



# Systematisation and cartographic reports of plenary sessions and workshops



**WHICH UNIVERSITY FOR THE 21TH CENTURY?**

TriViet International University Project.

Ho Chi Minh City, October 16-17, 2009

**DEVELOPING HIGHER EDUCATION: LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE**

Hoa Sen University.

Ho Chi Minh City, October 19-20, 2009

# THE SEMINARS

## Hoa Sen University



Since the beginning of the 21st century, new forces—cultural, political, environmental, and economic—have swept the world with irreversible changes. Without a doubt, the landscape of the current global economic meltdown has affected Higher Education in more ways than one. As we are reexamining the role of Higher Education within these new global complexities, it is important to analyze in some depth global education as a whole and to deliberate on the future trend of Higher Education for Vietnam. Thus comes up the question, **“Developing higher education: lessons from experience”**

Hoa Sen University hosted an international scientific conference on October 19 and 20, 2009 to address this question. This international meeting is part of a cycle of scientific activities initiated by Hoa Sen University in 2007 with two previous seminars already completed: “Autonomous thinking, self-government and teaching methods” (January 2008) and “Striving for a better higher education in Vietnam, the 20th - 21st Century milestones” (December 2008). In addressing the situation in Vietnam, the October conference also contributes to a 2008 action supported by the Charles Leopold Mayer Foundation for Human Progress in response to the global question: “What is the university for the 21st century?” hosted by Tri Viet University.

## Tri Viet International University Project



Tri Viet International University Project is the brainchild of a group of dedicated Vietnamese intellectuals and professionals who pondered over its vision and conception for several years before launching the project in August 2007. Tri Viet aims to be a center of academic and pedagogic excellence in Viet Nam. First, by striving for maximum academic autonomy as a sine qua non of educational quality. Second, by promoting transdisciplinary approaches based on foundational knowledge and skills (traditionally known in Western institutions as Liberal Arts and Sciences) sub-

jects (e.g., Critical Thinking, Creative Writing, Problem Solving, etc); concurrently, fundamentals of Vietnamese Studies will help anchor the Vietnamese students' awareness of their roots and identity as they embark on discovering the world. Tri Viet is convinced these initiatives will help equip its graduates with the right kind of intellect, one balancing specialization with an all-around humanistic education.

Tri Viet International University's launch is planned for 2012.

Tri Viet International University organized the International Seminar "**What University for the 21st Century?**" in conjunction with the Charles Leopold Mayer Foundation for Human Progress and the project of developing an International Sustainable Earth Alliance University.

The Foundation Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for Human Progress - FPH is an independent foundation under Swiss law that supports the emergence of a global community. Its current priorities, defined in its 2004–2010 guidelines, are: - to support the emergence of a world community, made indispensable by globalisation; - to contribute to three major changes that humankind must make in the course of the 21st century (a revolution in governance, the search for a universal ethic of responsibility; the creation of a sustainable society). <http://www.fph.ch/>

## METHOD DESCRIPTION



ALMEDIO Consulting, is a french-chilean consulting company working on sistemisation methods and the building of collective intelligence.

The ALMEDIO team was asked to systematise the International Seminars Which university for the 21th century? organized by TriViet International University Project and Developing higher education: lessons from experience, organized by Hoa Sen University.

This document is the cartographical and textual account of this two seminars realized in HoChi Minh City among october 16 and 20, 2009.

### **About the method:**

The cartographic method is a working device that enables the collective organization of knowledge offering more transparent, democratic and fairer means of communication. The cartographic method has been elaborated by the Fondation Charles Léopold- Mayer ([www.fph.ch](http://www.fph.ch)).

As an instrument to collect, manage and compile complex information, the cartographic method is not just another technical gadget (the software under GPL license can be downloaded at <http://adullact.net/projects/outilcarto/>). It is a useful method to organize, in a precise and clear fashion, whatever is analyzed, proposed or debated during seminars and events. By using this method, one is able to contrast, in a transparent manner, the ideas expressed in different places and moments, for example, two or more workshops held simultaneously in the same event.

In addition, the cartographic synthesis is an effective procedure to transform a grand event into a laboratory of collective production of knowledge and proposals, oriented for their practical application. This method facilitates the elaboration of work plans and common agendas in those places where, for lack of time or organization, the valuable ideas of a group of individuals tend to get lost.

The cartographic method has been used by Almedio in a series of events of a diverse and comprehensive nature. It was originally conceived to prepare the "World Assembly of Citizens" (Lille, France, 2001) and later to systematize the debates of the international seminar University XXI (Brasilia, Brazil, 2003), of the Founding Congress of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG, Paris, France, 2004) where more than three thousand mayors from around the world participated, of the international meeting organised by ORUS and the Santiago de Chile University about new challenges of public universities (Santiago de Chile, 2006), of 2nd International Forum on Fair Tourism and Fair Trade (FITS 2006), Mexico, 2006.

Prior to the events, we conducted a two-day training in the Hoa Sen University facilities with a group of 10 people. The

subject matters of the training session were:

- ✦ Reporting of the working sessions and plenary
- ✦ Interview with prominent figures invited to the event
- ✦ Mapping method and the use of the software Desmodo

During the course of the events, the systemisation team identified the most significant lectures in order to highlight the most outstanding moments, contributions and ideas of the event. To do so, a team of 6 reporters covered all the working sessions (5 plenary sessions and 3 parallel workshops ).

The objective was to:

- ✦ identify the main findings and challenges of 21th century University;
- ✦ record the advice, recommendations or concrete proposals related to the subject.
- ✦ Identify elements of proposals that could feed the reflection around the higher education in Vietnam.

On the other hand, a team of interviewers recorded first-hand testimonies, interviewing a group of distinguished guests at the seminar around five topics:

*In your opinion and by priority order, What are the main chalenges that faces the construction of an university open to the XXI century in your locality and why?*

*What values base that university?*

*In your experience, How it should be and operate this new university?*

*What are the specifics steps that should be done in order to progress in the construction or strengthening of this type of university?*

*How do you think international experience could contribuye to strengthen and enhance higher education in Vietnam?*

The interviews were completed with contact information including a photo of each interviewee.

After the events, with all the data collected we built one cartographic synthesis for each session. After that, the Almeida coordinators compare the 8 cartographics synthesis and nine recurring points (or orientations) were identified. The result of this work can be seen in one final map with the nine strategic axes identified, and for each axe a map showing the most significant proposals and issues and specifying which sessions they came from, plus a comment.

Our goal was to achieve a synthesis that could build a bridge between the two seminaries, pointing to what seems to us, the main elements of both international and Vietnamese debate around the challenges of building an 21st century university.

