. In the garden of spring, I walk, tasting the new life; on the sea of offices, I let go the oar, leaving the past. Rummaging the purse of the universe, silver does not lack; tilting the flask of the wind and the moon, wine and verse abound. Smoothing my beard, I consider the people at play: robes and caps — O how busy from morning to evening.

Having become a poet, Đinh Nho Diệm took the pseudonym Quỳnh Dao. At barely 19, he presented the collection *Tiếng chuông chiều* (The Evening Bell), published with Liêu Kỳ Lộc, edited by Thụy Ký in 1937. Two years later, he brought out his own collection *Tơ trăng* (Threads of Moon), of 25 poems, which caught the 'blue eye' of Lê Tràng Kiều: 'The more one reads, the stranger it is; the more one advances, the more faery-like.' In the newspaper *Tiểu thuyết thứ năm*, on 11 April 1939, this elder of letters placed Quỳnh Dao alongside the renowned poets of the New Poetry movement (Thơ mới). He wrote: 'Never have the friends of poetry been so gratified, so intoxicated as today, in opening the cherished pages of this cherished newspaper. It has presented so many works of value: the dreamy verses of Quỳnh Dao, the light verses of Anh Thơ, the shimmering verses of Thanh Tịnh, the simple and sincere verses of Nguyễn Bính, the verses full of dream and music of Yến Lan, the singular verses of Tchya, Phạm Huy Thông, Lưu Trọng Lư…'

In truth, in the modern age, the pre-war poet Quỳnh Dao is very little known; some have even confused his work with that of the Taiwanese novelist Qiong Yao. Over the last some 15 years, by dint of searching in the archives of the remaining numbers of the *Tiểu thuyết thứ năm* at

the National Library, the poet Anh Chi has been able to reconstitute a part of the literary portrait of the poet. And in 1999, the Publishing House of Youth published the collection *Văn phẩm Quỳnh Dao* (Works of Quỳnh Dao), comprising *Tơ trăng, Dưới cầu Giang Tô* (Under the Bridge of Suzhou), and the scattered pieces appeared in the *Tiểu thuyết thứ năm* and the review *Đông Tây*. Many readers of today evoke the name of Quỳnh Dao, for a time forgotten, as a talented poet of the New Poetry movement.

The time when Quỳnh Dao appeared on the literary scene was fairly brief, about 5 years, and it was also the time when he earned his living by journalism. He was the master pen of the *Tiểu thuyết thứ năm*; alas, the newspaper closed too soon (in 1940). Then he founded the review *Đông Tây*, with the motto: 'To gather the forces of the talented writers and poets to contribute to enriching and renewing the national letters of Viet Nam.' This review could publish only 7 numbers; in 1942, it had to close because of the severe censorship of the French, and for lack of sufficient funds. On rereading today the articles of Quỳnh Dao, one sees that besides his qualities of a dreamy and limpid poet, he was also a journalist sensitive to current events, of a deep practical sense, and of a sincere critical spirit, manifest in his editorials, his essays, and his chronicles. This lucid clarity also explains why he awoke early to the revolution, quickly leaving the domain of 'dreaming with the moon and wandering with the clouds' to join the ardent revolutionary movement of the laboring masses directed by the Communist Party.

If Quỳnh Dao appeared on the literary scene like a shooting star, the life of Đinh Nho Diệm, engaged in the struggle for the independence and the freedom of the country, was likewise very brief. He began to take part in the revolution in 1944, then in the pre-insurrectional movement; during the August 1945 General Insurrection in his locality, he was a member of the Việt Minh organization; at the beginning of 1947, he fell on a mission. The revolutionary activity of Đinh Nho Diệm was, from the beginning, entirely secret. Who introduced him into the revolutionary path, when was he admitted to the Party, and what task did he accomplish? The interested parties never had the opportunity to say it, and the others still less; even to his close ones, he never revealed anything. Except for a single piece of information in the public press of the time: the newspaper *Cứu Quốc*, organ of propaganda and struggle of the General Committee of the Việt Minh, on Saturday 12 January 1946, indicates that Đinh Nho Diệm figured among the 74 candidates to the National Assembly at the first general elections of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, on 6 January 1946, at Hanoi. Then, after the day of the National Resistance, he was reported missing." Many years later, his close ones — in particular his younger brother, the professor and doctor of sciences Đinh Phạm Thái, former teacher of the Polytechnic School of Hanoi —, through the accounts of his cell companions of Hỏa Lò and of a few acquaintances who had met him during the resistance, joined together the facts to have an overall view of his life as a militant, heroic and glorious.

Today, at the revolutionary historical site of the prison of Hỏa Lò, in Hanoi, 17 gilded bronze plaques solemnly engrave the names of the revolutionary militants imprisoned, tortured, and often fallen, from the birth of the Communist Party of Viet Nam (3 February 1930) to the retaking of the capital and the total liberation of the North (10 October 1954). On plaque no. 3, among the militants arrested between 1930 and 1945, on the 5th line, letter D, one reads: "Đinh Nho Diệm (Quỳnh Dao), born in 1918." Mr. Nguyễn Huy Hòa, alias Hoàng Phong, of the Thành Công quarter, Ba Đình, a veteran of the Hanoi revolution, has confirmed: "During my stay at Hỏa Lò, I knew that the poet Quỳnh Dao was detained in quarter H, bearing the square number of political prisoners. He was a composed man, of few words, living in harmony with his fellow

prisoners, composing prose and verse for the newspaper of Hỏa Lò, and taking part in the 3-day hunger strike that contributed to the victory of the prisoners."

Mr. Bùi Huy Thục, alias Hồng Thao, a former political prisoner of Hỏa Lò, remembers an anecdote about the poet Quỳnh Dao: "I had read before the review *Đông Tây* of Quỳnh Dao, and I recalled his verse: *The cock, at dawn, calls the soul of the moon to the West Pavilion.* On meeting him at Hỏa Lò, where we published the newspaper of the political prisoners, he had a text describing very realistically quarter H: *He hears urinating marvelously, / it is monsieur Bái* — this 'monsieur' Bái, charged by the jailer with discipline, had a fine ear for hearing urinating at night, and punished whoever troubled the sleep." In the nights of 11 to 16 March 1945, the political prisoners escaped from Hỏa Lò by the underground sewers; Đinh Nho Diệm was of these communist prisoners escaped successfully. It was on the eve of the General Insurrection; with his comrades, he hastened to reach various localities to prepare the struggle against the French, drive out the Japanese, and take the power for the people. At that period, he was charged with propaganda in zone 2 of Hương Sơn District, then worked at Vinh and at Hanoi. His wife, dame Lâm Thị Bảo, worked, after the restoration of peace in the North, at the tobacco factory Thăng Long (Hanoi).

She remembers: Before the outbreak of the August 1945 revolution at Hanoi, he returned home for a moment, without saying what he was doing. After the success of the revolution, he worked some time in the country, then took his family to Hanoi. From the end of 1946, the family had no more news of him. In the middle of 1999, when the Publishing House of Youth published the Works of Quỳnh Dao, Mr. Đinh Phạm Thái brought the work as a gift to the poet Huy Cận, a pre-war poet friend of his brother; the latter furnished him information: at the beginning of 1947, they had met by chance at the edge of the Lô River, at Tuyên Quang, had greeted one another, then parted. The poet added: dame Vũ Thị Chúc, residing on Yên Phụ Street in Hanoi, knew precisely the place of their meeting. On meeting her, one learned that the two poets had met at the temple of Cấm, near the landing of Tràng Đà, Yên Sơn District.

From this information, Mr. Đinh Phạm Thái went up several times to Tuyên Quang on the traces of his brother. He finally met a person who knew precisely what had happened to his brother: dame Vũ Khắc Hùng, wife of a veteran of the Tuyên Quang revolution. At the mere sight of the photo, she recognized at once the poet Quỳnh Dao. She related that at the time, Mr. Quỳnh Dao lodged with a cell secretary and often recited poems at the cultural evenings; he had a grave air; she was then very young, barely 19, and did not dare approach him to speak to him. One day at the beginning of 1947, the poet was pedaling in a row of trees when a French 'Bà già' (Morane) plane appeared and fired a burst of 'đùm đùm' (explosive bullets); the poet, hit, fell at the edge of the river, losing much blood; for lack of means of rescue, he died. His remains were buried on a hill. More than half a century having elapsed since his death, to find the tomb was very difficult. One day, Mr. Đinh Phạm Thái and the daughter of the poet Quỳnh Dao, following their 'intuition,' went to a place presumed to be that of the burial, took up a handful of black earth, and brought it back to the country to bury it at the cemetery of the lineage.

Let us add that Mr. and Mrs. Đinh Nho Diệm had an only son, Đinh Nguyên Hà, who volunteered for the army in 1966, was early admitted to the Party, and fell in the flower of his age on the front of the South.

The time has come for the generations of today to respect and to continue to study, to clarify further his contributions to literature and to the work of liberation of the country."

18. Đinh Nho Khôi: a journalist of talent and virtue

Article published on the site hanoimoi.vn on 19 October 2017, by Trần Thu Hăng, on the journalist Đinh Nho Khôi (1910–1988), 15th generation of the Đinh Nho lineage.

"(HNM) — I did not have the good fortune to meet him or to converse with him, but I represent to myself very clearly the journalist Đinh Nho Khôi through the accounts of his daughter, the memories of his friends and colleagues. Engaged early in the revolution, he was a journalist of talent and virtue, living with modesty and rectitude…

Every beginning is difficult

After the liberation of the capital (October 1954), Hanoi entered a new era. The need of the city's Party committee for an 'official' daily for Hanoi became pressing. Before this reality, on 26 February 1957, the Hanoi Party committee officially adopted resolution no. 93-NQ/ĐBHN 'On the publication of a daily in the capital.' The preparation of the newspaper was conducted in haste. In March 1957, the journalist Đinh Nho Khôi, former head of the international section of the newspaper *Nhân Dân*, was transferred by his superiors as editor-in-chief. With his collaborators, he took charge of all the 'domestic' questions of the newspaper.

The journalist Doãn Chiêm, one of the first to work at the newspaper *Thủ đô*, remembers: 'The work of preparation was very heavy and complex. The line and the aim were clear, but how to structure the content to adapt it to the readership of the capital? What rubrics to create? To appear at once daily, or two or three times a week? Large or small format? … So many questions to decide.

Laying the first stone of the newspaper in gestation, comrade Đinh Nho Khôi brought the knowledge and the experience of decades of journalism — from before the August revolution, at the newspaper *Cứu quốc*… during the resistance against France at the newspaper *Giết giặc*, then at the *Nhân Dân* after the liberation of the capital — to, with the newly constituted editorial staff, debate and build the publication project. Overcoming a host of difficulties, the daily *Thủ đô* finally appeared on time, on 24 October 1957.'

More than 10 years of editorship-in-chief were an extremely difficult period: insufficient and makeshift material means, rudimentary press tools, untrained cadres…; with the heavy responsibility of the chief, the journalist Đinh Nho Khôi gathered his people, united them, and transmitted the flame of the love of the craft to the cadres and reporters. He often recalled: 'The manner of working of a reporter must differ completely from that of the old functionary who "in the morning carries his umbrella, in the evening brings it back." An article, a piece of news written for tens of thousands, for millions of readers, to have effect, must be understood and believed by the reader.' This apparently simple thing remains a concrete lesson for each reporter of today.

Under his direction, parallel to the enlargement of the format — from the small 30 × 40 cm (1957) to the medium 32.5 × 47 cm (1958), then to the large 40 × 60 cm (1959) —, was affirmed the solidity and the maturity of the content of each number. The seat of the newspaper also

passed from 6 Hai Bà Trưng to the house at 44 Lê Thái Tổ, spacious and imposing, overlooking Hoàn Kiếm Lake, with a printing works right beside it.

When the resistance against the United States entered its difficult and atrocious phase, a few reporters set off to the front, some fell. Then, besides the task of making the newspaper and reorganizing the editorial staff, he and the editorial staff had also to watch over the life of the cadres and reporters: to create a crèche and to evacuate it, to distribute the raising of pigs so that at Têt each had his share of meat…

The journalist Đinh Nho Khôi always wished to build a newspaper representative of Hanoi, making known its millennial history and its economic potential to the whole world. But this wish could not be realized in time of war. In 1968, he was transferred to the Association of Journalists of Viet Nam, member of its executive committee (3rd mandate) until his retirement.

A very simple editor-in-chief

The journalist Đinh Nho Khôi (1910–1988) was born at Sơn Hòa Commune, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province, one of the 'lands of study' of the land of Nghệ. From the school benches, Đinh Nho Khôi took part in the patriotic movement of the pupils. He read the progressive books and newspapers in French, allied himself with the patriots and the revolutionaries, and awoke early…

During his lifetime, remembering his first chief, the journalist Hàm Châu told me: 'Mr. Khôi was a man sincere to the point of simplicity, modest to the point of rusticity. Rustic in daily life, but "exacting" in the craft. An article written, he read it and corrected it many times, weighing each idea, each phrase. The doctor Nguyễn Khắc Viện taught me that, in his youth, Mr. Khôi was reputed "strong in letters," and that the hoàng giáp Nguyễn Khắc Niêm, father of the doctor Viện, had invited him as tutor of French. In the time of the Indochinese Democratic Front, Mr. Khôi wrote many articles in French in the public newspapers of the Party, directed by the journalists Trường Chinh and Võ Nguyên Giáp. It is a great example of disinterested morality that I have always respected and followed.'

In the memory of the journalist Doãn Chiêm, the editor-in-chief Đinh Nho Khôi was 'a wholly good man, simple, without pleasant exterior but of an evident firmness and maturity.' Having worked closest to the editor-in-chief from the first days of the newspaper, Mr. Doãn Chiêm remembers: 'At that time, we, the young reporters, back from the fronts, gathered from everywhere, each with his little baggage of journalism and information… were still very awkward before the task of making the newspaper of a great city freshly liberated and so diverse. No one could say he had the craft. To look at our editor-in-chief, to receive his concrete accompaniment in the real work, each felt reassured and assured. His workroom, on the second floor of the editorial staff, lit each night until very late, transmitted to us an attachment to the product of our mind, a devotion and a love of the craft carried to passion.'

The deputy editor-in-chief, the journalist Thanh Thủy, concurs: 'The editor-in-chief Đinh Nho Khôi was a veteran of the revolution, a seasoned journalist, devoted to the craft, sincere toward his colleagues, affectionate toward each employee. Almost the whole day, he watched over the newspaper: from the editorial to the reading and correction of the articles, to the approval of the layout, to the signing of the "good to print" at midnight, before going to bed. If there was some concern to settle, he was called, and, however late it might be, he was at once there.'

Mr. Khôi lived with rigor and simplicity. On a mission, the reporter went by bicycle, the editor-in-chief too. From the time when the newspaper was at 6 Hai Bà Trưng, his family had a room of more than 10 m^2 on the second floor, burning like an oven. When the newspaper settled at 44 Lê Thái Tổ, he transferred his family to a small room on the second floor of the editorial staff. The city's Party committee then offered him a better lodging; he refused flatly, alleging: 'I stay near the newspaper to attend to any night affair.'

The journalist Lê Việt, at the international section, observes: 'Working at his side, we learned there many things useful to a daily journalist. Liveliness and care in the work were his two salient qualities. To see him, one would have taken him for a peasant of the land of Nghệ rather than for the editor-in-chief of a great newspaper. Ordinarily, it was only toward 1:30 in the morning that he withdrew to his room. Many nights, it was at 4 or 5 o'clock that he went to close his eye, for he had the "mania" of always going over the next day's number, still fragrant with ink, and of withdrawing only after having assured himself that there was no fault in it. He lived equitably, without partiality toward anyone…'

Later, in retirement, Mr. Khôi still pedaled each day several kilometers from his house at Giảng Võ to the editorial staff, as diligent as when he worked, going over the newspaper, finding again his old friends or the young reporters freshly entered into the craft, exchanging familiarly a few words, like the old gardener attached to the trees and the flower beds where he has put so much heart and effort to sow and to cultivate…

60 years have elapsed since the birth of the newspaper *Thủ đô*, ancestor of the *Hànộimới*, of which the journalist Đinh Nho Khôi was the editor-in-chief; the newspaper of the Party of the capital has traveled many roads of development, and develops still to fulfill the mission entrusted to it. The generation of journalists that has succeeded him knows that all that is attained today takes its source in these first hesitant steps…"

19. There existed a man of the Đinh lineage such as this, in our days

Article by Professor Nguyễn Đình Chú, of the Higher Normal School of Hanoi, on Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh, 16th generation of the Đinh Nho lineage, published in the Proceedings of the colloquium *The House of the Đinh in the Work of Unification and Development of the Country*. The colloquium was held on 7 January 2012 at the Hoa Lư hotel, Ninh Bình, organized jointly by the Institute of History, the People's Committee of Ninh Bình Province, and the Association of Historical Sciences of Viet Nam.

"Twenty-three years ago, from the day I saw the manuscript of the scholarly work of Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh, of the Đinh lineage of Hương Sơn (Hà Tĩnh), from all time renowned for its brilliant studies, the impression of a strange phenomenon in the cultural life of the country pursues me and obliges me to many reflections, down to a silent confrontation with myself, and with a number of my colleagues whom life has ranged under such or such title, grade, or dignity — and whom today, at this scientific colloquium on *The Đinh Lineage in the Work of Unification and Development of the Country*, I would like to present to you.

For me, to think of the phenomenon Đinh Xuân Vịnh is necessarily to think of what one calls the authentic value of a cultural personality, of a scientific personality, and of a path that has led to a scientific accomplishment in the manner of Đinh Xuân Vịnh. Certainly, according to the official and ordinary scale of values, Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh is almost nothing. Neither candidate-

doctor, nor doctor. Neither associate professor, nor professor, nor academician. Neither expert of such or such kind. Not even the licentiate diploma (end of higher studies), nor the baccalauréat (end of secondary school)! His biographical file bears only: received the diploma in 1934 at the Quốc Học of Vinh, that is, the equivalent of the present certificate of the first cycle. Then he worked to live as secretary at the French Residence of Nghệ An Province. At the success of the August 1945 revolution, he was a cadre of cultural and social affairs, head of the administrative bureau of the Administrative Committee of Nghệ An Province. In 1962, he was transferred to Hanoi as an employee of the editorial secretariat of the newspaper *Khoa học thường thức*. In 1974, he retired with the salary of an agent of the third class. The biography of Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh is modest, not to say 'humble'; but more than twenty years ago, he presented himself to us, Vietnamese of the country and abroad, and even to many foreigners, as the author of a scholarly work whose manuscript, 0.6 meters thick, was extolled by the press in three languages — Vietnamese, English, French —, admired by opinion, venerated by many men of letters come to see him, and presented solemnly by the VKT program of the Television of Viet Nam. The former secretary general Đỗ Mười (then still president of the Council of Ministers) sent twice his private secretary to inform himself and examine a part of the manuscript. I had proposed to the private secretary of the president of the Council of Ministers that the government allocate a sum to buy back the manuscript of Mr. Vịnh, reproduce it, and deposit it in the libraries for consultation. The proposal was accepted, but by misfortune this private secretary soon died. Then, the Association of Popular Arts of Viet Nam awarded him the prize of the first class (1994) and inscribed him on the list proposed for the Hồ Chí Minh prize of the State. Is not such a phenomenon a great joy for the country, a strange phenomenon?

To speak of Đinh Xuân Vịnh is first to speak of a passion for books and knowledge. As soon as he left the benches of the Quốc Học of Vinh, the reputation of Đinh Xuân Vịnh the 'bookworm' spread. It is thus that, through the intermediary of his friend Phan Đăng Tài (brother of Phan Đăng Lưu and secretary at the French Residence of Hà Tĩnh), Đinh Xuân Vịnh became the 'bookworm' who read and took notes for Ramadier (son of the French Prime Minister Ramadier), then vice-resident of Nghệ Province and preparing a doctoral thesis on Vietnamese studies. In the time of the resistance against France, books being rare, Mr. Vịnh found every means not to distance himself from books. Especially from 1962, transferred to Hanoi as secretary of the newspaper *Khoa học thường thức*, whose seat was near two great libraries — the Scientific Library and the National Library —, it was for him like the fish in the water, the tiger returned to the forest. The organization attributed him a collective lodging. But he returned very rarely to his home.

Each day, he ate at the eating-house, slept in his office, so as to be able, outside of hours, to read at the library, for decades. His passion for books went hand in hand with a habit of note-taking, an approach of meticulous and rigorous research, likewise continued over the years. At 90, the illness of old age not sparing him, he still read each day, still wrote, corrected and re-corrected, cut and pasted on the manuscript of his work. It was a state of intellectual labor become instinct, like eating, sleeping, breathing. Mr. Vịnh was besides endowed by heaven with an uncommon memory. I have many times, in secret, tested his memory by questioning him on the origin of a datum, on the history of such or such entry of his work, and he answered at once, to the point, worthy of a living dictionary. I have also many times asked him to enlighten me on such or such point of the geography and the history of Viet Nam, of China, and of the world, and, after hearing him, I could only envy his strange memory. With this memory, he mastered

French, that goes without saying, but could also consult works in other languages: English, Spanish. He spoke very little, especially of himself. More than half a century of relentless study to engender a work so monumental, and no one knew it, save his wife and his children, who likewise kept silence after his example. At the beginning, having by chance discovered his work, after a moment of stupor, I asked him: For what purpose have you made this book? He answered: I only knew how to make it for pleasure. I begged him to specify. He continued: To fulfill my pleasure in the national letters; to imitate the ancients — Lê Quý Đôn, Phan Huy Chú, Trương Quốc Dụng, Đặng Xuân Bảng… — and the contemporaries — Nguyễn Văn Tố, Đào Duy Anh… I asked further: Do you think of publishing it? He answered: I do not dare think of it. I understand that this silence of Mr. Vịnh is not only a matter of character, but also the purity of a great cultural personality. And this singular personality reposes on the love of the country, the love of the national patrimony. The poet Huy Cận, then president of the Union of the Literary and Artistic Associations of Viet Nam, at the meeting examining the proposal of the Hồ Chí Minh prize for the work of Đinh Xuân Vịnh, at the end of 1995, said with fervor: 'With this work, Mr. Vịnh is not only worthy of praise, but worthy of veneration,' basing himself both on the scholarly accomplishment and on the personality, the scholarly motive of the author.

