



Report on Working Trip To Vietnam Late September and Early October 2010

By

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Arriving in Saigon

My Cathay Pacific flight landed at Tan Son Nhut International Airport in Saigon at 4:20 PM, Monday, October 20, 2010. Present was a group of three staff members from the Office of the Department of Library and Information Science, Saigon University to meet me. Dr. Nguyen Van Bang, Department Head, having a meeting at the school, could not come to see me at the airport and asked his staff to convey his apology. The van sent by the school brought me to my niece's home on Huynh Tinh Cua Street.

Preparations for the Training

I had a meeting at Saigon University with Dr. Nguyen Van Bang on Friday, September 24, 2010, at 3:00 PM. Present at the meeting were the three instructors from the Department of Library and Information Science: Mr. Nguyen Minh Hiep, Mr. Le Ngoc Oanh, and Mr. Bui Xuan Duc. Before the meeting we were received by Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan, Rector of Saigon University, in his office. Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan welcomed me and asked me to convey his thanks to Mrs. Lien-Huong Fiedler, President of LEAF-VN, for her consent to jointly organize and support this **Subject Access To Information** Training / Seminar. This reception lasted about half an hour and then we all returned to the Office of the Department of Library and Information Science to continue our meeting. The purpose of the meeting, as suggested by Dr. Nguyen Van Bang, was to determine how the Department's instructors could participate in the training program. After discussion, all three instructors agreed that they should not

participate in the teaching because doing that could do away the consistency needed for the whole training program. Instead they agreed that the afternoon session of the last day, i.e., Thursday, September 30, 2010, should be reserved for Discussion / Questions & Answers. I gave my consent since I believed these suggestions by the three instructors were really logical and positive.

One day before the opening of the Training / Seminar, Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan invited us to have lunch with him at the Quan Xua Restaurant on Nguyen Trai Street, just across the street from the back gate of Saigon University. During the lunch, we were all presented by Dr. Nguyen Van Bang with a copy of the textbook for the Training / Seminar just off the press.

The Training / Seminar

The Opening Ceremony

At 8:45 AM, Tuesday, September 28, 2010, the Opening Ceremony of the Training / Seminar was held in the large Meeting Room on the third floor, presided over by Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan, Rector of Saigon University, and attended by all Vice-Rectors, Library and Information Science Department instructors, distinguished guests and all Training / Seminar participants.

After the warm opening remarks by Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan, I was invited to make a speech. My speech was short, just a few minutes, focussing on the goals and principal activities of LEAF-VN during the past 10 years, emphasizing the fact that this is the first cooperation between LEAF-VN and Saigon University, and hoping for more cooperation between the two organizations in the future. After the speech, representing Mrs. Lien-Huong Fiedler and on behalf of LEAF-VN, I donated the valuable materials to the Library of the Department of Library and Information Science. I was presented with two bouquets of flowers, one from Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan, and one from a representative of the participants.



Banner for the Training / Seminar in Campus Core of Saigon University



Vinh-The Lam Making Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Training / Seminar



Vinh-The Lam, On Behalf of LEAF-VN, Donated Valuable Materials To Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan, Rector of Saigon University



Valuable Materials Donated by LEAF-VN To Department of Library and Information Science, Saigon University (the three piles on the right side)

The Training / Seminar

Right after the Opening Ceremony, all participants and I moved to the larger Meeting Room on the fourth floor and the Training / Seminar started immediately.

This room was equipped with a lectern for the lecturer; there were two large white screens on both sides for showing information during my lecture, one is used to project the Power Point Slide Show, the other one to project the full pages from the Textbook, and, occasionally, to project information taken from the Internet. Two staff members from the Office of the Department of Library and Information Science handled the two PCs to perform these functions throughout the whole 3-day Training / Seminar. There were more than 100 participants; most of them were catalogers from academic, government and school libraries. Each one of them was given a copy of the Textbook for the Training / Seminar.



