



MAY 03

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR OF VNU-USSH, 2018

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Abstract of Lecture:

The concept of 'national history' (German: *Nationalgeschichte*) originated in Europe in the 19th century. This is an interpretation of history and in the same time a kind of historiography where history is regarded through the presumed perspective of the (own) nation. The deliberate aim of the historian is to create one or several national myth(s) with academic means. History serves politics: to establish a national consciousness (German: *Nationalbewußtsein*) with the ultimate goal to create, to strengthen or to defend the national state as a political unit, mostly against a presumed foreign enemy. In this way, history helps to legitimize a political party or a regime. Right from the origins in the 19th century, this concept of history writing invited to criticism. Subjectivity, partiality and partisanship, but especially the inadequate critical approach towards the sources, the tools of the historian, drew criticism from historians who defended the academic standards.

Three examples will serve here to illustrate the usage of this concept in different national and cultural backgrounds: first of all the faked manuscripts of Vaclav Hanka (Bohemia, 19th century), second the debate about the so-called Ramkhamhaeng inscription in Thailand (19/20th centuries), and third the discussion about Văn Lang and Âu Lạc in Vietnam.



Myths and
National History
Writing: three
examples from
Europe and Asia



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Language: Vietnamese