The scholarly work of Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh is today a manuscript recopied by his hand a third time, after the first was lost by the war and the second stained by the bad weather. It comprises 40 school notebooks of 19 × 27 cm, of 120 pages each. The total number of entries is about 40,000, distributed into 5 parts.

Part I: 21 notebooks of entries relating to the geography of Viet Nam and of the countries of the world linked to Viet Nam: entries on the crystals, the star systems, the sun, the earth, the natural phenomena, the weather, the four seasons; provinces, prefectures, districts, cantons, communes, hamlets (with their position and their limits changing over the course of history); mounts, plateaus, valleys, forests, lagoons, ponds, lakes, marshes; estuaries, plains, steppes, passes, cliffs, islands; inhabited places, towns, chief towns, cities, capitals; agricultural farms, fisheries, forestry exploitations; embassy relays, markets, schools, communication routes, inns, hotels, railways, tunnels, roads; rivers, dikes, locks; ports, landings, airports; cultural and archaeological vestiges, temples, pagodas, churches, Taoist oratories, mausoleums, altars, and towers; general and specialized hospitals, battlefields, battles…

Part II: 15 notebooks of entries on the history of Viet Nam, its subordinate administrative units, the countries of Antiquity; the political organizations (parties, secret societies), military (blocs of defense against invasion), religious, economic (trusts, companies, enterprises), cultural; the ancient renowned schools, the universities of today, the academies, learned societies, libraries, museums, press, press agencies; the international prizes, festivals, Têt celebrations, medals, and decorations; the literary, artistic, plastic, technical works; the forms of entertainment, the chèo theater, the singing, the dance; the sporting competitions; the provincial, metropolitan, court examinations, the military examinations, the military doctors; the laureates of the great examinations, the kings and lords, the dynasties, the queens, princesses, imperial sons-in-law; the sages, the civil mandarins, the generals, the ambassadors; the foreign mandarins who governed our country under the Chinese and French domination; the navigators, the scholars, the missionaries, monks, nuns, Taoists, Buddhists; the patriarchs of the traditional trades; the international treaties and conventions…

Part III: 3 notebooks of entries on the resources, products, plants, animals, and minerals of Viet Nam and Indochina (including the history of the distribution, the migration, the introduction of species — by whom, at what epoch); the mines, mineral springs, products of the terroir; the traditional trades (hulling, basketry, rattan and bamboo, chiseling and turning, making of palanquins and parasols, footwear, brushes and paper, hats and caps).

Part IV: 1 notebook in the form of an annex: recapitulative tables of the currencies, of the ancient and modern units of measure in Viet Nam, in China, in England, in France, in the United States; the languages, the peoples of the world; the countries born after the Second World War, those struggling for their independence, the current kingdoms; the list of the emperors of China, of the kings of Viet Nam, of Laos, of Champa, of Chenla; the list of the popes; of the Chinese ambassadors come to our country from the epoch of the Han to the Nguyễn; of the Chinese mandarins come to govern our country — governors (thái thú), inspectors (thứ sử), protectors (đô hộ), general administrators (tổng quản), military governors (tiết độ sứ); of the French mandarins having governed our country — admirals, governors, governors general, residents general, residents superior, residents, high commissioners general, high commissioners; a table of the inventions of humanity since the dawn of civilization, of the important political, military, and economic events of the world and of Viet Nam.

Part V: About 50 maps, including a map of the world through the epochs of the great geographical discoveries, a map of Viet Nam and the neighboring countries, a map of the division of the administrative units (lộ, trấn, provinces, prefectures, districts), a map of the great invasions, a map of the citadels of Viet Nam, a map of the routes of the Vietnamese ambassadors in China under the Lê and the Nguyễn. Mr. Đinh had sat the examination of the School of Fine Arts of Viet Nam after his diploma, without success.

Besides these 5 parts, a bibliography of 36 pages comprising 435 works in French, English, and Spanish, 52 Chinese works translated by Frenchmen, 206 Vietnamese works, 15 various dictionaries, 11 ancient maps, and a very great mass of press of the country and abroad. With this content, the author has entitled his work *Viet Nam at the Heart of the World*. The title *The Patrimony of Viet Nam* (title of the work awarded the prize of the first class by the Association of Popular Arts of Viet Nam in 1994) dates from after the setting aside of the entries of worldwide scope. *Viet Nam at the Heart of the World*, these are the things of Viet Nam, but also those of the world linked to Viet Nam, and all that a cultivated Vietnamese needs to know of the world. I respect this design that Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh has pursued from end to end. The question is: to what genre does this work belong? Many articles have held it to be an encyclopedia. I fear that this appellation may lend itself more or less to misunderstanding, even to doubt. For an encyclopedia requires a more complex ‘encyclopedicity,’ a higher systematicity, and can be realized only by a numerous team of scholars. A single man, however deep and vast his knowledge, can hardly come to the end of an encyclopedia.

For me, although the work of Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh has a multidisciplinary content, I would like to range it in the category of the *Kiến văn đại tiểu lục* (Great and Small Records of What One Has Seen and Heard). It is close to the genre of the *Kiến văn tiểu lục* of Lê Quý Đôn of old, but of a much greater volume. What then is its scientific value? It is doubtless what interests one most. But it is not easy to answer it fully at once, for it has not yet been submitted to the expertise of any scientific council of scope. Let us imagine: a private work of more than half a meter thick, of 40,000 entries — how to make it cross the threshold of expertise? The costs of

typing and reproduction, the costs of the council of expertise, would assuredly be considerable; where to find them? Supposing that an organization financed the expertise, of how many members would one have to compose the council to read the entirety of the multidisciplinary content, and how much time would each put into it? All this difficulty holds in sum to the excessive amplitude of the work, although this amplitude is precisely its great seduction. The essential is not to let the work perish. To let it perish would be to spoil a whole life of scholarly labor, rigorous and passionate, of Mr. Vịnh, but also to make Vietnamese culture lose a precious good. But how to go about it, that is not easy either.

Many high leaders of the Party and the State have had knowledge of it and have manifested their interest by charging a few organizations to examine it. The press has spoken of it many times, but to this day without concrete result. However, the Association of Popular Arts of Viet Nam and the National University of Hanoi have shown zeal in defending this cultural and scholarly value. The Association of Popular Arts of Viet Nam, by an (limited) expertise, has awarded the prize of the first class to the work of Đinh Xuân Vịnh, as said above. Then it constituted a Council of Discovery and Sponsorship of Authors and Works (belonging to the Association), resolved to sponsor in priority the work of Mr. Đinh Xuân Vịnh. The determination of the Association and of the National University of Hanoi was to present as soon as possible to the reader a part, however minimal, of the work. Result: a part relating to the geography of Viet Nam, by the author Đinh Xuân Vịnh, appeared under the title *Geographical Handbook of Viet Nam* (*Sổ tay địa lý Việt Nam*), of more than 600 pages, in 1994. The government also awarded the author Đinh Xuân Vịnh the Order of Labor of the third class. It is only regrettable that today the fate of the monumental work of a whole life risks perishing. And its author is nearly 100, and prepares to join the ancestors of the Đinh lineage."

20. In memory of the chief Đinh Nho Liêm

(Article by Trịnh Đình Hùng, deputy director of the Europe Department of the ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on the site *Thế giới & Việt Nam* (baoquocte.vn) on 9 November 2008, on Đinh Nho Liêm, 16th generation.)

Mr. Đinh Nho Liêm belonged to the generation of the veteran cadres of the ministry. During the resistance against the United States, he took part in the "Viet Nam sub-commission," a special unit of the ministry of Foreign Affairs charged with the question of the negotiated solution (the struggle against the United States in the strategy "to fight and negotiate at the same time" to end the war), which later became Department II, directed by Phan Hiền under the authority of the vice-minister Nguyễn Cơ Thạch. After the war, he was consul general in Egypt and in India, ambassador to Laos and to the USSR, head of the governmental negotiation delegation for the normalization of relations with China, vice-minister, then first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.

The author's most striking memory goes back to the time when Mr. Đinh Nho Liêm was ambassador to the USSR (1982–1986), when the author was an attaché and often had to serve as interpreter, not only for the ambassador, but also for the high-ranking delegations come from the country. It was an intense period of Vietnamese-Soviet relations, the USSR being then the foremost ally of Viet Nam, its principal support for the building of socialism and the defense of the fatherland, in a context of immense internal difficulties and of external encirclement-embargo.

Member of the Central Committee of the Party and vice-minister, Mr. Đinh Nho Liêm was sent as ambassador to the USSR to consolidate and promote the general cooperation with that country. The author depicts him as a leader rigorous and benevolent, indifferent to the ordinary pleasures that diplomatic life can offer, his heart always turned toward the difficulties of the country. In these years of great penury, diplomacy had to economize to the extreme: the embassies were entitled to the costs of a reception for the national day only one year in five, and the minister Nguyễn Cơ Thạch himself traveled almost always in "economy" class.

The author concludes by paying homage to a master concerned to accompany his cadres step by step, to a sincere chief, exemplary by his probity, his measure, and his austerity — "like a stick of incense in memory of a former chief and a master."

21. Indelible memories of the journalist Đinh Nho Liêm

(Article by Phan Thế Cải, published on the site of the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh* on 29 July 2022, on Đinh Nho Liêm, of the offshoot of the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Tân Commune — not to be confused with the vice-minister Đinh Nho Liêm evoked above. He was the father of the doctor and poet Đinh Nho Tuân, evoked further on.)

It has been a decade since the journalist Đinh Nho Liêm gave up his soul. The author, at each visit to his tomb, sees returning the memories of this respected editor-in-chief, an exemplary communist cultivating the virtues of "diligence, thrift, integrity, rectitude, disinterestedness."

Mr. Đinh Nho Liêm was born on 14 July 1935 at Sơn Tân Commune, Hương Sơn District (today Tân Mỹ Hà). At 22, he was a teacher of letters at the middle school. In 1960, he was admitted to the Party and appointed school director. In September 1962, the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh* being founded, the editor-in-chief Võ Trọng Cúc drew him to the Party newspaper. After an accelerated training at the Central School of Propaganda, he became a reporter.

The author evokes the heroic journalism of the war: after 5 August 1964 and the American bombardments of the North, the editorial staff had to evacuate to Thạch Lưu Commune, Thạch Hà District. Braving danger, Đinh Nho Liêm went everywhere soldiers and militiamen shot down planes, to relate the victories — from Bến Thủy to the Đèo Ngang, in each "coordinate of fire." The most toilsome: alone, with his "Soviet bicycle," to travel hundreds of kilometers under the burning wind of Laos to deliver his articles on time. By the light of a bamboo lamp, he wrote the article *The Call to Vengeance*, tears flowing on the page, when the American planes massacred 33 pupils of the middle school of Hương Phúc (Hương Khê); read on the airwaves of the Voice of Viet Nam by the announcer Tuyết Mai, the article made millions of compatriots weep.

Formed by the editor-in-chief Trần Văn Trạc as a "leading cadre in reserve," he became at 35 deputy editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh*. In 1976, at the merger of the newspapers of Hà Tĩnh and of Nghệ An into the *Journal of Nghệ Tĩnh*, he was again deputy editor-in-chief, in very difficult living conditions, his family lodging in a hovel of two bays of the editorial staff. The author underlines his simplicity, his modesty, his respect for the law, and his constant concern to form the ethics of the reporters and to improve the life of the team — down to organizing, in the years 1987–1990, in full food penury, a screen-printing service and the purchase of rice at Saigon for his people.

In May 1987, answering the campaign “Things to Do Without Delay” launched by the secretary general Nguyễn Văn Linh, he brought out the *Nghệ Tĩnh of the Weekend*, the most striking title of the newspaper’s history, by its burning information and its investigative reports on the abuses of the epoch. In September 1991, at the re-separation of the provinces, he continued to hold the helm of the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh*. His poem *Tomorrow You Return to Hà Tĩnh* — “Tomorrow you return to Hà Tĩnh / I remain at Nghệ An / The La River, the Lam River / Vibrate with one same string, one same rhythm” — was set to music by Trần Hoàn and diffused on the airwaves. Several of the cadres he formed (Nguyễn Quốc Khanh, Lê Hữu Quý) became editors-in-chief of the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh*.

22. The professor and Emeritus Teacher of the People Đinh Xuân Lâm: the man and the work

(Article by Thanh Hà and Trần Minh, published on the site of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Hanoi, on 22 November 2021, on Professor Đinh Xuân Lâm (1925–2017), of the offshoot of the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Tân Commune. One does not know to this day which ancestor passed from An Ấp to Xa Lang (Sơn Tân); hence one does not know to which generation of the great lineage Đinh Xuân Lâm corresponds.)

The colloquium “Prof. and Emeritus Teacher of the People Đinh Xuân Lâm: The Man and the Work,” held on 20 November, aimed to take stock of his considerable heritage in the research and teaching of history.

Prof. Đinh Xuân Lâm (1925–2017) was born at Sơn Tân Commune, Hương Sơn District, in a family of mandarins of the Nguyễn dynasty. He began to teach (at the secondary level) after the August 1945 revolution. Graduated from the Higher Normal School (faculty of letters) in 1956, he was retained to teach at the faculty of history of the University of Hanoi. He is held to be one of the founders of the revolutionary Vietnamese historiography after 1954. In nearly six decades of research, he left hundreds of works of various genres.

For 30 years, he directed the department of Modern and Contemporary History of Viet Nam of the faculty of history; he was vice-president of the Association of Historical Sciences of Viet Nam (4th mandate). For his virtue and his pedagogical talent, his colleagues and his pupils held him to be one of the four legendary “pillars” of the faculty of history (with Phan Huy Lê, Hà Văn Tấn, and Trần Quốc Vượng). In 45 years of teaching, he formed thousands of students, hundreds of masters and doctoral candidates, Vietnamese as well as foreign, of whom many became renowned scholars.

Only a year after his graduation, in 1957, under the direction of the historian Trần Văn Giàu, he completed his first work, *History of Viet Nam, Period 1897–1914*. From there until 2015, he published more than 570 works. According to Prof. Nguyễn Văn Khánh, over his 33 years at the university, he produced 185 works (5.6 per year on average); but after his retirement (1990), at 70 and 80 years old, he published far more: 377 works from 1991 to 2016, that is, nearly 15 per year — an exceptional accomplishment. Prof. Trần Đức Cường, Prof. Vũ Dương Ninh (who accompanied him a year to Madagascar, where the master’s erudition on Malagasy history astounded his listeners), Prof. Phùng Hữu Phú (who calls him “a popular scholar”), and the historian Dương Trung Quốc all pay homage to a master of masters, of an immense heritage not only of knowledge but of character — measured, frank without excess, formed both by the

national instruction and the French culture, and borne by the aspiration of the intellectuals who had known the loss of the country.

23. The head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ

23.1. Life and career

It would be regrettable not to write a few lines on the venerable head of the lineage of the 18th generation Đinh Nho Quỳ (1937–2022).

His father was the head of the lineage of the 17th generation Đinh Nho Liên (1905–1946), who lived and worked at Quảng Nam, his wife being from Quảng Ngãi. When Đinh Nho Quỳ was 3, his paternal grandmother, resolute, made the long journey to the South to bring him back and raise him — in order, above all, to ensure the continuity of the worship of the ancestors. The home was destitute: two old people and a grandchild, in the difficulties common to the whole society of the time.

The author relates a memory: from the time of his studies at the Higher School of Foreign Commerce of Hanoi (1992–1997), his professor Trần Sửu, a classmate of Đinh Nho Quỳ, taught him that both had studied, pupils come from Nghệ An as from Bình Trị Thiên, at Ngu Lâm Commune (Đức Thọ District) for the lycée. The professor said: Quỳ was the best pupil of the class, of an intelligence that all admired. At the university, each went to a different school; the friends lost his trace. Having grown old, they sought one another again, disconcerted at the absence of Đinh Nho Quỳ. “What a waste for such a talent!” sighed the professor.

Graduated from the University of Hanoi, Đinh Nho Quỳ became a teacher of physics at the lycée of Hương Sơn. In 1982, when the province opened an annex of the Lê Hữu Trác lycée at Sơn Hòa Commune for the pupils of the neighboring communes, he was assigned there to be near his home. Some say he was not assigned to Hanoi because of his mandarinal family origins; others, that he had to return home to take care of his aged grandmother. The two reasons are doubtless true.

A teacher of physics, he was nicknamed the “King of physics” for his talent, his devotion, and the many pupils he led to the great prizes of the examinations. The author, who had the good fortune to have him as master, relates that one day of substitution, entering empty-handed, he asked which exercises, which pages had been given, and corrected from memory — knowing by heart the 12 textbooks and exercise books of the lycée of the time.

23.2. A heart wholly vowed to the worship of the ancestors

Doubtless no period, neither before nor after, was as difficult, toilsome, and bitter as that of the head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ. After the August 1945 revolution, the whole Vietnamese society, and particularly Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh, under the policy of eradication of superstition assimilating the worship of the ancestors to superstition, destroyed without pity the places of worship. Without the resolute resistance of the wife of the head of the lineage of the 16th generation (bà Cu Hồ), the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage would no longer exist. And without its requisition as the seat of the People’s Committee of Sơn Hòa, the temple of Gôi Vỵ would not have subsisted to be restored.

Then the temple fell into disrepair; it rained inside as outside. The head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ gathered the lineage, wrote to the descendants everywhere — in vain, for the whole society and all the Đinh Nho were then poor. There remained to regroup and restore the dispersed tombs of the ancestors; to raise up the abandoned temple of Gôi Vỵ; to ensure the worships of the year, especially the great ceremony of the 9th day of the first month for the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên; to renew ties with the Đinh lineages of the same ancestral mother; to help the dispersed offshoots to recognize one another by the genealogy; and to recompose and continue the genealogy.

The economy of the country and of the Đinh Nho improving little by little, and all placing their trust in him, one united to contribute to it, and the essential was accomplished. He passed away doubtless fulfilled, on the 30/5 of the year Nhâm Dần (2022): at his death, his last worksite — the restoration of the mausoleum of the ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường at Lòi Chim Chim — was nearing its end. There remains, however, to be done: the temple of the lineage is gravely deteriorating and threatens ruin; the union of all the kinsfolk is needed to restore it as soon as possible.

24. The old master climbs Mount Pháo

(Article published on the site of the Museum of the Patrimony of the Scholars of Viet Nam on 26 December 2015, a reprint of an article by Phạm Quang Đẩu, on the professor, doctor of sciences, Emeritus Teacher of the People, and poet Đinh Phạm Thái (1937–2023), 17th generation, younger brother of the poet Quỳnh Dao — Đinh Nho Diệm.)

One day in 2012, Prof. Đinh Phạm Thái, accompanied by his eldest son, went to Mount Pháo (at nearly 80, his family did not want him to go far alone). With the eye of the man of the craft, having reached the summit, he recognized at once the extraction zone and the processing plant, already well completed. His gaze rested long on the high reduction tower, and he thought: if one no longer needed a reduction furnace, by applying his new method, one would clearly reduce the costs and improve the quality — that to which the father and the son had devoted so much effort.

Mount Pháo (Đại Từ District, Thái Nguyên) holds a polymetallic deposit almost open-cast, of a reserve estimated at more than 80 million tons, among the largest in the world, rich in tungsten, fluorite, bismuth, copper, gold… The exploitation project was to last 20 years; it belongs today to the Masan Resources Company.

The design of Prof. Đinh Phạm Thái aimed only at the processing of bismuth (0.1% of the ore). To obtain it, one ordinarily employs hydrometallurgy to produce an intermediate, bismoclite (BiOCl), then a reduction at high temperature. But in the laboratory, the professor had discovered a clean method, more promising. Forty years earlier, he had gone up to the tin mine of Tĩnh Túc (Cao Bằng) and had found a new method of refining tin, which earned him the first individual patent of the country and his doctor-of-sciences thesis.

His discovery on bismuth holds to chance: having left bismoclite to dry in a beaker, then scraping the bottom with an aluminum spoon, he saw appear in the white powder a few black flakes — reduced bismuth. Intrigued, he repeated the experiment, mixed aluminum powder with the bismoclite: the black matter appeared in abundance, fruit of a reduction at ambient temperature, strongly exothermic, giving a very pure product — a reaction never described in

any textbook. He drew from it a new concept: the “double thermometallic reaction.” He went up to Mount Pháo to negotiate a lot of raw ore in order to test his theory on a large scale.

The Office of Intellectual Property awarded him a patent of invention for this new method of refining bismuth from BiOCl (patent no. 14552, 14 September 2015). Thus, in his life as a researcher, he obtained two major patents — the refining of tin in his youth, that of bismuth in the evening of his life.

Prof. Đinh Phạm Thái was also a poet, descendant of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn, author of the *Mặc Trai sứ tập*. On the way back, at the Khế pass, moved by the landscape, he composed a quatrain: *Forest of cicadas through the long summer afternoon / the branch shakes off the dust of sun, the car the dust of the road / the deep ore, the loved one far away / at the foot of the pass, I let go the rein… at sunset.* And his poem *The Whip of Old* (second prize — with no first — at the lục bát poetry competition of the newspaper *Giáo dục và Thời đại* 1996–1998):

> **THE WHIP OF OLD** Formerly, a mischievous child, I played; I left the house, outside all day. The whip fell on my thin body, making my mother’s heart suffer, my grandmother’s eyes sting. Now, you are far away, bones with neither roof nor home, wandering still. The Trường Sơn range, a long green trail, black earth, red earth, in what earth are you buried? My leg trembling, I feel for my worn stick, fearing to seize the whip that would still be there.