Meeting Room on Fourth Floor Used for The Training / Seminar

The daily schedule for the Training / Seminar is as follows:

- Morning: 8:00 - 9:30: Lecture
- 9:30 - 10:00: Refreshment
- 10:00 - 11:30: Lecture

- Afternoon: 14:00 - 15:15: Lecture
- 15:15 - 15:30: Refreshment
- 15:30 - 17:00: Lecture

After each part of the lecture following the Textbook, I always made illustrations with examples taken from the Internet web pages or from North American academic libraries' OPACs, especially from the OPAC of the University of Saskatchewan, which continues to provide me, as a Librarian Emeritus of the University, with privileges of accessing its electronic and digital resources. I also made use several times of the LC ClassificationWeb during my lecturing.



One Scene During The Training / Seminar



**Another Scene During the Training / Seminar
Vinh-The Lam with Dr. Nguyen Van Bang**

In the afternoon of the last day, Thursday, September 30, 2010, from 2 to 4 PM, the three instructors of the Department of Library and Information Science shared the lectern with me in giving answers to the questions asked by the participants. Through these questions, my observation was that the level of the participants' learning was relatively good, a proof that they understood the contents of the lecture.

Recapitulation and Closing Ceremony

The recapitulation of the Training / Seminar began at 4:00PM. Due to other commitment, Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan was not present. The ceremony presided over by one of the Vice-Rector, was begun with the recapitulation of the Training / Seminar by Mr. Vo Van Loc, M.S., Head of Training Department; then the decision signed by Dr. Nguyen Viet Ngoan to grant certificates to participants was read. I was asked to say a few words. On behalf of LEAF-VN, I thanked Saigon University for agreeing to jointly organize and support this Training / Seminar and wished all participants good future in their careers. Participants then received their certificates in groups of ten; each group had a photo taken together with the guest who presented certificates to them. At the end of the Closing Ceremony, one representative of participants was asked to present his impression about the Training / Seminar. Once again, I was presented with another bouquet of flowers from the participants. The Closing Ceremony ended at 5:00 PM. After the Closing Ceremony, Dr. Nguyen Van Bang invited me and the three Department instructors to have dinner with him at the above-mentioned Quan Xua Restaurant.

Meeting at The General Science Library of Ho Chi Minh City

Mr. Bui Xuan Duc, Instructor of the Department of Library and Information Science, Saigon University, also Director of the General Science Library of Ho Chi Minh City (GSLHCM) invited me to come to the GSLHCM on Friday, October 8, 2010 for a visit of the Library and a meeting with his principal staff.

Present at this Meeting were:

- Mr. Bui Xuan Duc, M.S., Director of GSLHCM
- Mr. Vinh Quoc Bao, M.S., Head, Information Technology Division (Department of Information Science and Document Preservation)
- Mr. Huynh Trung Nghia, M.S., Head, Book Technical Processing Department (Cataloging and Classification)
- Ms. Nguyen Thi Huong Giang, B.S., Assistant Head, Book Technical Processing Department
- Dr. Nguyen Van Bang, Head, Department of Library and Information Science, Saigon University

- Mr. Le Ngoc Oanh, M.A., Instructor, Department of Library and Information Science, Saigon University

During the Meeting, several issues were raised for discussion with a focus on the List of Subject Headings that was just printed by the GSLHCM and was being distributed nation-wide. Mr. Bui Xuan Duc said he would welcome any remarks, observations, comments and suggestions for this List of Subject Headings. He also asked me to bring back two copies of the List of Subject Headings as gifts from his Library for Mrs. Lien-Huong Fiedler and Ms. Le-Huong Pham. I accepted them and, on behalf of the recipients, thanked him for his generous gifts.

I shared with all persons present at the Meeting my personal experience in the library development movement for Vietnam pre- and post-1975. Mr. Bui Xuan Duc asked me to come and talk to his staff the next time I will be in Vietnam. After the Meeting, Mr. Bui Xuan Duc invited everyone to stay and have a family lunch with him with dishes prepared by his staff.

Returning To Canada

For family reason, I decided to return to Canada two days sooner than planned. I went to the Office of Cathay Pacific Airlines on Nguyen Thi Minh Khai Street to make necessary arrangements for a returning ticket for October 9, 2010 instead of October 11, 2010. I arrived safely in Canada in the evening of October 9, 2010 at 7:30 PM.

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
October 14, 2010