25. The guardian of the values of the forebears

The generations of the Đinh Nho lineage all have the concern to preserve the values of the forebears: loyalty, filial piety, thrift, diligence; virtue, measure, and responsibility toward the family and society, worthy of the ancestral maxim: *Tiến vi nghĩa sĩ, thoái vi lương nông* — when one advances, let one be a man of duty; when one withdraws, let one be an honest peasant.

The author cites an example: the associate professor, doctor of mathematics, and Emeritus Teacher Đinh Nho Chương, former dean of the mathematics department of the Higher Normal School of Hanoi, 17th generation, great-grandson of the licentiate and prefect Đinh Nho Quang.

Of the same generation as the author, but older than his own father, he was one of those kinsfolk the author had never met. As a child, the author heard his name only in the parental exhortations to study. Now, a few years earlier, Đinh Nho Chương called him from Hồ Chí Minh City to Hạ Long to renew the tie of kinship; and when the author, out of deference to his great age, called him “uncle,” he corrected at once: in the lineage, an elder of the same generation is an “elder brother,” not an uncle. The author was touched by it: “diluted blood is worth more than thick water.” His sister, the doctor Đinh Thị Khương, former director general of the Sériculture Company, testified to the same family attachment.

On the occasion of the classification of the temple of the lord Hường Đinh Nho Điển, the author published a study where figured an error on dame Đinh Thị Hoan, grandmother of Đặng Thai Mai (given as daughter, and not sister, of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển); Đinh Nho Chương called him to correct it and furnish the exact information. At the beginning of 2023, the author visited him at Hồ Chí Minh City: at more than 90, his health and sight declining but his mind very lucid, he knew by heart the kinsfolk, the offshoots, and the history of the lineage. He

carefully preserves the two original manuscript exemplars of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* — one by his father Đinh Nho Dật, the other by his uncle Đinh Nho Chú —, thanks to which the genealogies of 2000, 2010, 2020, and the present book could be perfected. A remarkable fact: a simple teacher, without fortune, he yet finances alone, to this day, the Fund of Encouragement to Studies of the lineage.

26. A "great tree" devoted to the Vietnamese gold sector

(Article published on vietnamnet.vn on 15 April 2016, by Vũ Ngọc Minh, on Mr. Đinh Nho Bảng, 16th generation.)

Mr. Đinh Nho Bảng, vice-president and secretary general of the Gold Trade Association of Viet Nam, is an expert accompanying the gold sector for decades, devoted to his craft and recognized by many enterprises. Past sixty, he masters the fluctuations of the gold market, worldwide and national, and advises the enterprises on the orientations to follow.

On the trends, he considers that investment in gold will impose itself, and that jewels of platinum and white gold will become a fashion. Most Vietnamese still favor yellow gold and showy stones, contrary to the worldwide trend toward platinum, white gold, and diamond, more refined. According to him, gold should serve for thesaurization rather than for adornment, its color according ill with the complexion and the attire; white gold, for its part, suits all ages and styles. He salutes the rare enterprises that concentrate on platinum and white gold.

27. The professor and doctor of sciences Đinh Dũng — Tạ Quang Bửu Prize

(Article published on taquangbuuprize.nafosted.gov.vn on 30 March 2019, on Prof. Đinh Dũng, 17th generation, laureate of the Tạ Quang Bửu Prize 2015, eldest son of Đinh Nho Liêm, former first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.)

Prof. Đinh Dũng, born in 1951 at Thanh Hóa, was graduated in 1975, doctor in 1979, and doctor of sciences in 1985 at the Lomonosov Moscow State University. A principal researcher at the Institute of Information Technologies of the National University of Hanoi, he is the author of more than 80 scientific articles.

His awarded work (Dũng, D., & Ullrich, T. (2013). *N-Widths and ε-dimensions for high-dimensional approximations.* Foundations of Computational Mathematics, 13(6), 965–1003) studies the computational complexity of problems of approximation of signals with a very large number of dimensions, which ordinarily grows exponentially, rendering the problems insoluble. The work proposes a new approach and a method of approximation "in hyperbolic cross," showing that the "curse of dimensionality" can, in certain cases, be overcome.

The Tạ Quang Bửu Prize, awarded annually by the ministry of Sciences and Technologies, honors the researchers with remarkable contributions in fundamental research. The article relates a debate, gathered by Nguyễn Hoài (tienphong.vn, 17 March 2016), on the value of this prize awarded by a council composed solely of scientists, and on the necessity of defending fundamental research as the foundation of applied research.

28. The professor and doctor of sciences Đinh Nho Hào

(Article by Nguyen Trung Thanh, published on his Facebook page on 15 August 2022, on Prof. Đinh Nho Hào, president of the scientific council of the Institute of Mathematics of the Academy of Sciences of Viet Nam.)

After a postponement due to Covid-19, the International Conference on Differential Equations and Their Applications was held from 17 to 20 August 2022 at the Institute of Mathematics, to honor the contributions of Prof. Đinh Nho Hào on the occasion of his 60th (+1) birthday.

Prof. Hào is a renowned expert in several domains — partial differential equations, and above all inverse problems. He has published more than 100 articles, in large part in first-rank international journals, and two monographs; his works have been cited more than 2,000 times (Google Scholar). He has received prestigious distinctions (Alexander von Humboldt fellowship, Royal Society Visiting Professorship, Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowship) and has successfully directed 10 doctoral theses. At an age when many rest, he continues to work with rigor, directing a large research group. Besides his specialty, he knows very well literature… and wine.

29. My master

(Article published on baovannghe.com.vn on 29 March 2020, from *Văn nghệ* no. 13/2020, on the teacher Đinh Nho Hoan, 17th generation, great-grandson of the doctor Đinh Nho Điển.)

It concerns the master Đinh Nho Hoan, born in 1933, living today at Quỳnh Đôi Commune, Quỳnh Lưu District, Nghệ An, a village renowned for its men of letters. At nearly 90, his head all white, his bearing serene, he waters his orchids or works at his computer, in an embalmed garden and an orderly house where all breathes knowledge.

The author was his pupil only one semester (1966–1967) at the middle school of Quỳnh Hậu, in full war, the classes dispersed in the hamlets. His lessons of letters, “like a fresh water,” opened to the pupils a new world; in a few months, the author wrote his first sentences, which the master corrected.

The master Đinh Nho Hoan is the descendant of the 6th generation of Đinh Nho Công, of the 5th of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn; his great-grandfather was the doctor Đinh Nho Điển (1838), his father the doctor Đinh Nho Hân, the first doctor of chemistry of all Indochina. Despite this glorious lineage, his life was wandering from the cradle: orphaned of his father at four months, taken to Saigon, raised among wealthy relatives, instructed at the Catholic school Taberd where he acquired a perfect French; orphaned of his mother at 9, brought back to the country, orphaned of all support at 12, he had to leave school, but his brilliance earned him the help of his masters. In 1952, he was received among the first two of more than 2,000 candidates at the Normal School of Interzone IV.

Assigned to Yên Thành, he knew the Land Reform: fair complexion and the bearing of a man of letters, the young master was suspected of being the son of a landowner, watched, hindered; he nonetheless continued to defend the pupils issued from families classified “landowners.” In 1961, his first short story obtained the 3rd prize of a competition of the ministry of Education and the Association of Writers; but his novel, sent back, was accused of proximity to the “Nhân

văn — Giai phẩm" movement; disheartened, he burned the manuscript and laid down the pen — learning three years too late that a critic had judged it very well.

It was only after 80, at the exhortation of a friend, that he took up the pen again. In 2012, he completed *Accounts of the Village of Gôi*; then *The School of a Time*, both published by the Publishing House of the Association of Writers. *Accounts of the Village of Gôi* brings back to life a terroir at the foot of Mount Thiên Nhẫn, its customs, its village conventions, then the upheaval of the Land Reform that "overturned all values." Through a language by turns murmuring and vehement, the master affirms that the Vietnamese peasant, the villager of Gôi, under any regime, keeps at the bottom of his blood his humanity and his fidelity to the country. Today, in his simple house, his mind and his heart still in quest, he exists according to the Cartesian maxim: "I think, therefore I am."

30. The master Đinh Nho Kiểu — the one who remains in the memory

(Article published on thptchuyenhatinh.edu.vn on 22 September 2021, by Thái Thanh Huyền, on the teacher Đinh Nho Kiểu, 18th generation.)

The master Đinh Nho Kiểu was of the first generation of teachers of the lycée for the gifted of Hà Tĩnh. Born at the edge of the Ngàn Phố River, at Sơn Hòa, he was proud to be a son of the Đinh Nho lineage, renowned for its studies. Graduated from the Normal School of Vinh (physics) in 1972, he was retained there to teach. In 1980, received at the doctorate to study in Germany, he could not depart "for an obscure local appraisal"; like a kite that falls back for lack of wind, he returned to the country as a modest master at the Lê Hữu Trác lycée.

His daughter, Đinh Nho Lam Hương, relates that in 1991, at more than 50, he hesitated to join the lycée for the gifted, then accepted for the future of his children. The journey from Sơn Hòa, under the floods, lasted two days; documents soaked, meals of rice with pebbles, first nights on tables without a mat. Despite all, these devoted masters held on to the end.

In the memory of the author, a pupil of the literary section, the master Đinh Nho Kiểu — thin and tall silhouette, deep and clear eyes, mischievous smile — taught physics to her class for five years, without ever opening the textbook, the knowledge "flowing from the source." The pupils of letters sometimes questioned him off-topic, for the pleasure of listening to him; and from these digressions, they drew many lessons of life.

All his life, he lived in a noble poverty, exercising many small trades to raise his three children; it was only at the lycée for the gifted that he could live from his craft. A former pupil, Bùi Tiến Sỹ, testifies that he was for him not only a master, but a father and a great friend: he helped him, him and his comrade Hào (of a very poor family, with a deranged father), encouraged them, sometimes gave them the wherewithal to study. Stricken with a chronic cor pulmonale, fruit of a life of labor, which degenerated into lung cancer, he had to leave the chair before his retirement. A month before his death, he could no longer speak; only his eyes remained clear. His daughter relates that he kept in his pocket, with his insurance card, the list of the 8 pupils awarded prizes at the national physics competition of the year. He passed away on 13 June 2004, a summer day when, under a tropical depression, Hà Tĩnh wept under torrents of water. The author dedicates to him these words borrowed from *The One Who Remains in the Memory* by Lưu Quang Vũ: one truly dies only when one no longer lives in the heart of another; there

exists a third realm, that of those who live in the memory of the living, whom one does not forget — and it is there that the master remains.

31. The businesswoman Đinh Thị Hoa

(Article published on nguoinoitieng.tv, on Mrs. Đinh Thị Hoa, 17th generation, daughter of Đinh Nho Liêm, former first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.)

Đinh Thị Hoa is a renowned businesswoman of Viet Nam, known as president and director general [of her group]. The notice of the site presents her as an entrepreneurial figure of the first plan.

32. Đinh Nho Tuấn: the sweet potato and the eggplant that forge a stature

(Article published on vanhoavaphattrien.vn on 12 December 2021, by Ngô Đức Hành, on the doctor of economics, master of law, and poet Đinh Nho Tuấn, of the offshoot of Sơn Tân, son of Đinh Nho Liêm (1936–2012), former editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Hà Tĩnh*.)

Đinh Nho Tuấn "blossoms" in poetry. Prof. Phong Lê, former director of the Institute of Literature, salutes "a remarkable poetic labor, uncommon even in a professional poet, and above all the broadening of the matter and the inspiration." From 2018 to 2020, he has published three voluminous collections: *Let Me Hasten, O You*, *You, My Sister*, and *Tenderly Entwined with the Mounts and the Rivers*. His poetry embraces the world, the country, the terroir, love, the near ones, with astonishingly long poems (up to 132 verses).

Son of "good stock," his poetic soul was nourished on the ví giặm, on the *Kim Vân Kiều*, and on the family tradition. He writes much on the fatherland — *When the Fatherland Is in Peril from the Sea*, *The Islands of the Fatherland* —, evoking the tragedy of Gạc Ma (14 March 1988, where 64 Vietnamese soldiers fell), and on the terroir of Hà Tĩnh: "I borrow my father's verses like an oar to go back up the Lam River…" He has also an ecological versant (*Mother Nature*, *The Water Bindweed*), lucid on the rupture with the traditional culture and the factitious happiness of modern consumption. The poet Trần Đăng Khoa salutes "poems teeming and overflowing with emotion."

33. The blind woman of talent who rises above her destiny

(Article published on nxbhanoi.com.vn on 19 October 2016, by Đào Thị Huệ, on Đinh Việt Anh, 17th generation, vice-president of the Association of the Blind of Viet Nam — and sister of the author of this book.)

Đinh Việt Anh, born in 1978 at Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn, had beautiful eyes black as any child; but at 3, a degenerative retinopathy ravished from her little by little the light. Eager to learn, she followed school from the age of 5 and was, for twelve years, first in her class. The lycée finished, her road seemed closed, no university accepting the files of the visually impaired.

In 1997, alone, she reached Hanoi to enroll at the Center of Training and Rehabilitation of the Association of the Blind, was retained as a trainer, and braille became her turning point. In 1999, she entered the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (social management); two years later, the faculty of English of the Open University of Hanoi. In six years, working and studying, she was graduated with mention from the two universities, learning besides French

and Japanese. In 2005, the only visually impaired Vietnamese, she was sent to study informatics in Japan and the making of audiobooks in Thailand.

With her husband Phạm Xuân Trường (himself blind, and a brilliant academic), she forms a fulfilled home; in May 2014, both defended their master's at the National Academy of Administration, she with the best mark of the class. At 34, she was deputy director in charge of the external relations of the Center, communicating in three languages, representing Viet Nam in nearly 10 countries. In 2013, elected to the Central Committee of the Association of the Blind, she is a permanent member of it, editor-in-chief of the review *Đời mới*, and responsible for the action in favor of women and children. Many times distinguished (by the Union of Women, the Prime Minister, the city of Hanoi), she remains an attentive wife and mother. Her life is the prolongation of tireless aspirations: to knowledge, to the gift of self, to social usefulness — a luminous example of strength above destiny, "diminished but not infirm." She is today vice-president of the Association of the Blind of Viet Nam.

34. Verses where a secret of the heart smolders

(Article published on baoquangninh.vn on 5 August 2018, by the writer Vũ Thảo Ngọc, on the collection *Tự sự* (Confidences) by Đinh Tú Anh, 17th generation, Branch B — that is, the collection of the author of this book.)

The author says her surprise at the thickness of the collection *Tự sự* (Publishing House of the Association of Writers, 2017): 300 pages, 200 poems distributed into 9 chapters, each recounting a theme, in all genres (lục bát, seven-syllable, free verse, prose poem). She speaks of a "novel in verse." Chapter 5 sings the 12 months of the year; chapter 3, "Terroir, Childhood, and Nostalgia," tells off the labors of the village (fishing for crab, gleaning the rice) with the words of the speech of Nghệ Tĩnh; chapter 2, "Myself," is a self-portrait; the chapter "Confidences" tells of the work of the mine. But it is the lancinating nostalgia for the country that traverses the whole collection. The author salutes a poetic soul simple and powerful, while regretting an excess of personal outpouring.

A few poems by Đinh Tú Anh, drawn from the collection Tự sự:

> **DIVAGATIONS OF MY CHILDHOOD** My father carried on his shoulder the Ngàn Phố River to fill the jar on the days of drought when the sun burned; my mother ferried by boat the whole of Mount Thiên Nhẫn to the village, gathered gravel, raised the floor of the house in the flood. At night, on the loft of straw, we listened to the buffaloes chewing noisily, as if they were settling the next day's labors; our belly gurgled with the meager sweet potatoes that would not hold still to let us sleep. We contemplated the stars through the pierced roof that let the sky be seen, in a dream with the acrid smell of manure. We ran straight on the muddy paths of the village, playing the games of the past centuries, today vanished; we climbed the hills of pebbles, believing our little village as vast as a flight of herons exhausts its wings — much later, we knew our error; we braved the storm under palm leaves gathered in haste, and rejoiced when the flood invaded the house, in the anguish of our parents. The sun and the wind of Laos burned our hair and our skin; the puddles of the buffalo tracks, in the middle of the fields, slaked our thirsts. And then we grew up, and then we set off far, following other horizons. At each return to the village, the

houses grow rarer, but on the hill the new tombs thicken. When I tell my children the story of my childhood, they look at me, astonished. When I tell myself the story of my childhood, I weep: my tears flow back toward the village.

I SIT TO AWAIT THE TÊT I sit to await the Têt for so many years, but the Têt remains infinitely distant. The pot of bánh chưng, the crackling hearth, the new garment, the firecrackers — where are they today? I sit to await the Têt for a long time, but I no longer find the buffalo market of the country, the tò he one blows, the balloon, the pulled caramel, hung to the peddler's basket. I sit to await the poor Têt, the biting cold, the piece of dried potato, the ginger jam; so little, and yet what joy, the schoolchildren stopping ceaselessly: at my house! I sit to await the Têt of yore, the branch of plum with white flowers, the branch of peach with pale rose; at the New Year, my father put on his long robe, donned the turban, and recited an oration in Chinese characters. I sit to await the Têt, anxious about the poem of the opening of the brush that my father entrusted to me — what to write? I asked my grandmother; she said: well then, think and write, what is there difficult, my little man of letters. I sit to await the Têt, the Têt comes, but I no longer find the Têt of any year of my country…

BEFORE THE SPRING The pagoda afar sends back, icy, the sound of the bell; the instant when the spring arrives is very near. The smoke mingles its perfume of aloes, persistent; the bud bursts into a young green leaf, hesitant. I turn my eyes toward my mother: a story of clouds veils her; I think of the love of my father: the tears stream. I would that time drew back a little, but, sad, the Creator only temporizes.

THE HEART STILL SO HEAVY, O MY COUNTRY! At seventeen, my father cut the mooring; he launched the boat of my life, and I went down the current in silence. Light baggage, breast full of youth, farewell to the bamboos, I engaged, green, on the road. Farewell to the native land, to so much brooded tenderness; farewell to the Ngàn Phố, river so near; farewell to the Thiên Nhẫn, mount so good to climb; farewell to the myrtle, to the shrub — I go! I followed life, wandering among the clouds, through so many recesses of the world, of innumerable horizons; tasting humiliation, enjoying honors, of all fully; the step lengthening, the years with it. That sky sometimes knows limpidity, sometimes it raises a thousand whirlwinds; in the heart of the storm, the boat of my heart said to itself: hold firm the oar, accept your thin fate tossed about. Until this day, having crossed rapids and reefs, at fifty, the hair already of two colors, returned to the country, for the first time I weep, asking to become again the child of old. Farewell, country of the floods and the storms, of the manioc, of the sweet potato, of hunger and cold, of the drought, of the wind of Laos, of the burning sun — I have come back to the harsh taste of green tea. Here I am, to you, my sisters, my brothers, to you, uncles and aunts, living or departed. Whatever number of lands I have crossed, the heart remains heavy, so heavy, O my country!

(The writer Vũ Thảo Ngọc.)

35. A young Vietnamese graduate of two of the most prestigious universities of England and the United States

(Article published on the site of the newspaper *Dân trí*, by Lệ Thu, on 12 November 2020, on Đinh Nho Tâm, 18th generation, grandson of Đinh Nho Liêm, former first vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.)

The holder of an MBA Đinh Nho Tâm, who once obtained the perfect score at the GRE (top 1% worldwide), is a graduate of the University of Cambridge (England) and figured in the top 10% of the graduates of his faculty at Stanford University (United States).

Born in 1986 at Hanoi, Đinh Nho Tâm manifested early the taste for study and challenge. In middle school, he was the pupil of Vũ Hữu Bình, author of mathematics textbooks; in the lycée, of Trần Văn Khải, at Hanoi-Amsterdam. For his higher studies, he joined Cambridge — the university of Newton, Darwin, and Hawking — and was admitted to the prestigious faculty of mathematics of Trinity College (where Cambridge counts 34 of its 110 Nobel prizes, and where Newton's apple tree subsists), with the full Woods Studentship scholarship (nearly 100,000 pounds, or 3 billion dongs in 2004). Fond of discoveries, he frequented each week a new one of the 116 libraries of the university (15 million works, including manuscripts of Newton and Shakespeare) and attended the courses of other disciplines. He presided over the Association of Vietnamese Students of Cambridge — not without having fallen once into the Cam River while practicing punting, which, according to a student "legend," brings luck at the examinations.

For the MBA, he chose Stanford, at the heart of Silicon Valley (HP, Nike, Google…), with a program ranked no. 1 worldwide with an admission rate below 6%. To distinguish himself, he took the GRE rather than the GMAT and obtained the perfect score in the two tests; he put forward the singularity of Viet Nam and his dream of transforming its economy. He obtained the Arjay Miller Scholar prize (top 10% of his MBA class) — the first Vietnamese to receive it in decades —, was a teaching assistant (course OIT 269, supply-chain strategy), and won with his team a competition on the application of AI to big data in online education.

Returned to the country despite the Western offers, persuaded that Viet Nam will be one of the most dynamic economies of the decade, he is today financial and investment director of the Galaxy group, developing platforms of online education and of savings-investment. To the youth, he advises finding oneself mentors, aiming high, and preparing oneself three to five years in advance, citing Phil Knight (Nike): *Just do it.*

36. A student of Foreign Commerce who "bets" twice on his destiny and wins a scholarship of more than 4.7 billion dongs

(Article published on ione.vnexpress.net on 11 February 2015, by Lan Vũ, on Đinh Nho Minh, 18th generation, grandson of Đinh Nho Liêm.)

Đinh Nho Minh (born in 1996), former pupil of the physics section of the Hanoi-Amsterdam lycée, then a first-year student at the University of Foreign Commerce, received in February a full scholarship of 220,000 dollars over 4 years from Tufts University (United States). He says he obtained it by knowing how to assert himself, not as a "learning machine."

He evokes two “bets”: to submit his application to Tufts only in his first year of university (and not in the final year of secondary school as usual), while conducting at the same time the preparation of the entrance examination to Foreign Commerce, the assembling of the file, and the associative activities; then, received at Foreign Commerce (25 points), to “dare” to miss classes to prepare his file for studies abroad. His secret: to choose a university that truly corresponds to him (Tufts offers the international relations he is fond of, and formed the vice-Prime Minister and minister of Foreign Affairs Phạm Bình Minh), and to dare to express his personality in the essay, for “the jury wants to see an interesting being, not a learning machine.” An active member of the Model United Nations (Oxford, Yale-NUS), he aims at a career at the ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Record: IELTS 8.0; SAT 2270; SAT II math 800/800, physics 800/800.)

37. The “Gen Alpha” chess player Đinh Nho Kiệt wins 6 gold medals at the Southeast Asian Youth Chess Championships

(Article published on the site of the newspaper *Người Lao động* on 27 June 2023, by Đào Tùng, on Đinh Nho Kiệt, 18th generation.)

At the Southeast Asian Open Age-Group Chess Championships 2023 (Thailand, 17–26 June), the junior team of Viet Nam achieved a prodigious performance: 178 medals, of which 92 gold. Among the most regular players, Đinh Nho Kiệt distinguished himself “in his own way”: born in 2010, he “moved up a notch” to contest the standard time control in the U16 boys and won there the individual gold as top seed, then returned to his U14 category for the rapid and blitz games, adding two individual gold medals and two by team — that is, six gold medals in total at this championship. Viet Nam finished largely in the lead (92 gold, 37 silver, 49 bronze). Beforehand, according to vnexpress.net (21 September 2022, by Xuân Bình), Đinh Nho Kiệt had dominated the U12 boys category at the youth world championship of Batumi (note by the author).

38. Eulogy of the 4 tutelary divinities

The “eulogy” (bài tán) — the chant of praise of the 4 tutelary divinities — was composed by the Ancestor of the 13th generation, the Thái Bộc Tự khanh Đinh Huy Tăng [Đinh Nho Tỉnh (Tĩnh)]; we recopy it from the genealogy of the Đinh Nho lineage:

> On the nine degrees of the throne, seconding Heaven, one governs the country; below, the people by tens of thousands are intoxicated with virtue and goodness. There is a country, there are the divine ancestors; the source of the lineage’s happiness, its grace waters the village. Anh Nghị, His Majesty, opened the source of the waters of the Đinh, built the base of happiness from yesterday to today; from the day when the dragon awaited the cloud, the divine omen appeared, on strange days of stars. At the field of Thác Lác, at dawn, one greeted the censor; at the Eo Trèo pass, of old, one foretold the high success. Having already seized the cinnamon branch of the moon palace, on the road of the clouds, straight, he crossed the pavilion of the counts. The royal brush on the gold tablet, resplendent; the four characters “Phong Lăng Ngôn Ngữ,” more glorious still. From beginning to end, one same integrity, one same rectitude; the renown first, the sacred soul after. The rank of Đắc Đạt, and moreover the fine continuity; the bearing of the great families, the air of an illustrious house.

Stele at the Văn Miếu, name on the tablet of the East; examination of the year Canh Tuất, then examination of the year Canh Thìn. At the frontier, of old, he held the power of military governor; his probity made the Hoa and the Di tremble. At Cao Bằng, the “Đức Chính” stele bears witness; the “Mặc Ông sứ tập” keeps the poems of the embassy journey. The jade seal, behold, at Yên Kinh the snow dyed it; but the ancestor had already early set his affairs in order. From the day he returned to settle the goods of the house, half charged with the affairs of the country, half with those of the home. He raised a few peaceful altar-towers, established votive rice fields, distributed the lands among the branches; clear, the engraved stele, the inscription of the lithophone, so that the descendants follow it and transmit it afar. At the rank of Á Thận, it is dame Phan, of virtuous bearing enhanced with letters. On the day she escorted the embassy carriage, at Lã Côi, they confided to one another their innermost hearts. The love of the departure: sad clouds, afflicted winds; the tunic of the Yellow Flowers, he removed it to give it to her. Watching afar for the news of the wild goose, the poems sent are there, the silk tunic is there. The carriage of the northern pass hardly returned on the day of the repatriation, she resolved to sacrifice herself to follow him to the end: farewell letter to her mother, oration for her husband, a few lines of tears of snow, a heart of frost. The panel “Tiết Phụ” bears in gold three characters, the rice field of Tàm Tang furnishes the incense for a thousand springs; the royal patent equals her to her husband — O how her heart of fidelity and duty is a thousand times glorious! The Marquis of Hương Nghĩa, gifted in letters and in arms, to the glory of the examinations joined the art of strategy. At La Sơn, first, he tried the ox-sword; at Kỳ Anh, from commander of the troops, he passed commander general. Walking in the footsteps of his fathers and elders, filled with the grace of the village and the country after him, in the year when the arms were repaired, with a single hand he held the power — his merit is transmitted still. The renown of the tiger-general resounds at the frontier marches; the lineage of the qilin reflects the brilliance of the men of letters. Above, they keep the country; below, they shelter the people: a single house, four tutelary divinities — what glory! The faces blossom, mounts of Tiêu, waters of Phố; from generation to generation, the temple rises, majestic. Our people render worship to our divinities; below, the descendants; above, the forebears. The ancestral maxim is engraved in the stone; may the troop of children read it and retain it: quarrel not in litigation, gamble not at cards, be neither proud nor debauched, nor licentious. Lineage of loyalty and piety, keep the ground of simplicity; content with pure poverty, with thrift and measure. If you know how to keep the rules of the house, when you advance, be men of duty; when you withdraw, honest peasants. Each year, at the opening of spring, the ceremony; the lineage assembled offers the fragrant incense. The sincere heart reaches even to the souls of the forebears; at the temple, their spirit, half present, communes. May each vow his heart to the respectful worship; the book says: may the divinities be in concord and in peace. For a thousand years, harmony and quietude; the more solid the stock, the longer the soul of the forebears.

39. The temple of the great lineage & the temple of the Son of the Grand King

Since the Ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công, the Đinh Nho lineage divided into 4 branches: the two senior branches at Sơn Hòa (Hương Sơn); the third at Cương Gián (Nghi

Xuân); the fourth at Thanh Liên (Thanh Chương). The two senior branches of Sơn Hòa have the temple of the great lineage and the temple of the cadet branch. Beside the temple of the great lineage rises the temple of the Son of the Grand King (Đức Đại vương tử), that is, the temple of the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn [the father and the son, Đinh Nho Công and Đinh Nho Hoàn, both having been raised to the rank of "Đại vương" under the Cảnh Hưng era, one names them in the lineage the Father Grand King and the Son Grand King].

Originally, the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên settled at the village of Bình Hòa. Then the Ancestor of the 6th generation, the assistant to the sub-prefect of Đông Ngạn Đinh Hữu Luân, on the indications of the Chinese geomancer Ngô, came to establish his residence at the location of the present temple of the great lineage. This land belonged formerly to the censor Nguyễn Tử Trọng (1485–?), doctor of 1502, founding ancestor of the Nguyễn Đình lineage; his descendants having disdained it and left it in abandonment, Đinh Hữu Luân exchanged it for good rice fields with the village chief and built his house there.

The *Hương Yên phổ tự* does not say when the temple was founded or embellished. The genealogy of 2020 supposes that it was founded in the time of Đinh Nho Công and embellished around 1717 — the very year when the king had the temple of the Woman of Duty (Gôi Vụ) built. In 1922 (Nhâm Tuất, under Khải Định), it was restored by artisans of the village of Trung Cần, at the same time as the temple of Gôi (facades with identical motifs). It then comprised:

An Upper Sanctuary of three bays in ironwood and jackfruit wood, with "âm dương" tiles. A Middle Sanctuary, whose facade bears two couplets:

(1) Couplet on either side of the central door, still present:

家孝子國忠臣事業勳猷炳炳三百年天下生榮名死顯號精神命脈繩繩億萬世雲仍 *Gia hiếu tử, Quốc trung thần, sự nghiệp huân du bính bính tam bách niên thiên hạ Sinh vinh danh, tử hiển hiện, tinh thần mệnh mạch thăng thăng ức vạn thế vân nhưng.*

Translation of the meaning:

> In the house pious sons, in the country loyal subjects: their merits resplend, three hundred years long, throughout the empire; living, they had the renown; dead, they manifest themselves: their spirit and their lineage transmit themselves to ten thousand generations of descendants.

(The version of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of Đinh Nho Chú renders it freely: In the house pious sons, in the country loyal subjects, these shining merits of the dynasty of the Later Lê; living with a fragrant name, dead manifesting themselves, this spirit and this lineage imbue the descendants for ten thousand generations.)

(2) Couplet on the two outer lateral faces of the facade of the Middle Sanctuary, still present:

祖考萃精神如在上在左右尊親同血氣此其身其子孫 *Tổ khảo tuỵ tinh thần như tại thượng, tại tả hữu Tương thân đồng khí huyết, thử kỳ thân, kỳ tử tôn.*

Translation of the meaning:

> The forebears concentrate their spirit, as if present above, to the right and to the left; kinsfolk and near ones share one same blood, in this person, in his descendants.

A Lower Sanctuary (hall of prostrations), of three bays likewise. The enclosure of about 3 sào (≈ 1,500 m²), with brick walls and court.

In front, the great gate bears 3 large characters: “Lai Dã Viễn” 來也遠 (which we translate: “come from afar” — a reminder that the ancestors came from elsewhere; and also: “which transmits itself to a thousand generations”). These three characters evoke the couplet: *Tổ đức tôn công lai dã viễn / Xuân thường thu tự phụng duy tư* — “The virtue of the forebears and the merit of the ancestors reach to a thousand generations / At the ceremonies of spring and autumn, one honors them and keeps memory of them.”

On the pillars of the gate, two couplets:

(1) Couplet of the pillars, outer side:

椒聊且駙蓋高門福履攸集火傳也本支百世氣脉相關 *Tiêu liêu thả tứ cái cao môn, phúc lý du tập Hỏa truyền dã bản chi bách thế, khí mạch tương quan.*

Translation of the meaning:

> Descendants filling the house, high gate with carriages and parasols, happiness and felicity flow in; the torch is transmitted, trunk and branches over a hundred generations, whose vital veins are linked to one another.

(2) Couplet of the pillars, court side. We do not have the text in Chinese characters, but only the transcription of the genealogy of 2020:

Môn địa cao khả dụ Thiên trụ hữu dĩ tôn.

Probable meaning: This site has a high gate / It has a solid pillar that supports the sky.

On the geomantic situation of this residence of the Đinh, the work *Geography of Vương Dư Dụ* (gathered by Mr. Đinh Nho Hoài) says: “The residence of the Đinh Nho at the hamlet of Hoán Vỹ, An Ấp Commune, of the doctors of the Lê (Đinh Nho Công, Đinh Nho Hoàn) to the Nguyễn (Đinh Nho Quang, Đinh Nho Hường, that is, Đinh Nho Điển), belongs to the configuration ‘Bàn Long Tả Cục’ (Coiled Dragon, left disposition).”

The annual ceremony was held solemnly, on the commemoration days of the ancestors and the tutelary divinities, financed by a few rice fields of the lineage. The great ceremony fell at the beginning of spring, with the cleaning of the tombs. After the August Revolution, in 1948, in conformity with the State’s policy, the temples of the sub-branches — including that of the branch of Nho Thận — were regrouped at the great temple; a management committee was constituted (Đinh Nho Kiên, Đinh Nho An, Đinh Nho Cầm, Đinh Nho Bá, Đinh Nho Tiến).

The genealogy continues: “After 1953, under various external pressures, some resolved to reduce the worship and to tighten the temple of the great lineage. They sold the temple of the Son of the Grand King (the temple of Đinh Nho Hoàn); they also felled and sold the age-old trees of the mausoleum of Sản Trà, reducing it to a bare plot, and even wished to sell the hall of prostrations and the Upper Sanctuary. Before this, the wife of the head of the lineage of the 16th

generation (bà Cu Hồ) opposed it resolutely and prevented the sale — supported by a few devoted elders. Thanks to her, our temple subsists to this day."

In 1970, a few kinsfolk (Nho Bính, Nho Huệ, Nho Khoách, Nho Đào, Nho Trương) gathered the lineage to consolidate the worship: the hall of prostrations was attributed to the head of lineage Đinh Nho Quỳ to dwell there, on condition that he repair the temple and maintain the worship. From then on, a representative committee of the lineage (Ban Tộc biểu) was elected and accomplished several works: consolidation of the annual worship (Têt and 15th day of the 7th month); from 1990, an annual contribution for the cleaning of the tombs and the ceremony; institution of the 9th day of the first month (death of the founding ancestor Phúc Diên) as the great ceremony; raising and displacement of the Upper Sanctuary, enlarged by 3 meters, rearrangement of the Middle Sanctuary (facade preserved). The Upper Sanctuary preserves the inscription "Thế Đức Từ," the altar of the Father Grand King, and a few tablets of the tutelary divinities (transferred from Gôi Vỵ); the two couplets offered by Mr. Chấp (Nghi Lộc), alas lost, were remade in the autumn Canh Dần by the sons of Đinh Nho Tâm. In 2007, the enclosure wall and the iron gate were built.

Disposition of the Upper Sanctuary: at the center, the altar of the ancestors from the 1st to the 7th generation; to the left (seen from outside), the altar of the senior branch; to the right, that of the cadet branch. Two couplets frame the central altar:

1. Couplet in front, remade from the one offered by the Hoàng giáp Đinh Văn Chấp:

譜存本何敢忘歡愛二州經世代族同地亦非異藍鴻千古一江山

The two characters Hồng Lam 鴻藍 have been engraved backward, as Lam Hồng 藍鴻, compared to the original couplet of Đinh Văn Chấp. On reading, "Lam Hồng" sounds less well than "Hồng Lam," but the meaning does not change (Hồng Lam: Mount Hồng, Lam River; Lam Hồng: Lam River, Mount Hồng).

Transcription (by Mr. Tống Trần Tùng): *Phả tồn bản, hà cảm vong, Hoan Ái nhị châu kinh thế đại Tộc đồng địa, diệc phi dị, Hồng Lam thiên cổ nhất giang sơn*

Translation of the meaning:

> The genealogy keeps its stock — would one dare forget it? Hoan and Ái, the two châu, through so many generations; the lineage shares the same land — how could it be a stranger? Hồng Lam, for ten thousand ages, one and the same country.

2. Couplet behind, by Mr. Đinh Nho Thanh (17th generation, Branch B, father of the author of this book), engraved in nôm:

丁族擁玉家風闊課浪名鑲□ □

That is:

> The Đinh lineage, a thousand years long, is inscribed in the book of jade; the family tradition, forever, makes a name of gold shine.

The original text in Chinese characters by Mr. Đinh Nho Thanh was:

丁族千秋雷玉彩家風萬代顯馨名 *Đinh tộc thiên thu lưu ngọc thái Gia phong vạn đại hiển hinh danh.*

Translation of the meaning:

> The Đinh lineage, a thousand autumns long, shines with the brilliance of jade; the family tradition, ten thousand generations, makes resplendent a fragrant name.

In our view, at a future restoration, it would be better to replace this couplet in nôm by the one in Chinese characters above, more solemn; one rarely employs nôm in the temples.

Present state of the temple of the great lineage: it is deteriorating gravely and calls for an urgent restoration.

40. The temple of the cadet branch

The temple of the cadet branch, dedicated to the first ancestor, the Ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thận, was likewise of three bays in ironwood and jackfruit wood, with "âm dương" tiles, but of modest dimension. It was at the hamlet of Đông Mỹ (about 200 meters from the temple of the great lineage). The lineage sold it around 1948, in conformity with the policy of regrouping the worships, to render the worship to the ancestors at the temple of the great lineage. The branches of Đinh Nho Thường (Cương Gián) and of Đinh Nho Côn (Thanh Liên) have their own temples.

41. The altar of master Ngô

As said above, the Ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân was shown by the Chinese geomancer Ngô the locations of the tombs and taught the art of geomancy, so that the descendants "succeed at the examinations from generation to generation, without ever an interruption." The genealogy relates that at his death, Đinh Hữu Luân recommended to his descendants:

"Our house owes master Ngô an immeasurable debt. But our two countries are distant. I recall only his name, Ngô; he was a few years older than I. Let us therefore raise a small altar beside our temple, so that on the day of my commemoration one commemorates also master Ngô, and at the festivals — New Year, first fruits, festival of the 5th month — to mark a little of my sincerity. Is it enough to pay the grace of the master!"

The genealogy adds: "Formerly, to the left of the temple, a small altar had been raised to honor the master regularly. After the fourth generation elapsed, according to the rite, one burned the ancestral tablet, and the altar was from then on abandoned."

42. The lineage today

The Đinh Nho lineage has today spread into every region of the country and abroad. Numerous are those who have succeeded in study (professors, associate professors, doctors) as in the economy. Most have the concern to perpetuate the tradition, to unite and to help one another. But without the concern to preserve the tradition of the forebears and to record carefully the genealogical information, the future descendants would risk losing their roots and no longer

being able to attach themselves to the ancestors and the lineage — a source of avoidable regrets.

43. The opinion of Professor Đặng Thai Mai on the Đinh Nho lineage

In the Foreword of the manuscript exemplar of the *Hương Yên phổ tự* of Đinh Nho Chú figures a passage of the opinion of Professor Đặng Thai Mai (1902–1984; his grandmother was the Ancestor of the 14th generation Đinh Thị Hoan, mentioned above; his daughter, the professor of history Đặng Bích Hà, was the wife of the general Võ Nguyên Giáp). We reproduce it:

"The Đinh lineage is a great lineage. It is said that, going back very far, to the epoch of Đinh Tiên Hoàng, Đinh Điền and Nguyễn Bặc were the two meritorious dignitaries of that dynasty. Later, the descendants emigrated to the village of Gôi Mỹ, Hương Sơn District, Hà Tĩnh Province. Toward the Later Lê, then the Nguyễn, the genealogy of the Đinh records many ancestors received at the great examinations. The temple still preserves the panel of the Lê epoch honoring the Woman of Duty, wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn — doctor, mandarin of the first and second rank, gone on embassy to China and dead on the way. She was a woman renowned for her beauty and her knowledge, an intimate friend of the woman of letters Đoàn Thị Điểm… The family library preserves the poems she composed with her husband and her friends. At the death of Đinh Nho Hoàn, she was young; but after her husband's coffin was repatriated and the funeral completed, she committed suicide.

For our generation of today, all these accounts of lettered stock, of successes and offices, of death on the road of the embassy, or the gold tablet engraved with the words 'Tiết hạnh khả phong' of a young wife, are but pages of the history of the mores of the feudal epoch. Be that as it may, for hundreds of years, the descendants of the Đinh, besides the pride — deserved or not, that is another matter —, have seen there a tradition of virtue of diligent study and of that virtue which the ancients named loyalty, duty, and fidelity, in the ideology of an epoch henceforth elapsed never to return."

(*Memoirs of Đặng Thai Mai*, Publishing House Tác phẩm mới, 1985, p. 119.)

44. The quest for the origins of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune

(Article by Mr. Đinh Quang Tích, published on hodinhvietnam.com on 19 January 2014.)

The Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune (Nghi Xuân, Hà Tĩnh) is an offshoot of the Đinh Nho lineage of Sơn Hòa Commune (Hương Sơn, Hà Tĩnh).

At Cương Gián, there was from all time only a single Đinh lineage, with two temples (the senior branch at Trung Sơn, the cadet at Song Long). The author grew up with the concern to rediscover the origin of the founding ancestor. As a child, he heard the elders relate that the stock of the Đinh of Cương Gián had succeeded at the examinations and held high offices — higher than sub-prefect or prefect —, and that at the great ceremonies, one had to reserve in the court the wherewithal to feed dozens of guards and horses escorting the mandarin ancestor.

Toward the middle of 2008, uncle Đinh Duyệt gave him a photocopy of the foreword of the *Genealogy of the Đinh lineage, senior branch of Trung Sơn* (translated from Chinese): he learned there that the ancestors came from Gia Viễn (Ninh Bình), that the founding ancestor had set off for Nghệ An - Hà Tĩnh (one to An Ấp, the other to Cổ Ngu), and that the lineage once counted a

father and a son received doctors under the Lê. At Hải Phòng, uncle Đinh Xuân Dục taught him that An Ấp (Yên Ấp) was at Sơn Hòa (Hương Sơn) — where his own Đinh lineage lived — and that Cổ Ngu was the region of Đức Thủy, Đức Lâm (Đức Thọ).

In the middle of 2009, kinsfolk of Cương Gián found at Trung Lương (Đức Thọ) a Đinh lineage whose genealogical foreword resembled theirs. On the 15th day of the 7th month of 2009, they went there; the two genealogies concorded on the origin of the founding ancestor (from Gia Viễn to An Ấp, a member at Cổ Ngu; a father and a son doctors under the Lê). But the author could not establish a direct link between the two offshoots and was very disappointed by it.

In August 2011, he discovered the site of the Đinh lineage of Viet Nam and published there his wish. A few days later, Mr. Đinh Nho Quỳ, head of the lineage of the Đinh Nho of Sơn Hòa, wrote to him. After exchange, Mr. Quỳ sent him a copy of the genealogy of the Đinh Nho: in confronting the two, the author was overwhelmed — “a terrible resemblance!”: over the first seven generations, the same names of the ancestors, the same clans of the ancestresses, the same titles, save a few characters (effects of the transmission). On the 15th day of the 7th month of 2013, the Đinh of Cương Gián came to burn incense and officially confront the genealogies: the concordance was perfect, from the 1st generation (the Tả Hiệu Điểm Marquis of Công Tây Đinh Phúc Diên) to the 7th (the doctor Đinh Nho Công).

The reconnection remains difficult, for the genealogy of Cương Gián does not record the true name of the ancestors at the moment of their departure from Hương Sơn; but the author hopes to achieve it in future, through the historical sources. Be that as it may, the origin of the Đinh lineage of Cương Gián is henceforth established with certainty: the Đinh Nho lineage of An Ấp (Sơn Hòa, Hương Sơn), rich in examination laureates under the Lê and the Nguyễn (nearly ten doctors), and in many doctors and officials today. The more the tradition of the ancestors is a pride, the more the descendants must strive to show themselves worthy of it.

CHANT OF THE OFFERING OF INCENSE AT THE TEMPLE OF THE ĐINH NHO LINEAGE

(Music and words: Đinh Tú Anh, descendant of the Đinh Nho lineage, 17th generation, Branch B — composed in August 2023.)

[The musical score cannot be rendered by the text; here are the words.]

> Here we are all returned here, gathered one near another, filled with the affection of kinship, more and more dear. From the four horizons, we return to offer the incense at the temple, in memory of our ancestors, we, the lineage of the Đinh Nho. Over hundreds of distant years, our ancestors resplend; so many illustrious figures, from generation to generation, glorious, shining. Resolved to follow the maxim of the forebears: when one advances, to be a man of duty; when one withdraws, an honest peasant. May the descendants, with one heart, unite and counsel one another. Remember: of old, from Gia Viễn, the ancestors came to Hương Sơn; and to this day, the descendants, joyful and numerous, are throughout all the regions. (bis)

Story of the song “In Leaving Me, You Depart for the Other World”

Our father (we, that is, Đinh Tú Anh, the author of this book) is today nearly 90 (born in 1937, but 1934 in his papers); he is still very vigorous and lucid. A few years ago, one day when we were both joking, he said to me laughing:

“You know how to compose music; write then a song of farewell to your father to sing it to him. For who knows: later, when your father is dead, were you to write it and sing it, he might no longer be able to hear it?”

Finding this just, I composed this song for my father. And indeed, he was very happy with it. He said:

“How many men in the world have a song of farewell for the day when they will return to the ancestors? And composed by their own son? And that they hear until they know it by heart in their lifetime?”

In our view, this song is beautiful, of melody as of meaning. Hence it is fitting to share it in this book, to preserve it with the *History of the Đinh Nho Lineage*; to offer it to the kinsfolk of the lineage, to each, and in homage to the fathers. Life and death are the impermanence of the Creator, who spares no one.

In Leaving Me, You Depart for the Other World

(Music and words: Đinh Tú Anh.)

[Score — the words, in two superposed voices:]

> In leaving me, you depart for the other world. Beloved father, have no worry at all. In leaving me, you go toward the just. Beloved father, ascend serenely to heaven. Farewell henceforth. Farewell, I have no more the Old Father whom I have always cherished. Live the life of the immortals. Live the life for those who, in this world, have always lived. The memories of you, joys and sorrows, I keep them forever in my heart. Keeping fully the way of life, through the vicissitudes, without the least hesitation. O my country, for a time you knew the trials. O my country, a whole life you toiled to raise your children. O separation, what heart would not sadden at it? But at the separation, let him go serene. You depart; we, from today, deprived of you, the hamlet saddens, each is moved, regretting a man who always was for others, without grumbling or calculating. You, in life, in the sorrows, your descendants still believe that you will always be at their side, and always their shelter. Having lived fully of heart and of duty, for the hamlet, the country; having lived fully of heart and of duty, and died full of holiness.

PART II. TEXTS OF THE WORSHIP OF THE ANCESTORS

I. The days of worship and ceremony in the year

Besides the charge, for the representative committee of the lineage (Ban Tộc biểu), of designating the persons charged with sweeping the temple, wiping the objects and the altars, preparing the offerings, and respectfully offering the incense at the temple of the great lineage on the 1st and 15th of each lunar month, the great Đinh Nho lineage has, each year, 4

commemoration days, 5 places for the cleaning of the tombs, and the following other ceremonies.

1. The four commemoration days of the ancestors

1.1. Commemoration of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý (on the day of the Pure Clarity, Thanh minh, each year).

The ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, is the mother of our founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, of the founding ancestor of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, Đinh Phúc Tiên, and of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy, Đinh Phúc… (name unknown). In the orations, one may call her ancestral Mother (Tổ mẫu) or First ancestral Mother (Thủy Tổ mẫu).

Not knowing the date of her death, the Đinh lineages of the same ancestral mother (Đinh Nho of Hương Sơn; Đinh Văn of Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc; and Đinh of Đức Thủy, Đức Thọ) agreed, around 2017, to take the day of the Pure Clarity (Thanh minh) as the day of her commemoration. The ceremony takes place in two places: 1) the cleaning of her tomb; 2) the commemoration at the temple of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long. The preparation of the offerings falls to the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, and the lineages of the same ancestral mother depute representatives to take part in it and contribute to it.

1.2. Commemoration of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên (on the 9th day of the first lunar month). It is the commemoration of the ancestors and the greatest ceremony of the year of the Đinh Nho lineage.

1.3. Commemoration of the head of the great lineage, 8th generation, Đinh Nho Trạch (on the 15th day of the 12th month).

1.4. Commemoration of the head of the cadet branch (8th generation of the great lineage), Đinh Nho Thận (on the 7th day of the 12th month).

For the convenience of the kinsfolk, apart from the commemoration of the ancestral Mother combined with the cleaning of her tomb, at which we depute representatives to the other Đinh lineages at Nghi Long, we organize at the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage only a single great commemoration day gathering fully the descendants of the locality as of all the regions: the 9th day of the first month, commemoration of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên. As for the commemorations of the two first ancestors of the two branches (Đinh Nho Trạch and Đinh Nho Thận), the representative committee will organize them simply in the name of the kinsfolk, or even content itself with deputing someone to offer the incense.

Some have proposed to add each year the commemoration of the ancestor of the 7th generation Đinh Nho Công (on the 27th day of the 2nd lunar month), for he was the ancestor who inaugurated the successes at the examinations and broke the “độc đinh” condition. This commemoration, like that of the ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân, is rich in meaning. However, the kinsfolk having so many cares and occupations, we consider after reflection that it is fitting to gather only once a year, on the day of the founding ancestor — a day which, falling at the beginning of spring, in the full period of Têt, is very convenient for the kinsfolk, especially those who live far away.

2. The five places for the cleaning of the tombs

2.1. Cleaning of the tomb of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý — each year, by representatives deputed to the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long and the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy, on the day of the Pure Clarity, which is also that of her commemoration (see above). **2.2.** Cleaning of the tombs of Áng Phần (on the 9th day of the first month). **2.3.** Cleaning of the tomb of Rú Trai (on the 9th day of the first month). **2.4.** Cleaning of the tomb of Lòi Chim Chim (on the 9th day of the first month). **2.5.** Cleaning of the mausoleum of Kim Hoa (on the 9th day of the first month).

For these last four, each year on the morning of the 9th day of the first month, the representative committee deputes members and/or kinsfolk to clean the tombs, before returning to celebrate the commemoration of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên.

3. The other ceremonies

3.1. Worship of the ancestors on the afternoon of the 30th of Têt. **3.2.** Worship of the ancestors at the New Year's Eve vigil (Giao thừa). **3.3.** Worship of the ancestors on the morning of the 1st day of Têt. **3.4.** Worship of the ancestors (Lễ tạ, that is, the burning of the votive papers) on the 3rd day of Têt. **3.5.** Worship of the 15th day of the 7th lunar month. **3.6.** Visit of the descendants to the temple to offer the incense there. **3.7.** Offering of incense by the descendants to render account of their merits to the ancestors (on the evening of the 8th day of the first month, that is, the eve of the commemoration of the founding ancestor).

The worships of the afternoon of the 30th, of the vigil, of the morning of the 1st, of the 3rd day of Têt, and of the 15th day of the 7th month were formerly ensured by the head of the lineage of the 18th generation. The head of the 19th generation living and working far away, the representative committee will henceforth share the charge of them in the name of the kinsfolk. For the visit to the temple, the descendants offer the incense at their pleasure, in memory of the ancestors.

As for the offering of incense to render account of the merits: each year, to honor the descendants with fine successes in studies and effort, to encourage studies and talents, and to educate the descendants to turn toward their origins, the Đinh Nho lineage organizes this ceremony on the evening of the 8th day of the first month (the eve of the commemoration of the founding ancestor). In case of change, the committee will announce it.

The commemoration of the ancestral Mother taking place at Nghi Long, we follow the rite of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long.

In the orations of the Đinh Nho temple, we invoke and invite the forefathers and foremothers, from the ancestral Mother and the founding ancestor down to the ancestors of the 8th generation (in all 30 ancestors, of whom 6 forefathers of the 8th generation); the other ancestors are invoked collectively. We nevertheless draft the orations in full; according to the circumstances, one may, at the execution, abridge the enunciation of the names if time is lacking. In the orations of the cleaning of the tombs, one invokes the ancestors whose tombs are there.

The orations have a fundamentally identical content; we nonetheless present them repeated in each particular oration, for the convenience of the execution. Besides the 4 commemorations above, if the kinsfolk agree to commemorate separately another ancestor, one may rely on the orations of this book, according to the principle: the one commemorated is invoked first, then the other ancestors in hierarchical order, from the highest to the lowest. Today, the tablets of the ancestors on the altars of the temple do not bear all the names figuring in the orations of this book; it will be fitting to complete them at the restoration of the temple.

II. The preparations of the ceremonies

Before each ceremony, one prepares thus:

1. Sweep the temple, wipe cleanly and with dignity the altars and the objects of worship.
2. Prepare and dispose the offerings, the incense, the flowers, the lamps, the candles, the tea, and the wine on the altars. Light the incense, the lamps, and the candles on all the altars before beginning.
3. Prepare the oration (the text of the worship) and the text of the ritual proclamation. These texts must be clean and well kept, as a sign of respect and dignity. The oration must be printed on a paper that burns easily and without too much smoke, for it is burned after the ceremony according to the ancient rite. One may however suppress this burning for fire safety and the protection of the environment.
4. Prepare the mats. Ordinarily, for the convenience of the descendants, we recommend the abridged rite; but this book presents the two rites — abridged and complete — for the kinsfolk to choose according to the moment. Abridged rite: a single mat. Complete rite: four mats.

1. DIAGRAM OF THE POSITIONS — ABRIDGED RITE

[Diagram of disposition. The positions are:] the Altar (Hương án); the table of the West (offerings / Tây quả) and the table of the East (vases / Đông bình); an officiant of service on each side; the gong and the drum; the proclaimer of the rite; on the mat: the reader of the oration and the principal celebrant.

Notes: 1) One does not set up the table of the West; 2) on the table of the East: 1 lamp, 1 incense burner, 1 jug of wine, and 3 cups placed on 3 stands (or saucers); 3) an officiant on each side; 4) the reader of the oration stands at a position very slightly lower than the principal celebrant (barely perceptible).

2. DIAGRAM OF THE POSITIONS — COMPLETE RITE

[Diagram of disposition of the complete rite. The positions are:] the Altar; mat 1: mat of the Welcoming of the divinities (Nghênh thần); mat 2: mat of the Reception of the benefits (Thụ tộ); mat 3: mat of the celebrant (the principal celebrant and the reader of the oration); mat 4: mat of the assistants (Bồi tế 1 and 2); the table of the West and the table of the East; an officiant on each side; the proclaimer of the West and that of the East; the gong and the drum; the ablution station (basin of water, towel stand).

Notes: 1) on the table of the West: a saucer with a little blood and hairs of the sacrificial animal; 2) on the table of the East: 1 lamp, 1 incense burner, 1 jug of wine, and 3 cups on 3 stands; 3) an officiant on each side; 4) the reader of the oration stands very slightly lower than the celebrant.

5. Distribution of the roles of the ceremony.

5.1. Abridged rite.

Position, function	Number	Note
1. Principal celebrant (chủ tế)	1	The head of the lineage; failing him, designated by the committee. He wears the costume and turban of the celebrant.
2. Assistants (bồi tế)	0	
3. Proclaimer (xướng lễ)	1	Reads the proclamation for each to execute the rite. Stands to the left of the altar (seen from inside).
4. Reader of the oration (độc chúc văn)	1	Drafts and reads the oration.
5. Guides (nội tán)	0	
6. Officiants (chấp sự)	2	Assist: incense, wine, tea…
7. Gong and drum	2	1 at the gong (or bell), 1 at the drum.
Total	**7**	

5.2. Complete rite.

Position, function	Number	Note
1. Principal celebrant	1	The head of the lineage; failing him, designated by the committee. Costume and turban of the celebrant.
2. Assistants (bồi tế)	2	For the 2 branches (senior, cadet). May be suppressed for lack of personnel.
3. Proclaimers (xướng lễ)	2	On the two sides of the altar: Đông xướng (to the left, seen from inside) and Tây xướng (to the right). Often only one is employed today.
4. Reader of the oration	1	Drafts and reads the oration.
5. Guides (nội tán)	2	On either side of the

Position, function	Number	Note
		celebrant to conduct him; often suppressed today.
6. Officiants (chấp sự)	2	Incense, wine, tea…
7. Gong and drum	2	1 at the gong (or bell), 1 at the drum.
Total	**12**	

It may happen that one lacks personnel for one or the other rite. One may then simplify. At the limit, a single person may content himself with greeting the ancestors and reading the oration, kneeling or standing. For the ceremony to be fluid, dignified, and recollected, it is fitting to procure the complete costumes and to rehearse the rite regularly. The costumes are sold in the specialized shops: "phốc đầu"-type cap, ample sleeves, white trousers, boots. Cap and garment of the same color: celebrant in red; assistants in violet; officiants and guides in blue.

III. RITUAL PROCLAMATION — ABRIDGED VERSION

This abridged proclamation is used at each great ceremony. For the cleanings of tombs or the small worships (1st and 15th of the month), one contents oneself, to keep it simple, with reading the oration or invoking in everyday language (khấn nôm).

The proclaimer must have a beautiful and grave voice. Here is the proclamation that he reads successively for the officiants to execute the rite. (Outside the parentheses: the Sino-Vietnamese transcription; inside the parentheses: everyday Vietnamese. One reads both: the Sino-Vietnamese part with solemnity, the everyday part lower for dignity and comprehension. The numbers are not read; nor are the notes.)

Sound convention: unless otherwise indicated, each call is punctuated by three strokes (drum first, gong after), at moderate volume. The mention "gong and drum silent" indicates silence.

CONTENT OF THE PROCLAMATION — ABRIDGED VERSION

1. *Tĩnh túc thị lập* (May the descendants keep silence and order; three strokes). {Note: some sound the gong before the drum.}
2. *Hành tế đại lễ, chấp sự giả các tư kỳ sự* (Beginning of the great ceremony; the officiants take their places, in two rows; three strokes).
3. *Khởi chinh cổ, các tam nghiêm* (Rising of the gong and the drum, three rolls on each side; drum first). {Note: a roll then three strokes, the gong following each stroke of the drum; thus three times, that is, 3 rolls and 9 strokes.}
4. *Tế chủ tựu vị* (The celebrant goes to his place, on the mat). {Note: no assistant in the abridged rite; the celebrant comes by the left of the altar and must never turn his back to the altar.}
5. *Nghệ hương án tiền* (The celebrant advances one step before the altar; three strokes). — *Quỳ* (he kneels; three strokes). — *Phân hương* (the officiant of the table of the East lights 3, 5, or 7 sticks of incense and hands them to him; three strokes). — *Thượng hương* (the celebrant raises the incense above his eyebrows, bows three times kneeling,

then hands it to the officiant who plants it in the incense burner; three strokes). — *Hưng* (he rises; three strokes).

6. *Phủ phục* (prostration): — *Nhất Bái* (the celebrant prostrates himself, whole body; three strokes). — *Hưng* (he rises; three strokes). — *Nhị Bái* (he prostrates himself again; three strokes). — *Hưng* (he rises; three strokes).
7. *Bình thân phục vị* (he draws back one step and stands upright; gong and drum silent).
8. *Nghênh thần cúc cung bái* (Welcoming of the divinities; he advances one step). — *Nhất Bái ... Hưng ... Nhị Bái ... Hưng ... Tam Bái ... Hưng ... Tứ Bái ... Hưng* (four prostrations interspersed with risings; three strokes at each).
9. *Bình thân phục vị* (he draws back one step and stands upright; gong and drum silent).
10. *Hành sơ hiến lễ* (First offering of wine; three strokes). — *Quỳ* (he kneels; three strokes). — *Nghệ tửu tương sở, tửu tương giả cử mịch* (the officiant of the table of the East removes the lid of the jug of wine). — *Chước tửu* (he pours the wine into a cup placed on its stand; three strokes). — *Tiến tước* (he presents the stand and the full cup to the celebrant, who receives it, bows once, and returns it; three strokes). — *Hiến tước* (offering of the wine on the altar; the officiant raises the stand with both hands and deposits it on the altar; three strokes). — *Hưng* (he rises; three strokes). {Note: the officiants enter the Upper Sanctuary to pour the wine into the cups, moderately, for the wine will be offered three times.}
11. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái ... Hưng ... Nhị Bái ... Hưng* (three strokes at each).
12. *Bình thân phục vị* (he draws back one step and stands upright; gong and drum silent).
13. *Độc chúc tựu vị* (the reader of the oration goes to the mat, beside the celebrant and a little lower; three strokes).
14. *Tiến thân chúc vị* (the celebrant and the reader advance one step; three strokes).
15. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái* (the celebrant and the reader prostrate themselves; three strokes). — *Hưng* ... — *Nhị Bái* ... — *Hưng* ...
16. *Giai quỳ* (the celebrant and the reader kneel together; three strokes).
17. *Chuyển chúc* (transmission of the oration: the officiant takes the oration from the altar, bows four times kneeling, hands it to the celebrant who bows four times, then to the reader who bows four times; three strokes).
18. *Tuyên độc* (the reader bows four times and reads; three strokes). {Note: at the end of each idea, the reader stops, the gong strikes one stroke, then he continues, the drum silent; at the end, he bows four times and hands the oration to the celebrant; then gong and drum strike together three strokes.}
19. *Dâng chúc* (the celebrant bows four times and has the oration carried to the altar by the officiant). — *Hưng* (the celebrant and the reader rise; three strokes).
20. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái ... Hưng ... Nhị Bái ... Hưng* (three strokes at each).
21. *Bình thân phục vị* (the celebrant and the reader draw back one step and stand upright; gong and drum silent; the reader bows four times standing and withdraws).
22. *Hành á hiến lễ* (Second offering of wine; the celebrant advances one step; three strokes). — *Quỳ* (he kneels). — *Chước tửu* (the wine is poured). — *Tiến tửu* (the officiant presents the full cup; the celebrant receives it, bows, and returns it). — *Hiến tửu* (offering on the altar). — *Hưng* (he rises). {Note: the officiants pour the wine again into the cups, moderately, for one offering will remain.}

23. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
24. *Bình thân phục vị* (he draws back one step and stands upright; gong and drum silent).
25. *Hành chung hiến lễ* (Third offering of wine; the celebrant advances one step; three strokes). — *Quỳ …* — *Chước tửu …* — *Tiến tước …* — *Hiến tước …* — *Hưng.* {Note: the officiants pour the wine a last time.}
26. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
27. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
28. *Điểm trà* (Offering of the tea; the celebrant advances one step). — *Quỳ* (he kneels). — *Tiến trà* (the officiant presents him the prepared teapot; the celebrant takes it, bows once, and returns it). — *Điểm trà* (the officiant pours the tea into the prepared cup). — *Dâng trà* (he carries the cup to the altar and pours the tea into the cups that are there). — *Hưng* (he rises). {Note: the officiants pour the tea into the cups of the Upper Sanctuary.}
29. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
30. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
31. *Tạ lễ tổ tiên cúc cung bái* (Thanksgiving to the ancestors; the celebrant advances one step and stands upright). — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng … Tam Bái … Hưng … Tứ Bái … Hưng* (four prostrations).
32. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
33. *Phần chúc* (the officiant takes the oration down from the altar and burns it on the spot — each looks in that direction; another officiant carries the votive papers outside to burn them; three strokes).
34. *Tiền thân tạ lễ* (the celebrant advances one step).
35. *Đồng tộc tạ lễ tổ tiên đồng tam bái* (The whole lineage renders thanks to the ancestors by three common prostrations). — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng … Tam Bái … Hưng.* {Note: all stand and bow three times.}
36. *Lễ tất* (The ceremony is accomplished; gong and drum resound with a long roll at moderate volume, without any additional stroke). {Note: each withdraws.}

IV. RITUAL PROCLAMATION — COMPLETE VERSION

We consider that the abridged version above suffices and already guarantees the dignity and the recollection toward the ancestors. But at the request of a few kinsfolk, we add the following complete version, for consultation, and applicable if needed.

Same conventions as in the abridged version: the Sino-Vietnamese formulas are kept in italic; unless otherwise indicated, each call is punctuated by three strokes (drum first, gong after), at moderate volume; “gong and drum silent” indicates silence. In the complete rite, the assistants (bồi tế) always reproduce the salutes and prostrations of the celebrant; the whole proclamation is said by the proclaimer of the East (Đông xướng), except the calls “Hưng” (rise), said by the proclaimer of the West (Tây xướng).

CONTENT OF THE PROCLAMATION — COMPLETE VERSION

1. *Tĩnh túc thị lập* (May the descendants keep silence and order; three strokes). {Note: some sound the gong before the drum.}

2. *Hành tế đại lễ, chấp sự giả các tư kỳ sự* (Beginning of the great ceremony; the officiants take their places, in two rows; three strokes).
3. *Khởi chinh cổ, các tam nghiêm* (Rising of the gong and the drum, three rolls on each side; drum first). {Note: a roll then three strokes, three times, that is, 3 rolls and 9 strokes.}
4. *Nhạc sinh tựu vị, tấu nhạc* (The musicians go to their place and play). {Note: if there is an orchestra, one proclaims thus; if not, one proclaims:} *Khởi nhạc* (Start the ritual music, at moderate volume). {Note: a short passage of ritual music, for example drawn from YouTube, then one stops.}
5. *Củ soát lễ vật* (The celebrant and 2 officiants, lamp or candle in hand, inspect the offerings on the altar to verify that nothing is missing; the 2 guides accompany the celebrant on either side; three strokes).
6. *Ế mao huyết* (Remove the hairs remaining on the sacrificial victim; three strokes). {Note: the officiant of the table of the West carries outside the saucer containing a little blood and a few hairs of the animal, to throw them away.}
7. *Thuế căn, nghệ quán tẩy sở* (The celebrant, the assistants, the officiants, and the guides go in turn to the ablution station — basin of water and towel prepared at the right angle before the altar, called the West side —, wash their hands and wipe them; three strokes).
8. *Các bồi tế tựu vị* (The 2 assistants go to the outermost mat — the 4th from the altar —, behind the celebrant's mat, aligned behind and on either side of the celebrant's place; three strokes).
9. *Tế chủ tựu vị* (The celebrant goes to his place — the 3rd mat, before that of the assistants; three strokes). {Note: he comes by the left of the altar and never turns his back to the altar; if there are guides, they conduct him to the mat on either side, then withdraw.}
10. *Nghệ hương án tiền* (The celebrant and the 2 assistants advance one step before the altar; three strokes). — *Giai quỳ* (the celebrant and the 2 assistants kneel; three strokes). — *Phân hương* (the officiant of the table of the East lights 3, 5, or 7 sticks of incense and hands them to him; three strokes). — *Thượng hương* (the celebrant raises the incense above his eyebrows, bows three times kneeling, then hands it to the officiant who plants it in the incense burner; three strokes). {Note: the assistants bow following the celebrant, and always follow him in all the salutes and prostrations.} — {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* (the celebrant and the assistants rise; three strokes). {Note: the whole proclamation is said by the proclaimer of the East; only the "Hưng" are said by that of the West.}
11. *Tấu nhạc* (Play the music). {Note: if orchestra; if not one proclaims:} *Khởi nhạc* (Start the music).
12. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái* … {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* … — *Nhị Bái* … {Tây xướng:} *Hưng.*
13. *Bình thân phục vị* (the celebrant and the assistants draw back one step and stand upright; gong and drum silent).
14. *Nghênh thần cúc cung bái* (Welcoming of the divinities): — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng … Tam Bái … Hưng … Tứ Bái … Hưng* (four prostrations; three strokes at each, the "Hưng" by the Tây xướng).
15. *Bình thân phục vị* (they draw back one step and stand upright; gong and drum silent).

16. *Hành sơ hiến lễ* (First offering of wine; three strokes). — *Quỳ* (the celebrant kneels). — *Nghệ tửu tương sở, tửu tương giả cử mịch* (the officiant of the East removes the lid of the jug). — *Chước tửu* (he pours the wine into the cup). — *Tiến tước* (he presents the full cup to the celebrant, who receives it, bows once, and returns it). — *Hiến tước* (offering on the altar, the stand raised with both hands). — {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* (the celebrant rises).
17. *Tấu nhạc* (Play the music) / *Khởi nhạc.*
18. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
19. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
20. *Chuyển chúc vị* (an officiant prepares to transmit the oration; three strokes).
21. *Độc chúc tựu vị* (the reader of the oration goes to the mat, beside the celebrant and a little lower; three strokes).
22. *Tiến thân chúc vị* (the celebrant and the reader advance one step on the mat; three strokes).
23. *Nghệ độc chúc vị* (preparation of the reading; three strokes).
24. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
25. *Giai quỳ* (the celebrant, the assistants, and the reader kneel together; three strokes).
26. *Chuyển chúc* (the officiant takes the oration from the altar, bows four times kneeling, hands it to the celebrant who bows four times, then to the reader who bows four times; three strokes).
27. *Tuyên độc* (the reader bows four times and reads; three strokes). {Note: at the end of each idea, he stops, the gong strikes one stroke, then he continues, the drum silent; at the end, he bows four times and hands the oration to the celebrant; then gong and drum strike together three strokes.}
28. *Dâng chúc* (the celebrant bows four times and has the oration carried to the altar by the officiant).
29. {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* (the celebrant, the assistants, and the reader rise; three strokes).
30. *Tấu nhạc / Khởi nhạc.*
31. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
32. *Bình thân phục vị* (the celebrant and the reader withdraw; gong and drum silent).
33. *Hành á hiến lễ* (Second offering of wine; the celebrant and the assistants advance; three strokes). — *Quỳ …* — *Chước tửu …* — *Tiến tửu …* — *Hiến tửu …* — {Tây xướng:} *Hưng.*
34. *Tấu nhạc / Khởi nhạc.*
35. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
36. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
37. *Hành chung hiến lễ* (Third offering of wine; three strokes). — *Quỳ …* — *Chước tửu …* — *Tiến tước …* — *Hiến tước …* — {Tây xướng:} *Hưng.*
38. *Tấu nhạc / Khởi nhạc.*
39. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái … Hưng … Nhị Bái … Hưng.*
40. *Bình thân phục vị* (gong and drum silent).
41. *Điểm trà* (Offering of the tea; the celebrant and the assistants advance one step). — *Quỳ …* — *Tiến trà …* — *Điểm trà …* — *Dâng trà …* — {Tây xướng:} *Hưng.*
42. *Tấu nhạc / Khởi nhạc.*

43. *Phủ phục*: — *Nhất Bái ... Hưng ... Nhị Bái ... Hưng.*
44. *Bình thân phục vị* (the celebrant and the assistants draw back one step and stand upright; gong and drum silent).
45. *Nghệ ẩm phước vị* (The celebrant goes, by the left, to the upper mat and enters it; three strokes).
46. *Quỳ* (the celebrant kneels; the assistants stand upright; three strokes).
47. *Ẩm phước* (The celebrant drinks the wine of blessing; the officiant takes a cup of wine from the altar, brings it to the middle of the mat, kneels, and presents it to the celebrant; the latter receives it, bows once, then, covering his mouth with his sleeve, drinks it entirely; three strokes).
48. *Thụ tộ* (The celebrant eats a quid of betel; the officiant takes a quid from the altar, brings it to the middle of the mat, kneels, and presents it; the celebrant receives it, bows once, then, covering his mouth with his sleeve, puts it in his mouth and chews it; three strokes).
49. {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* (the celebrant rises; three strokes).
50. *Bình thân phục vị* (the celebrant goes, by the left, to the lower mat, enters it, and stands upright; gong and drum silent at this order).
51. *Tạ lễ tổ tiên cúc cung bái* (Thanksgiving to the ancestors; the celebrant and the assistants advance one step and stand upright). — *Nhất Bái* ... {Tây xướng:} *Hưng* ... — *Nhị Bái ... Hưng ...* — *Tam Bái ... Hưng ...* — *Tứ Bái ... Hưng* (four prostrations).
52. *Bình thân phục vị* (they draw back one step and stand upright; gong and drum silent).
53. *Phần chúc* (the officiant takes the oration down from the altar and burns it on the spot — each looks in that direction; another officiant carries the votive papers outside to burn them; three strokes).
54. *Tiến thân tạ lễ* (the celebrant and the assistants advance one step).
55. *Đồng tộc tạ lễ tổ tiên đồng tam bái* (The whole lineage renders thanks to the ancestors by three common prostrations). — *Nhất Bái* ... {Tây xướng:} *Hưng ...* — *Nhị Bái ... Hưng ...* — *Tam Bái ... Hưng.* {Note: all stand and bow three times.}
56. *Lễ tất* (The ceremony is accomplished; gong and drum resound with a long roll at moderate volume, without any additional stroke). {Note: each withdraws.}

V. THE ORATIONS (VĂN TẾ)

The orations must be recopied or printed on a paper that burns easily and makes little smoke, for the convenience of the rite of burning. One may also read them directly from this book and suppress the burning (phần chúc) of the ritual, for fire safety and out of concern for the environment.

Let us specify again this: in the Upper Sanctuary of our Đinh Nho temple, our fathers have brought in for worship only the tablets of our ancestors, and not those of other divinities. Hence, in our orations, we invite only our ancestors. The other divinities, if there are any and if need be, it is our ancestors who will invite them; it is not permitted to us to decide it arbitrarily. In consulting on the Internet the orations of other lineages, we have seen that many invite other divinities before their ancestors; we hold this to be incorrect and not permitted. Mr. Đinh Quang Tích (Đinh lineage of Cương Gián, an offshoot of our Đinh Nho lineage) has gathered for

us the opinion of several associate professors and doctors teaching the traditional culture in faculties and universities of the country: all share our point of view.

Often, in the orations, we cut the sentences into short segments and break the line — not by caprice, but to accord with the traditional manner of psalmodizing the orations inherited from our fathers.

1. ORATIONS OF COMMEMORATION OF THE ANCESTORS

The ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý, is the mother of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên. The exact term would be "First ancestral Mother" (Thủy tổ mẫu); but one may say "ancestral Mother" (Tổ mẫu).

Her commemoration is held at the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long, where her tomb is. Each year, on the day of the Pure Clarity, the Đinh Nho lineage delegates representatives there for the commemoration and the cleaning of the tomb, with the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long and the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy. Hence, for the convenience of the descendants, we do not organize a separate commemoration of the ancestral Mother at our temple: a representative of the committee contents himself with offering the incense there that day. We therefore do not give here an oration for the ancestral Mother; but, on a particular occasion, one may compose one relying on the orations of this book, their content being fundamentally identical.

1.1. ORATION FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANCESTOR ĐINH PHÚC DIÊN

(Commemoration day: the 9th day of the first month. Convention: the text the celebrant psalmodizes is given in bold-italic, in its Sino-Vietnamese reading; the English sense follows in parentheses. Stage notes are in braces.)

Duy (Now then) ***Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,*** (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) ***Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,*** (Hà Tĩnh Province) ***Hương Sơn huyện,*** (Hương Sơn District) ***An Hòa Thịnh xã,*** (An Hòa Thịnh Commune) ***Đồng Vực thôn.*** (Đồng Vực hamlet) ***Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,*** (in the year Quý Mão) {Note: each year, replace "Quý Mão" with the name of the year.} ***Chính nguyệt*** (in the first month) ***Cửu nhật.*** (the ninth day) ***Tại bản tộc đường*** (at the temple of the lineage) ***Đinh Nho đại tôn,*** (of the great Đinh Nho lineage) ***hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,*** (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân is absent, one invokes in addition:} ***Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân thời bất tại gia, tín chủ con là …… thế tha:*** (the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân being today absent, I, faithful …, the representative) ***hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão,*** (in union with the uncles and the elders) ***cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh*** (and the descendants of the paternal and maternal lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) ***cảm kiển cáo vu:*** (dares respectfully to declare:)

Tư nhân thích lâm huý nhật, phỉ lễ cáo kiển: Thủy tổ (Today, on the occasion of the commemoration day of the founding ancestor, and of the cleaning of the tombs, and of the ceremony of the welcoming of spring — ***Kiêm tỉnh tảo mộ phần / Nghênh Xuân gia tiết chi lễ***)

Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine) ***kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc,*** (paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice) ***hoa quả phẩm,*** (fruits and

offerings) *tư thình hàn âm,* (glutinous rice and chicken) *cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi* (dishes set out according to the rite) *cung trần bạc tế.* (humble offerings presented at the worship.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu, Nhị phẩm tòng võ giai, Đinh Tổ công, tự Phúc Diên, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Diên; office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, subordinate military class, under the Later Lê — the early Lê.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Thủy tổ mẫu Hoàng Quý thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu, Nhị phẩm tòng võ giai, Đinh Tổ công, tự Phúc Diên, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Diên; office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, subordinate military class, under the Later Lê — the early Lê.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đào thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, first wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, of the Đào clan.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, second wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên.) {Note: the name of the second wife is unknown.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Trường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 2nd generation, of social name Phúc Trường.) {Note: "Mạnh" = eldest; "Trọng" = middle; "Quý" = youngest. "Đinh Mạnh công" thus designates the eldest-son ancestor.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 2nd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Trường.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Bảo, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 3rd generation, of social name Phúc Bảo.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 3rd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Bảo.) {Note: the wives of the 2nd and 3rd generations are both of the Lê clan.} — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Chính Tính, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 4th generation, of social name Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Dương thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 4th generation, of the Dương clan, wife of Đinh Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Khánh, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 5th generation, of social name Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Nguyễn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 5th generation, of the Nguyễn clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Hữu Luân, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 6th generation, of social name Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 6th generation, wife of Đinh Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ khảo, Lê Cảnh Trị Canh Tuất Tiến sĩ khoa, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh Mạnh công, thuỵ Liêm Trực, tự Nho Công, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Anh Nghị Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 7th generation: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Tuất, under the Lê, Cảnh Trị era; office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử — second assistant of the Court of Censors, the organ charged with admonishing the king and supervising the mandarins; of posthumous name Liêm Trực, of social name Nho Công; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Anh Nghị Đại Vương; honored under the

Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Công.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh á thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, second wife of Đinh Nho Công.) {Note: the two wives of Đinh Nho Công are of the Đặng clan.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Hương công, Tiên phong Tiên nhân, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Nho Trạch, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, received licentiate (hương công), praised in his time as an Immortal, of social name Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Trưởng tộc, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, of the Đặng clan, wife of Đinh Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ nhị tổ khảo, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Huân, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, second ancestor, of social name Nho Huân.) {Note: Đinh Nho Huân, second younger brother of Đinh Nho Trạch, gifted for study but dead young.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tam tổ khảo, Lê Chính Hòa Canh Thìn Tiến sĩ khoa, Thượng Bảo tự Tự khanh, Phụng sứ tặng Lễ bộ Tả thị lang, Thọ Sơn Tử, Đinh Trọng công, thụy Giản Tĩnh, hiệu Mặc Trai, tự Tồn Phác, tự Nho Hoàn, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Đặc Đạt Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, third ancestor: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Thìn, under the Lê, Chính Hòa era; head of the Thượng Bảo office (the king's secretariat: seals, decrees, edicts); invested posthumously, by royal envoy, with the office of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites; title of Viscount of Thọ Sơn (4th of the five titles: Công, Hầu, Bá, Tử, Nam); of posthumous name Giản Tĩnh, of literary name Mặc Trai, of social names Tồn Phác and Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh chính thất Lê thị tự Vệ, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Lê clan, named Vệ, first wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh á thất Phan thị tự Viên, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, named Viên, second wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tứ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ nhị đại tôn, Quan viên tử, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thận, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fourth ancestor, head of the cadet branch (second great branch), son of a mandarin, of social name Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tứ tổ tỷ, Quan viên tử, Đinh chính thất Bùi thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Bùi clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ ngũ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ tam đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Cương Gián xã, Tri huyện, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fifth ancestor, head of the third great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune, sub-prefect, of social name Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ ngũ tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Đinh chính thất Phan thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ lục tổ khảo,*

Trưởng tộc Đệ tứ đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Thanh Liên xã, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh Quý công, tự Nho Côn, Nguyễn triều tấn phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền; (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, sixth ancestor, head of the fourth great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên Commune, sub-prefect, commander general (Tổng binh Đồng tri), Marquis of Hương Nghĩa (title of marquis, 2nd of the five titles), youngest son, of social name Nho Côn; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) {Note: Đinh Nho Côn being the youngest of the 6 sons of Đinh Nho Công, one invokes him as "Đinh Quý công".} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh chính thất Văn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Văn clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Côn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa hầu, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, second wife of Đinh Nho Côn.)

Kính kỵ: (We also respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, nguyên phối, thứ phối, huynh đệ, tỷ muội, huyết sảo, tảo thương, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (All the forefathers and foremothers of the paternal lineage, from generation to generation; the ancestors, uncles, and great-uncles; the fallen martyrs; the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the lineage dead in infancy; those who had a name as those who had none — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.)

— *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) *Tuế thứ lưu dịch;* (The years turn) *Huý nhật phục lâm;* (The commemoration day returns) *Truy viễn cảm thần;* (We evoke with emotion the grace of the ancestors of old) *Bất thăng vĩnh mộ;* (and keep it in memory forever) *Cung trần phụ lễ;* (We set out humble offerings) *Tinh sảng hữu thành;* (pure and of a sincere heart) *Thức biểu hiếu tâm;* (to bear witness to our piety) *Ngưỡng duỵ lai hâm;* (Lifting our eyes, we pray the ancestors to descend to enjoy the offerings) — *Viết tam bôi, phục vọng:* (Offering three cups of wine, we implore:) *Phù hộ độ trì toàn tộc;* (that they protect and assist the whole lineage) *Tử tôn, hôn tế;* (the children, the grandchildren, the daughters-in-law and the sons-in-law) *An khang thịnh vượng;* (peace, health, and prosperity) *Tích chí hanh cát;* (that they enjoy peace, happiness, and fortune) *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

1.2. ORATION FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE ANCESTOR ĐINH NHO TRẠCH

(Head of the great lineage, 8th generation, Đinh Nho Trạch; commemoration day: the 15th day of the 12th month.)

Duỵ (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *An Hòa Thịnh xã,* (An Hòa Thịnh Commune) *Đồng Vực thôn.* (Đồng Vực hamlet) *Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) {Note: each year, replace "Quý Mão" with the name of the year.} *Lạp nguyệt,* (in the twelfth month) *Thập ngũ nhật.* (the fifteenth day) *Tại bản tộc đường* (at the temple of the lineage) *Đinh Nho đại tôn,* (of the great Đinh Nho lineage) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân is absent, one invokes in addition:} *Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân thời bất tại gia, tín chủ con là …… thế tha:* (the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân being today absent, I, faithful …, the

representative) *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão,* (in union with the uncles and the elders) *cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (and the descendants of the paternal and maternal lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:)

Tư nhân thích lâm huý nhật, phỉ lễ cáo kiển: Thủy tổ (Today, on the occasion of the commemoration day of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, of social name Nho Trạch — *Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Đinh Mạnh công tự Nho Trạch*)

Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine) *kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc,* (paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice) *hoa quả phẩm,* (fruits and offerings) *tư thình hàn âm,* (glutinous rice and chicken) *cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi* (dishes set out according to the rite) *cung trần bạc tế.* (humble offerings presented at the worship.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Hương cống, Tiên phong Tiên nhân, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Nho Trạch, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, received licentiate (hương cống), praised in his time as an Immortal, of social name Nho Trạch.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Thủy tổ mẫu Hoàng Quý thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu, Nhị phẩm tòng võ giai, Đinh Tổ công, tự Phúc Diên, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Diên; office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, subordinate military class, under the Later Lê — the early Lê.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đào thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, first wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, of the Đào clan.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, second wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên.) {Note: the name of the second wife is unknown.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Trường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 2nd generation, of social name Phúc Trường.) {Note: "Mạnh" = eldest; "Trọng" = middle; "Quý" = youngest. "Đinh Mạnh công" thus designates the eldest-son ancestor.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 2nd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Trường.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Bảo, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 3rd generation, of social name Phúc Bảo.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 3rd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Bảo.) {Note: the wives of the 2nd and 3rd generations are both of the Lê clan.} — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Chính Tính, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 4th generation, of social name Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Dương thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 4th generation, of the Dương clan, wife of Đinh Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Khánh, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 5th generation, of social name Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Nguyễn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 5th generation, of the Nguyễn clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Khánh.) —

Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Hữu Luân, chi linh vị tiền; (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 6th generation, of social name Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 6th generation, wife of Đinh Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ khảo, Lê Cảnh Trị Canh Tuất Tiến sĩ khoa, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh Mạnh công, thuỵ Liêm Trực, tự Nho Công, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Anh Nghị Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 7th generation: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Tuất, under the Lê, Cảnh Trị era; office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử — second assistant of the Court of Censors, the organ charged with admonishing the king and supervising the mandarins; of posthumous name Liêm Trực, of social name Nho Công; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Anh Nghị Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Công.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh á thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, second wife of Đinh Nho Công.) {Note: the two wives of Đinh Nho Công are of the Đặng clan.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Hương công, Tiên phong Tiên nhân, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Nho Trạch, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, received licentiate (hương công), praised in his time as an Immortal, of social name Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Trưởng tộc, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, of the Đặng clan, wife of Đinh Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ nhị tổ khảo, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Huân, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, second ancestor, of social name Nho Huân.) {Note: Đinh Nho Huân, second younger brother of Đinh Nho Trạch, gifted for study but dead young.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tam tổ khảo, Lê Chính Hòa Canh Thìn Tiến sĩ khoa, Thượng Bảo tự Tự khanh, Phụng sứ tặng Lễ bộ Tả thị lang, Thọ Sơn Tử, Đinh Trọng công, thụy Giản Tĩnh, hiệu Mặc Trai, tự Tồn Phác, tự Nho Hoàn, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Đặc Đạt Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, third ancestor: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Thìn, under the Lê, Chính Hòa era; head of the Thượng Bảo office (the king's secretariat: seals, decrees, edicts); invested posthumously, by royal envoy, with the office of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites; title of Viscount of Thọ Sơn (4th of the five titles: Công, Hầu, Bá, Tử, Nam); of posthumous name Giản Tĩnh, of literary name Mặc Trai, of social names Tồn Phác and Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh chính thất Lê thị tự Vệ, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Lê clan, named Vệ, first wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh á thất Phan thị tự Viên, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, named Viên, second wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tứ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ nhị đại tôn, Quan viên tử, Đinh Trọng công,*

tự Nho Thận, chi linh vị tiền; (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fourth ancestor, head of the cadet branch (second great branch), son of a mandarin, of social name Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tứ tổ tỷ, Quan viên tử, Đinh chính thất Bùi thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Bùi clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ ngũ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ tam đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Cương Gián xã, Tri huyện, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fifth ancestor, head of the third great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune, sub-prefect, of social name Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ ngũ tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Đinh chính thất Phan thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ lục tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ tứ đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Thanh Liên xã, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh Quý công, tự Nho Côn, Nguyễn triều tấn phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, sixth ancestor, head of the fourth great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên Commune, sub-prefect, commander general (Tổng binh Đồng tri), Marquis of Hương Nghĩa (title of marquis, 2nd of the five titles), youngest son, of social name Nho Côn; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) {Note: Đinh Nho Côn being the youngest of the 6 sons of Đinh Nho Công, one invokes him as "Đinh Quý công".} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh chính thất Văn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Văn clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Côn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa hầu, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, second wife of Đinh Nho Côn.)

Kính kỵ: (We also respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, nguyên phối, thứ phối, huynh đệ, tỷ muội, huyết sảo, tảo thương, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (All the forefathers and foremothers of the paternal lineage, from generation to generation; the ancestors, uncles, and great-uncles; the fallen martyrs; the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the lineage dead in infancy; those who had a name as those who had none — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.)

— *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) *Tuế thứ lưu dịch;* (The years turn) *Huý nhật phục lâm;* (The commemoration day returns) *Truy viễn cảm thần;* (We evoke with emotion the grace of the ancestors of old) *Bất thăng vĩnh mộ;* (and keep it in memory forever) *Cung trần phụ lễ;* (We set out humble offerings) *Tinh sảng hữu thành;* (pure and of a sincere heart) *Thức biểu hiếu tâm;* (to bear witness to our piety) *Ngưỡng duỵ lai hâm;* (Lifting our eyes, we pray the ancestors to descend to enjoy the offerings) — *Viết tam bôi, phục vọng:* (Offering three cups of wine, we implore:) *Phù hộ độ trì toàn tộc;* (that they protect and assist the whole lineage) *Tử tôn, hôn tế;* (the children, the grandchildren, the daughters-in-law and the sons-in-law) *An khang thịnh vượng;* (peace, health, and prosperity) *Tích chí hanh cát;* (that they enjoy peace, happiness, and fortune) *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

1.3. ORATION FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE ANCESTOR ĐINH NHO THẬN

(Head of the first cadet branch since the division of the branches, 8th generation of the great lineage, Đinh Nho Thận; commemoration day: the 7th day of the 12th month.)

Duy (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *An Hòa Thịnh xã,* (An Hòa Thịnh Commune) *Đồng Vực thôn.* (Đồng Vực hamlet) *Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) {Note: each year, replace "Quý Mão" with the name of the year.} *Lạp nguyệt,* (in the twelfth month) *Thất nhật.* (the seventh day) *Tại bản tộc đường* (at the temple of the lineage) *Đinh Nho đại tôn,* (of the great Đinh Nho lineage) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân is absent, one invokes in addition:} *Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân thời bất tại gia, tín chủ con là …… thế tha:* (the head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân being today absent, I, faithful …, the representative) *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão,* (in union with the uncles and the elders) *cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (and the descendants of the paternal and maternal lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:)

Tư nhân thích lâm huý nhật, phỉ lễ cáo kiển: Thủy tổ (Today, on the occasion of the commemoration day of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the second branch, of social name Nho Thận — *Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đệ nhị đại tôn, Đinh Trọng công tự Nho Thận*)

Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine) *kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc,* (paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice) *hoa quả phẩm,* (fruits and offerings) *tư thình hàn âm,* (glutinous rice and chicken) *cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi* (dishes set out according to the rite) *cung trần bạc tế.* (humble offerings presented at the worship.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tứ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ nhị đại tôn, Quan viên tử, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thận, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fourth ancestor, head of the cadet branch (second great branch), son of a mandarin, of social name Nho Thận.)

Cung thỉnh: (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Thủy tổ mẫu Hoàng Quý thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu, Nhị phẩm tòng võ giai, Đinh Tổ công, tự Phúc Diên, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Diên; office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, subordinate military class, under the Later Lê — the early Lê.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đào thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, first wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên, of the Đào clan.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, second wife of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên.) {Note: the name of the second wife is unknown.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Trường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 2nd generation, of social name Phúc Trường.) {Note: "Mạnh" = eldest; "Trọng" = middle;

“Quý” = youngest. “Đinh Mạnh công” thus designates the eldest-son ancestor.} — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 2nd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Trường.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Bảo, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 3rd generation, of social name Phúc Bảo.) — *Hiển Đệ tam thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 3rd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Bảo.) {Note: the wives of the 2nd and 3rd generations are both of the Lê clan.} — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Chính Tính, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 4th generation, of social name Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Dương thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 4th generation, of the Dương clan, wife of Đinh Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Khánh, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 5th generation, of social name Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Nguyễn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 5th generation, of the Nguyễn clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Hữu Luân, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 6th generation, of social name Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 6th generation, wife of Đinh Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ khảo, Lê Cảnh Trị Canh Tuất Tiến sĩ khoa, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh Mạnh công, thuỵ Liêm Trực, tự Nho Công, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Anh Nghị Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 7th generation: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Tuất, under the Lê, Cảnh Trị era; office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử — second assistant of the Court of Censors, the organ charged with admonishing the king and supervising the mandarins; of posthumous name Liêm Trực, of social name Nho Công; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Anh Nghị Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Công.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh á thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, second wife of Đinh Nho Công.) {Note: the two wives of Đinh Nho Công are of the Đặng clan.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Hương cống, Tiên phong Tiên nhân, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Nho Trạch, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, received licentiate (hương cống), praised in his time as an Immortal, of social name Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Trưởng tộc, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress, of the Đặng clan, wife of Đinh Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ nhị tổ khảo, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Huân, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, second ancestor, of social name Nho Huân.) {Note: Đinh Nho Huân, second younger brother of Đinh Nho Trạch, gifted for study but dead young.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tam tổ khảo, Lê Chính Hòa Canh Thìn Tiến sĩ khoa, Thượng Bảo tự Tự khanh, Phụng sứ tặng Lễ bộ Tả thị lang, Thọ Sơn Tử, Đinh Trọng công, thụy Giản Tĩnh, hiệu Mặc Trai, tự Tồn Phác, tự Nho Hoàn, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Đặc Đạt Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, third ancestor: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Thìn, under the Lê, Chính Hòa era; head of the Thượng Bảo office (the king’s secretariat: seals, decrees, edicts); invested posthumously, by royal envoy,

with the office of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites; title of Viscount of Thọ Sơn (4th of the five titles: Công, Hầu, Bá, Tử, Nam); of posthumous name Giản Tĩnh, of literary name Mặc Trai, of social names Tồn Phác and Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh chính thất Lê thị tự Vệ, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Lê clan, named Vệ, first wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tam tổ tỷ, Lễ bộ Tả Thị lang, Đinh á thất Phan thị tự Viên, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, named Viên, second wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn; raised under the Cảnh Hưng era of the Lê to the rank of Trinh Nhất Á Thận Nhân; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Lương Tĩnh Thục Diệu Nhàn Uyển Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tứ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ nhị đại tôn, Quan viên tử, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thận, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fourth ancestor, head of the cadet branch (second great branch), son of a mandarin, of social name Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ tứ tổ tỷ, Quan viên tử, Đinh chính thất Bùi thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Bùi clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ ngũ tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ tam đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Cương Gián xã, Tri huyện, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thường, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, fifth ancestor, head of the third great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Cương Gián Commune, sub-prefect, of social name Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ ngũ tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Đinh chính thất Phan thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, wife of Đinh Nho Thường.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ lục tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ tứ đại tôn, Thủy tổ Đinh đại tôn Thanh Liên xã, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh Quý công, tự Nho Côn, Nguyễn triều tân phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestor of the 8th generation, sixth ancestor, head of the fourth great branch, founding ancestor of the great Đinh lineage of Thanh Liên Commune, sub-prefect, commander general (Tổng binh Đồng tri), Marquis of Hương Nghĩa (title of marquis, 2nd of the five titles), youngest son, of social name Nho Côn; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) {Note: Đinh Nho Côn being the youngest of the 6 sons of Đinh Nho Công, one invokes him as “Đinh Quý công”.} — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh chính thất Văn thị, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Văn clan, first wife of Đinh Nho Côn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đệ lục tổ tỷ, Tri huyện, Tổng binh Đồng tri, Hương Nghĩa hầu, Đinh á thất, chi linh vị tiền;* (Before the tablet of the ancestress of the 8th generation, second wife of Đinh Nho Côn.)

Kính kỵ: (We also respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, nguyên phối, thứ phối, huynh đệ, tỷ muội, huyết sảo, tảo thương, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (All the forefathers and foremothers of the paternal lineage, from generation to generation; the ancestors, uncles, and great-uncles; the fallen martyrs; the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the lineage dead in infancy; those who had a name as those who had none — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.)

— *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) *Tuế thứ lưu dịch;* (The years turn) *Huý nhật phục lâm;* (The commemoration day returns) *Truy viễn cảm thần;* (We evoke with emotion the grace of the ancestors of old) *Bất thăng vĩnh mộ;* (and keep it in memory forever) *Cung trần phụ lễ;* (We set out humble offerings) *Tinh sảng hữu thành;* (pure and of a sincere heart) *Thức biểu hiếu tâm;* (to bear witness to our piety) *Ngưỡng duỵ lai hâm;* (Lifting our eyes, we pray the ancestors to descend to enjoy the offerings) — *Viết tam bôi, phục vọng:* (Offering three cups of wine, we implore:) *Phù hộ độ trì toàn tộc;* (that they protect and assist the whole lineage) *Tử tôn, hôn tế;* (the children, the grandchildren, the daughters-in-law and the sons-in-law) *An khang thịnh vượng;* (peace, health, and prosperity) *Tích chí hanh cát;* (that they enjoy peace, happiness, and fortune) *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!) #### 2. ORATIONS OF CLEANING OF THE TOMBS (VĂN TẾ TẢO MỘ)

As said above, each year, on the day of the Pure Clarity (Thanh minh), the Đinh Nho lineage, with the Đinh Văn lineage of Kim Khê (Nghi Long, Nghi Lộc, Nghệ An) and the Đinh lineage of Đức Thủy (Đức Thọ, Hà Tĩnh), celebrates the cleaning of the tomb and the commemoration of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý. For the oration of cleaning and the oration of commemoration of the ancestral Mother, we use the texts that the three Đinh lineages have settled by common accord and that are preserved at the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long.

2.1. ORATION OF CLEANING OF THE TOMB OF THE ANCESTRAL MOTHER, DAME HOÀNG QUÝ

This is the oration of cleaning of the tomb of the ancestral Mother on the day of the Pure Clarity, settled by common accord by the three Đinh lineages of the same ancestral mother (furnished by Mr. Đinh Văn Ngư, of the Đinh Văn lineage of Nghi Long). We respect the original text, confining ourselves to reordering its sentences and words logically and to correcting a few faulty terms; we reproduce it here for consultation, with a translation into everyday Vietnamese for the comprehension of all.

This oration, proper to the site of Nghi Long, invokes first the divinities of the place (Thái tuế, Long mạch, Thổ địa, and the four directional animals), unlike the orations of the Đinh Nho temple. The Sino-Vietnamese text that the celebrant psalmodizes is in bold-italic; the English sense follows in parentheses.

Duỵ (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Nghệ An tỉnh,* (Nghệ An Province) *Nghi Lộc huyện,* (Nghi Lộc District) *Nghi Long xã,* (Nghi Long Commune) *Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) *…… Nguyệt,* (in the … month) *…… Nhật,* (the … day) *Tại Kỳ Ông Trường nghĩa trang,* (at the cemetery of Kỳ Ông Trường) *Hậu duệ đại diện các Đinh tộc phái,* (the descendants, representatives of the branches of the Đinh lineages) *Cộng đồng tổ mẫu Hoàng Quý thị,* (having in common the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý) *Cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dare respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân Thanh minh giai tiết chi lễ.* (Today, at the ceremony of the day of the Pure Clarity) *Tử tôn bàn soạn lễ vật* (the descendants have prepared the offerings) *Hương, đăng, phù, tửu* (incense, lamps, betel, and wine) *Kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc* (paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice) *Hoa quả phẩm* (fruits and offerings) *Diêu soạn thứ tu* (and other dishes) *Hiến trình tiền án* (presented before the altar.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Đương kim Thái tuế quản niên* (the divinity Thái tuế, regent of the year) — *Long quân xứ mạch* (the divinity of the dragon's vein, regent of the place) — *Thổ địa tôn thần* (the divinity of the Soil) — *Tiền Chu Tước, hậu Huyền Vũ, tả Thanh Long, hữu Bạch Hổ liệt vị chi linh tọa tiền.* (the divinities of the Vermillion Bird in front,

the Black Tortoise behind, the Azure Dragon to the left, the White Tiger to the right; may they take their place before the altar.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển Tổ mãu Hoàng Quý thị chi linh mộ tiền.* (before the tomb of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Đinh Trọng công tự Phúc Tiên chi linh mộ tiền.* (before the tomb of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Tiên.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Tiên tổ khảo tỷ, thế tổ khảo tỷ di duệ tam huynh đệ cập Tổ mãu Hoàng Quý thị liệt vị hương linh lai đáo Kỳ Ông Trường nghĩa trang.* (may the souls of the founding ancestress, of the forefathers and foremothers of the successive generations, of the three descendant brothers, and of the ancestral Mother dame Hoàng Quý come to the cemetery of Kỳ Ông Trường.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) *Thanh minh giai tiết,* (On this fair day of the Pure Clarity) *Vượng khí thanh bình,* (the air is flourishing and serene) *Tử tôn lai đáo mộ phần thỉnh lễ.* (the descendants come to the tomb to present the worship.) *Cung duy:* (Let us respectfully consider:) *Cao sơn dục tú,* (The high mount nourishes the beings of elite) *Tổ địa chung anh,* (the land of the ancestors concentrates the eminent souls) {Note: “dục tú” (to nourish the elite) and “chung anh” (to concentrate the sacred) go together.} *Càn khôn tạo thiết,* (Heaven and Earth have established it) *Sơn thủy hữu tình,* (mounts and waters here are full of soul) *Ức tích bản tổ,* (in memory of the ancestors of old) *Tăng thử tiềm linh,* (who concealed here the sacred) *Tăng kinh thế đại,* (through so many generations) *Vĩnh bảo phần hoành,* (ever resplendent) *Lưu phục địa,* (keeping the propitious land) *Đãi phúc nhân,* (reserving the happiness for the descendants) *Thừa cát tường,* (who inherit the good fortunes) *Dĩ âm khô cốt.* (for the tomb is ever kept warm.) *Y dã:* (We think:) *Hội âm long, dưỡng âm hướng,* (the dragon’s vein gathers and nourishes the orientation of the abode of the dead) *Tạ dư linh, dĩ bảo hậu sinh.* (may the sacred breath protect durably the future generations.) *Tín hồ:* (We believe:) *Tử tôn ngôn niệm tổ đức,* (the descendants keep in memory the virtue of the ancestors) *Bái tạ thần linh,* (and render thanks to the divinities) *Phục vọng chiếu giám,* (imploring that they be witnesses) *Tích dĩ an bình,* (and accumulate the peace) *Tiền nhân chi thể phách điện yên,* (that the body and the soul of the ancestors repose in peace) *Mộ dữ sơn nhi tỉnh thọ,* (that the tomb, with the mount, endure forever) *Tử nhược tôn hề vĩnh ninh.* (and that the descendants know quietude forever.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Đương kim Thái tuế quản niên* (the divinity Thái tuế, regent of the year) — *Long quân xứ mạch* (the divinity of the dragon’s vein, regent of the place) — *Bản địa tôn thần* (the divinity of the Soil of this place) *Đồng lai hâm hưởng.* (may they come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển Tổ mãu Hoàng Quý thị chi linh mộ tiền.* (before the tomb of the ancestral Mother, dame Hoàng Quý.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Đinh Trọng công tự Phúc Tiên chi linh mộ tiền.* (before the tomb of the founding ancestor of the Đinh lineage, of social name Phúc Tiên.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Tiên tổ khảo tỷ, thế tổ khảo tỷ di duệ tam huynh đệ cập Tổ mãu Hoàng Quý thị liệt vị hương linh lai đáo Kỳ Ông Trường nghĩa trang.* (may the souls of the founding ancestress, of the forefathers and foremothers of the successive generations, of the three descendant brothers, and of the ancestral Mother come to the cemetery of Kỳ Ông Trường.) *Đồng lai hâm hưởng.* (may they come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Đồng nghĩa trang hương linh liệt vị.* (the souls of all those who repose in the same cemetery) — *Cô hồn, cô quả đồng khu vực lai đáo án tiền chứng quả lễ phẩm hậu vi.* (the wandering and solitary souls of the same region; may they come before the altar to enjoy the offerings after the ceremony.) *Hâm hưởng.* (Come and enjoy the offerings!)

2.2. ORATION OF CLEANING OF THE TOMBS OF ÁNG PHẦN

(Comprises the 16 tombs of the ancestors: the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên; his first wife, of the Đào clan; his second wife, of unknown name; the ancestor of the 4th generation Đinh Chính Tính; his wife, of the Dương clan; the first wife of the ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công, of the Đặng clan, named Đô; the ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Trạch; his wife, of the Đặng clan, named Giản; the ancestor of the 8th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Hoàn; his first wife, of the Lê clan, named Vệ; his second wife, of the Phan clan, named Viên; the first wife of the ancestor of the 8th generation, the commander general Đinh Nho Côn; the ancestor of the 8th generation Đinh Nho Thận; the ancestor of the 9th generation Đinh Nho Thành; the ancestor of the 12th generation Đinh Thái Lăng; his wife, of the Trần clan, named Bảng.)

Duy (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *Tại Áng Phần bản sơn.* (at the mount of Áng Phần) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If absent: I, faithful …, the representative} *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão, cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (in union with the uncles and the elders, the descendants of the two lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Sơ tổ khảo Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu, Nhị phẩm tòng võ giai, Đinh Tổ công, tự Phúc Diên, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the founding ancestor, of social name Phúc Diên; office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, subordinate military class, under the Later Lê.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đào thị, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress, first wife of Đinh Phúc Diên, of the Đào clan.) — *Hiển Sơ tổ tỷ, Đinh á thất, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress, second wife of Đinh Phúc Diên.) — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Chính Tính, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 4th generation, of social name Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ tứ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Dương thị, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 4th generation, of the Dương clan, wife of Đinh Chính Tính.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị tự Đô, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 7th generation, of the Đặng clan, named Đô, first wife of Đinh Nho Công.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc đại tôn, Hương công, Tiên phong Tiên nhân, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Nho Trạch, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the great lineage, received licentiate, praised as an Immortal, of social name Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Đặng thị tự Giản, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Đặng clan, named Giản, wife of Đinh Nho Trạch.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Đệ tam tổ khảo, Lê Chính Hòa Canh Thìn Tiến sĩ khoa, Thượng Bảo tự Tự khanh, Phụng sứ tặng Lễ bộ Tả thị lang, Thọ Sơn Tử, Đinh Trọng công, thụy Giản Tĩnh, hiệu Mặc Trai, tự Tồn Phác, tự Nho Hoàn, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Đặc Đạt Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 8th generation, third ancestor: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Thìn; head of the Thượng Bảo office; invested posthumously with the office of Tả Thị lang of the ministry of Rites; Viscount of Thọ Sơn; of posthumous name Giản Tĩnh, of literary name Mặc Trai, of social names Tồn Phác and Nho

Hoàn; raised under the Lê to the rank of Đặc Đạt Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Tuấn Lương Lượng Trực Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị tự Vệ, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Lê clan, named Vệ, first wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Đinh á thất Phan thị tự Viên, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Phan clan, named Viên, second wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ tỷ, Tổng binh Đồng tri Hương Nghĩa Hầu, Đinh chính thất Văn thị, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 8th generation, of the Văn clan, first wife of the commander general Marquis of Hương Nghĩa Đinh Nho Côn.) — *Hiển Đệ bát thế tổ khảo, Trưởng tộc Đệ nhị đại tôn, Quan viên tử, Đinh Trọng công, tự Nho Thận, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 8th generation, head of the cadet branch, son of a mandarin, of social name Nho Thận.) — *Hiển Đệ cửu thế tổ khảo, Đinh Trọng công tự Nho Thành, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 9th generation, of social name Nho Thành.) — *Hiển Đệ thập nhị thế tổ khảo, Triều liệt Đại phu, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Thái Lăng, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 12th generation, Triều liệt Đại phu, of social name Thái Lăng.) — *Hiển Đệ thập nhị thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Trần thị tự Bảng, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 12th generation, of the Trần clan, named Bảng, wife of Đinh Thái Lăng.)

Viết vị hữu: (We declare:) *Kim nhân tỉnh tảo mộ phần tiên tổ;* (Today, on the occasion of the cleaning of the tombs of the ancestors) *Bái tạ long mạch kỳ yên;* (we render thanks to the dragon's vein and implore peace.) *Y dã:* (We think:) *Hội âm long, dưỡng âm hướng;* (the dragon's vein gathers and nourishes the orientation of the abode of the dead) *Tạ dư linh, dĩ bảo hậu sinh;* (may the sacred breath protect durably the future generations) *Mộ dữ sơn nhi tĩnh thọ;* (may the tomb, with the mount, endure forever) *Đồng tộc chi vân nhưng trường thịnh,* (may the lineage prosper long) *tử nhược tôn hề... vĩnh ninh.* (and may the descendants know quietude forever.) *Cung thỉnh tiên tổ khảo, tiên tổ tỷ liệt vị* (We respectfully invite the forefathers and foremothers) *lai đáo đại bản tộc từ đường* (to come to the temple of the great lineage) *tại Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn* (in Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet) *chấp kỳ lễ húy nhật Sơ Tổ Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu,* (to attend the commemoration of the founding ancestor, office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, under the Later Lê) *kiêm lễ tỉnh tảo mộ phần,* (and the cleaning of the tombs) *nghênh Xuân giai tiết.* (and the welcoming of spring.) *Cẩn cáo!* (We declare it respectfully!)

2.3. ORATION OF CLEANING OF THE TOMB OF RÚ TRAI

(Comprises 2 tombs: the ancestor of the 5th generation Đinh Phúc Khánh, and his wife, of the Nguyễn clan.)

Duy (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *Tại Trai sơn.* (at Mount Trai) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If absent: I, faithful ..., the representative} *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão, cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (in union with the uncles and the elders, the descendants of the two lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh Công tự Phúc Khánh, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 5th generation, of social name Phúc Khánh.) — *Hiển Đệ ngũ thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Nguyễn thị, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 5th generation, of the Nguyễn clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Khánh.)

Viết vị hữu: (We declare:) *Kim nhân tỉnh tảo mộ phần tiên tổ;* (Today, on the occasion of the cleaning of the tombs of the ancestors) *Bái tạ long mạch kỳ yên;* (we render thanks to the dragon's vein and implore peace.) *Y dã:* (We think:) *Hội âm long, dưỡng âm hướng;* (the dragon's vein gathers and nourishes the orientation of the abode of the dead) *Tạ dư linh, dĩ bảo hậu sinh;* (may the sacred breath protect durably the future generations) *Mộ dữ sơn nhi tĩnh thọ;* (may the tomb, with the mount, endure forever) *Đồng tộc chi vân nhưng trường thịnh,* (may the lineage prosper long) *tử nhược tôn hề... vĩnh ninh.* (and may the descendants know quietude forever.) *Cung thỉnh tiên tổ khảo, tiên tổ tỷ liệt vị* (We respectfully invite the forefathers and foremothers) *lai đáo đại bản tộc từ đường* (to come to the temple of the great lineage) *tại Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn* (in Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet) *chấp kỳ lễ húy nhật Sơ Tổ Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu,* (to attend the commemoration of the founding ancestor, office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, under the Later Lê) *kiêm lễ tỉnh tảo mộ phần,* (and the cleaning of the tombs) *nghênh Xuân giai tiết.* (and the welcoming of spring.) *Cẩn cáo!* (We declare it respectfully!)

2.4. ORATION OF CLEANING OF THE TOMB OF LÒI CHIM CHIM

(Tomb of the ancestor of the 2nd generation Đinh Phúc Trường. There are here 2 tombs: one of our ancestor of the Đinh lineage, the other of the ancestor of the Nguyễn lineage. After the burial, the traces of the tombs were effaced; today, the descendants of the two lineages have agreed to build a common mausoleum for the visit and the incense. "Lòi" is understood of a remnant of dense primeval forest subsisting after all around had become villages and rice fields. This place has for literary name "Mount Điểu Lĩnh." The genealogy records that the wife of Đinh Phúc Trường was also buried there, but the stele of the mausoleum does not mention her.)

Duy (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *Tại Sơn Băng xã.* (at Sơn Băng Commune) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If absent: I, faithful ..., the representative} *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão, cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (in union with the uncles and the elders, the descendants of the two lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Phúc Trường, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 2nd generation, of social name Phúc Trường.) — *Hiển Đệ nhị thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh mộ tiền.* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 2nd generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Phúc Trường.)

Viết vị hữu: (We declare:) *Kim nhân tỉnh tảo mộ phần tiên tổ;* (Today, on the occasion of the cleaning of the tombs of the ancestors) *Bái tạ long mạch kỳ yên;* (we render thanks to the dragon's vein and implore peace.) *Y dã:* (We think:) *Hội âm long, dưỡng âm hướng;* (the

dragon's vein gathers and nourishes the orientation of the abode of the dead) *Tạ dư linh, dĩ bảo hậu sinh;* (may the sacred breath protect durably the future generations) *Mộ dữ sơn nhi tĩnh thọ;* (may the tomb, with the mount, endure forever) *Đồng tộc chi vân nhưng trường thịnh,* (may the lineage prosper long) *tử nhược tôn hề... vĩnh ninh.* (and may the descendants know quietude forever.) *Cung thỉnh tiên tổ khảo, tiên tổ tỷ liệt vị* (We respectfully invite the forefathers and foremothers) *lai đáo đại bản tộc từ đường* (to come to the temple of the great lineage) *tại Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn* (in Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet) *chấp kỳ lễ húy nhật Sơ Tổ Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu,* (to attend the commemoration of the founding ancestor, office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, under the Later Lê) *kiêm lễ tỉnh tảo mộ phần,* (and the cleaning of the tombs) *nghênh Xuân giai tiết.* (and the welcoming of spring.) *Cẩn cáo!* (We declare it respectfully!)

2.5. ORATION OF CLEANING OF THE MAUSOLEUM OF KIM HOA

(Comprises 3 tombs: the ancestor of the 6th generation Đinh Hữu Luân; his first wife, of the Lê clan; and the ancestor of the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công, their son.)

Duy (Now then) *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh,* (Hà Tĩnh Province) *Hương Sơn huyện,* (Hương Sơn District) *Tại Kim Hoa Xã.* (at Kim Hoa Commune) *hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If absent: I, faithful ..., the representative} *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão, cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh* (in union with the uncles and the elders, the descendants of the two lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, invites) *cảm kiển cáo vu:* (dares respectfully to declare:) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:)

— *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ khảo, Đinh Mạnh công, tự Hữu Luân, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 6th generation, of social name Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ lục thế tổ tỷ, Đinh chính thất Lê thị, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestress of the 6th generation, of the Lê clan, wife of Đinh Hữu Luân.) — *Hiển Đệ thất thế tổ khảo, Lê Cảnh Trị Canh Tuất Tiến sĩ khoa, Ngự sử đài Thiêm Đô Ngự sử, Đinh Mạnh công, thuỵ Liêm Trực, tự Nho Công, Lê Cảnh Hưng triều gia phong Anh Nghị Đại vương, Nguyễn triều khâm phong Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần, chi linh mộ tiền;* (before the tomb of the ancestor of the 7th generation: doctor of the examination of the year Canh Tuất, under the Lê, Cảnh Trị era; office of Thiêm Đô Ngự sử; of posthumous name Liêm Trực, of social name Nho Công; raised under the Lê to the rank of Anh Nghị Đại Vương; honored under the Nguyễn with the title of Đoan Túc Dực Bảo Trung hưng Phúc thần.)

Viết vị hữu: (We declare:) *Kim nhân tỉnh tảo mộ phần tiên tổ;* (Today, on the occasion of the cleaning of the tombs of the ancestors) *Bái tạ long mạch kỳ yên;* (we render thanks to the dragon's vein and implore peace.) *Y dã:* (We think:) *Hội âm long, dưỡng âm hướng;* (the dragon's vein gathers and nourishes the orientation of the abode of the dead) *Tạ dư linh, dĩ bảo hậu sinh;* (may the sacred breath protect durably the future generations) *Mộ dữ sơn nhi tĩnh thọ;* (may the tomb, with the mount, endure forever) *Đồng tộc chi vân nhưng trường thịnh,* (may the lineage prosper long) *tử nhược tôn hề... vĩnh ninh.* (and may the descendants know quietude forever.) *Cung thỉnh tiên tổ khảo, tiên tổ tỷ liệt vị* (We respectfully invite the forefathers and foremothers) *lai đáo đại bản tộc từ đường* (to come to the temple of the great

lineage) *tại Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn* (in Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet) *chấp kỳ lễ húy nhật Sơ Tổ Hậu Lê, Lê Sơ, Tả Hiệu Điểm, Công Tây Hầu,* (to attend the commemoration of the founding ancestor, office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, Marquis of Công Tây, under the Later Lê) *kiêm lễ tỉnh tảo mộ phần,* (and the cleaning of the tombs) *nghênh Xuân giai tiết.* (and the welcoming of spring.) *Cẩn cáo!* (We declare it respectfully!) #### 3. ORATIONS FOR THE OTHER OCCASIONS

Note on method: these orations do not unroll the complete list of the thirty ancestors; they use the abridged collective invocation ("all the forefathers and foremothers of the lineage…"). The Sino-Vietnamese text that the celebrant psalmodizes is in bold-italic, the English sense in parentheses; orations 3.4, 3.8, and 3.9, drafted in everyday Vietnamese in the original, are simply translated.

3.1. ORATION OF THE AFTERNOON OF THE 30TH OF TÊT

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam,* (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam) — *Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn.* (Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet) *Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên, Lạp nguyệt, Tam Thập nhật.* (in the year Quý Mão, in the 12th month, the 30th day) {Note: if the year has no 30th, it is the 29th day.} *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân,* (at the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage, the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân) {If absent: I, faithful …, the representative} *hiệp dữ chư vị thúc phụ, kỳ lão, cập nội ngoại, tử tôn, hôn tế, đồng tộc đẳng, hội đồng bản tộc đồng lập bái thỉnh, cảm kiền cáo vu:* (in union with the uncles and the elders, the descendants of the two lines, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, all the members of the lineage; the council of the lineage, prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân: Trừ tịch chi tiết.* (Today, on the eve of the last day of the year.) The old year is about to end, the new year approaches; according to custom, we see off the old and welcome the new. With a sincere heart, we set out incense, flowers, and offerings, presented before the altar, and, burning a stick of incense, we respectfully invite: — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, nguyên phối, thứ phối, huynh đệ, tỷ muội, huyết sảo, tảo thương, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh* (all the forefathers and foremothers of the paternal lineage, from generation to generation; the ancestors and collaterals; the fallen martyrs; the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the lineage dead in infancy; those who had a name as those who had none — all these souls.) On the occasion of the old year that ends and the new year that comes, may they descend before the altar to contemplate the new spring and enjoy the offerings. We pray for the faithful: may the new year be prosperous and peaceful, the days and the nights fortunate; peace at all times, and the house flourishing and prosperous. We pour out our sincere heart, imploring that they be witnesses of it. *Cẩn cáo.* (We declare it respectfully.)

3.2. ORATION OF THE NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL (GIAO THỪA)

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, … Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn. Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên, Chính nguyệt* (in the year Quý Mão, in the first month) — at the instant of the passage from one year to the other. *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân, …* (… the council of the lineage,

prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân: Giao thừa chi lễ.* (On the occasion of the ceremony of the New Year's Eve vigil.) *Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc, hoa quả phẩm, tư thình hàn âm, cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi, cung trần bạc tế.* (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine; paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice; fruits and offerings; glutinous rice and chicken; dishes set out according to the rite — humble offerings presented at the worship.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, nguyên phối, thứ phối, huynh đệ, tỷ muội, huyết sảo, tảo thương, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (all the forefathers and foremothers of the lineage, the ancestors and collaterals, the fallen martyrs, the deceased without descent and dead in infancy, those who had a name as those who had none — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) The old year ends, the new year begins; we see off the old and welcome the new. *Cẩn dĩ diêu soạn trở đậu thứ tu* (We respectfully offer dishes and various offerings) … *Phục khất giám hâm;* (imploring that they be witnesses and enjoy them) … *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

3.3. ORATION OF THE MORNING OF THE 1ST DAY OF TẾT

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, … Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn. Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên, Chính nguyệt, Sơ nhất nhật* (in the year Quý Mão, in the first month, the first day). *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân, …* (… the council of the lineage, prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân: Nghênh Xuân gia tiết* (On the occasion of the welcoming of spring.) *Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc, hoa quả phẩm, tư thình hàn âm, cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi, cung trần bạc tế.* (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine; paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice; fruits and offerings; glutinous rice and chicken; dishes set out according to the rite — humble offerings presented at the worship.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Sơ tổ khảo, Sơ tổ tỷ* (the founding ancestor and the founding ancestress of the lineage) … *liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc … hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (… all the forefathers and foremothers, ancestors and collaterals, fallen martyrs, deceased without descent and dead in infancy, with or without name — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) On this first morning of spring, we present our wishes to the ancestors and implore their protection over the whole lineage: peace, health, prosperity, fortune, and happiness. *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

3.4. ORATION OF THANKSGIVING OF THE NEW YEAR

(Burning of the votive papers, on the morning of the 3rd day of Tết.)

This oration is drafted in everyday Vietnamese in the original.

Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Hà Tĩnh Province, Hương Sơn District, An Hòa Thịnh Commune, Đồng Vực hamlet. In the year Quý Mão, in the first month, the 3rd day. At the temple of the great Đinh Nho lineage, the descendant, head of lineage Đinh Hải Quân (or his representative), in union with the uncles, the elders, and all the members of the lineage, respectfully presents incense, lamps, betel, wine, and offerings before the altar. We respectfully declare: the banquet of spring is accomplished, the New Year is past; we ask now to burn the

votive papers, to render thanks to the venerated divinities, and to see off the souls of the ancestors toward the abode of the dead. We implore: may they leave us happiness and grace, may they protect us and assist us; may the abode of the living as the tombs of the dead be in all things propitious; may the descendants enjoy peace and the house prosper and rise. With a sincere and respectful heart, we present humble offerings; in your high mercy, deign to be witnesses of them. *Cẩn cáo!* (We declare it respectfully!)

3.5. ORATION OF THE 15TH DAY OF THE 7TH MONTH

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, … Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn. Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) — in the 7th month, the *Thập Ngũ nhật* (15th day). *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân, …* (… the council of the lineage, prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân: Trung nguyên thu tiết,* (On the occasion of the festival of Trung nguyên, in autumn.) *Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc, hoa quả phẩm, tư thình hàn âm, cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi, cung trần bạc tế.* (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine; paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice; fruits and offerings; glutinous rice and chicken; dishes set out according to the rite — humble offerings presented at the worship.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc, đồng bào, đồng kiên, hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng* (all the forefathers and foremothers of the paternal lineage, from generation to generation; the ancestors and collaterals; the fallen martyrs; the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters of the lineage dead in infancy; those who had a name as those who had none — all these souls — may they come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) At this festival of Trung nguyên, we evoke the grace of the ancestors and implore their protection over the whole lineage. *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

3.6. ORATION OF THE 1ST DAY OF EACH MONTH

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, … Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn. Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) — in the … month, the *Sơ nhất nhật* (first day). {Note: the 1st day of the first month is New Year's Day, Nguyên Đán.} *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân, …* (… the council of the lineage, prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân lễ Sóc,* (On the occasion of the ceremony of the first day of the month — lễ Sóc.) *Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc, hoa quả phẩm, tư thình hàn âm, cụ soạn thức trần chi nghi, cung trần bạc tế.* (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine; paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice; fruits and offerings; glutinous rice and chicken; dishes set out according to the rite — humble offerings presented at the worship.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc … hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (all the forefathers and foremothers of the lineage, ancestors and collaterals, fallen martyrs, deceased without descent and dead in infancy, with or without name — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) On this first day of the month, the descendants evoke the grace of the ancestors and implore their protection: peace, health, and prosperity for the whole lineage. *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

3.7. ORATION OF THE 15TH DAY OF EACH MONTH

Duy (Now then) — *Cộng hòa Xã hội Chủ nghĩa Việt Nam, … Hà Tĩnh tỉnh, Hương Sơn huyện, An Hòa Thịnh xã, Đồng Vực thôn. Tuế thứ Quý Mão niên,* (in the year Quý Mão) — in the … month, the *Thập Ngũ nhật* (15th day). *Tại bản tộc đường Đinh Nho đại tôn, hậu duệ Trưởng tộc Đinh Hải Quân, …* (… the council of the lineage, prostrate, dares respectfully to declare:) *Tư nhân lễ Vọng,* (On the occasion of the ceremony of the full moon — lễ Vọng.) *Cẩn dĩ: Hương đăng phù tửu, kim ngân, minh y, diêm cốc, hoa quả phẩm, tư thành hàn âm, cụ soạn thức trân chi nghi, cung trần bạc tế.* (We respectfully offer: incense, lamps, betel, and wine; paper-money, votive garments, salt and rice; fruits and offerings; glutinous rice and chicken; dishes set out according to the rite — humble offerings presented at the worship.) *Cung thỉnh:* (We respectfully invite:) — *Hiển nội tộc Thế tổ khảo, Thế tổ tỷ liệt vị gia tiên cập lĩnh bá, lĩnh thúc, chư vị liệt sĩ thương vong, cô di tỷ muội yểu tử đồng tộc … hữu vô danh vị, liệt vị chư linh, đồng lai hiến hưởng.* (all the forefathers and foremothers of the lineage, ancestors and collaterals, fallen martyrs, deceased without descent and dead in infancy, with or without name — may all these souls come together to enjoy the offerings.) *Viết vị hữu:* (We declare:) On this day of the full moon, the descendants evoke the grace of the ancestors and implore their protection: peace, health, and prosperity for the whole lineage. *Thượng hưởng!* (Deign to come and enjoy the offerings!)

3.8. ORATION OF THE OFFERING OF INCENSE IN MEMORY OF THE ANCESTORS

When descendants living or working far away return to the country and pass by the temple to offer the incense in memory of the ancestors, or when descendants of the locality or the surroundings pass by to burn a stick of fragrant incense, there is no need of all the ritual apparatus nor of the complete unfolding of the worship: it suffices that a representative of the group light the incense and the lamps on the altars, present the offerings (if there are any), and invoke in everyday language, according to what his heart dictates to him, or rely on the reference oration below (it suffices to stand, hands joined, without its being necessary to kneel). Piety toward the ancestors requires only to stand before the altar, to invoke, and to bow. Let one limit the use of incense; let one limit the use of the gong and the drum; and if one uses them, let it be at moderate volume, so as not to trouble the neighborhood of the temple.

Reference oration:

Today, the … of the month …, year …; that is, the … of the month …, year … of the lunar calendar. I (or: we), named …, of the … generation (if one knows one's own), living and working at … On the occasion of a return to the country (or of a passage, …), I come (or: we come) to the temple to offer a stick of fragrant incense on the altar of the ancestors, with these offerings (if there are any) … (enumerate the offerings, as the case may be). Before the tablets and the souls: of the forefathers and foremothers of the successive generations; of the ancestors and the uncles and great-uncles; of the fallen martyrs; of the deceased without descent, uncles and aunts of the lineage. We think respectfully: the grace and the virtue of the ancestors are immense; I engrave them (we engrave them) forever in our heart. I humbly pray (we humbly pray) the souls of the ancestors to descend before the altar to enjoy the offerings that I have (we have) set out (if there are any). I respectfully ask (we respectfully ask) to render account to the ancestors (if there is occasion): … (object of the account, for example: difficulties or obstacles in the work or the life; or a good piece of news, a success at the examinations, a

promotion, a child's marriage…). I humbly pray (we humbly pray) the ancestors to protect us and to assist us: health and peace for the descendants, fortune and flourishing talents, house prosperous and elevated. (One may add: I humbly ask (we humbly ask) … — state what one wishes to implore of the ancestors…) With a sincere heart, I implore (we implore) that they be witnesses of it!

Note: when the descendants return in great number (a large family, a branch, or an offshoot), it is fitting, for dignity, to accomplish the complete ritual (abridged or complete version, at will) and, at the moment of the reading of the oration, to employ this text — or to compose another at one's discretion, provided that piety toward the ancestors be in it.

3.9. ORATION OF THE ACCOUNT OF THE MERITS TO THE ANCESTORS

To honor study, each year the Đinh Nho lineage organizes a ceremony of the offering of incense where the descendants with fine scholarly successes render account of their merits to the ancestors, at the temple of the lineage. Ordinarily, this ceremony takes place on the evening of the 8th day of the first month, that is, the eve of the great ceremony — the commemoration of the founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên. In case of change, the representative committee announces it.

Oration of the account of the merits:

Today, the … of the month …, year …; that is, the … of the month …, year … of the lunar calendar. Before the tablets and the souls of the forefathers and foremothers of the successive generations: The descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage organize the ceremony of the offering of incense to render account to the ancestors of the results of study and effort, worthy of pride, that the descendants have obtained in the course of the past year, the year 202…: 1. Đinh Nho A, of the … generation, has obtained … 2. Đinh Thị B, of the … generation, has obtained … … Honorable souls of the ancestors, dear kinsfolk of the paternal and maternal lines of the lineage, Our Đinh Nho lineage is a great, illustrious, and aristocratic lineage, "*kế thế đăng khoa, đại đại bất tuyệt*," that is: "from generation to generation received at the great examinations, without ever an interruption." Our lineage descends from the general Đinh Điền, one of the four trusted lieutenants of the emperor Đinh Bộ Lĩnh. Our founding ancestor Đinh Phúc Diên was a military mandarin, office of Tả Hiệu Điểm, title of Marquis of Công Tây, rank of the second degree, that is, at the second rank among the mandarins of the court. Under feudalism, to be received even as bachelor was already very difficult. Now our Đinh Nho lineage counted many laureates. From the first at the provincial examination and above alone, our lineage has had: At the 7th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Công. At the 8th generation, the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn. At the 8th generation, the first at the provincial examination (Giải nguyên) Đinh Nho Côn. At the 11th generation, the doctor Đinh Nhật Thận — of the offshoot of the Đinh Nho lineage of Thanh Liên Commune, Thanh Chương District. The doctor Đinh Nhật Thận is the author of the famous poem *Thu dạ lữ hoài ngâm*. At the 14th generation, the doctor Đinh Nho Điển. The Nguyễn dynasty had a temple built in his honor; the temple of the lord Hường — Đinh Nho Điển — is today classified a historical and cultural vestige of provincial level. And, a wholly singular fact, our Đinh Nho lineage counts, in one same family, a father and his children — four persons — raised by the Nguyễn dynasty to the rank of tutelary divinities (Phúc thần) and honored at the temple of Gôi Vỵ. They are: — the doctor Đinh Nho Công; — the Hoàng giáp Đinh Nho Hoàn; — the ancestress Phan Thị Viên, wife of Đinh Nho Hoàn; —

the first at the provincial examination, commander general Đinh Nho Côn. The following generations likewise counted many laureates of high rank. The descendants of our Đinh Nho lineage always keep the rules of the family tradition and follow the teaching of the ancestors, namely: To cultivate oneself to be a loyal and pious son, generous and sincere, upright and thrifty, content with one's poverty when one is not yet rich; when one advances, to be a man of letters of honor; when one withdraws, an honest peasant; not to be proud to excess, not to offend one's superiors, not to gamble — in following the virtue of the ancestors. Honorable souls of the ancestors, The descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage make the vow to remain all their life united, to counsel one another and help one another, and to follow the luminous virtue of the ancestors, so as not to be ashamed before the forebears, not to betray their hopes nor their work. They make the vow to strive and to perfect themselves ceaselessly to become beings useful to the family and to society. The descendants of the Đinh Nho lineage humbly pray the souls of the ancestors to descend to be witnesses of it and to share the joy of their descendants!

End of Part II — Texts of the worship of the ancestors.

End of the work "History of the Đinh Nho Lineage."