



The Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups is in the center of Thái Nguyên City, about 80 km north of Hà Nội on National Highway 3. The Museum was built in 1960. At first it was named Việt Bắc Museum, with its functions and tasks of scientific research and educating the traditions of culture and revolutionary struggle history of ethnic groups in Việt Bắc.

In 1976, the Việt Bắc autonomous area was dissolved and the Việt Bắc Museum was handed over to Ministry of Culture and Information. Since then, the Museum has changed its activities from an integrated museum to the one specialized in ethnic cultures. At decision No. 508/QĐVH dated March 31, 1990 signed by Minister of Culture, it was renamed the Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups and became one of the seven national museums of Việt Nam.

The Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups is a big cultural center with its functions and tasks of doing research, collection, inventory, conservation, exhibition, popularization and bringing into play the heritage of traditional cultures of the Vietnamese ethnic groups in the entire country.

With the concern from the Party and State, specifically from Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups has developed day by day. During the past 50 years, the Museum has conducted hundreds of researches and collections all over the country, acquiring nearly 30,000 valuable items. These were

important for the Museum to prepare the indoor and outdoor exhibitions to serve the domestic and international people.

Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups is well-known for its architecture which won the Hồ Chí Minh Prize, situated on an area of 40,000m² by the poetic Cầu River and at the centre of Thái Nguyên City.

The exhibition system of Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic Groups was built on the basis of ethnic language families in combination with regional cultures, introducing the cultural characters of 54 ethnic groups associated with ecological landscapes of every settlement area, including 5 showrooms.

Showroom No. 1: Exhibits and introduces cultures of ethnic groups of Việt – Mường language family (Kinh, Mường, Thổ, Chứt). The people mainly live on wet rice cultivation and fishing. In spiritual life, they worship their ancestors. Their traditional handicrafts develop at high level.

Showroom No. 2: Exhibits and introduces cultures of ethnic groups of Tày – Thái language family (Tày, Thái, Nùng, Giáy, Lào, Lự, Sán Chay, Bố Y). The people mainly live in stilted houses, cultivate rice fields on valleys and along rivers and streams which are irrigated by canals, bamboo troughs and water wheels. Handicrafts such as forging and weaving are fairly developed with beautiful and sophisticated products. They have rich spiritual life including many unique Xoè dances and Then songs.

Showroom No. 3: Exhibits and introduces cultures of ethnic groups of three H'mông – Dzao language families: (H'mông, Dzao, Pà Thẻn), Ka Dai (La Chí, La Ha, Cờ Lao, Pu Péo) and Tạng Miến (Lô Lô, Phù Lá, Hà Nhì, La Hủ, Cống, Si La). The people are good in cultivation on burnt over land and terrace fields. Periodic market is an activity which clearly shows the cultural characters of mountainous area including gastronomy, attire, embroidery, printing patterns on fabric, performing music and khèn dancing etc.

Showroom No. 4: Exhibits and introduces cultures of 21 ethnic groups of Môn – Khmer language family (Ba Na, Brâu, Bru – Vân Kiều, Chơ Ro, Co, Cơ Ho, Cơ Tu, Gié Triêng, H'rê, Kháng, Khmer, Khơ Mú, Mảng, Xinh Mun, Mnông, Ó Đu, Mạ, Rơ Măm, Tà Ôi, Xơ Đăng, Xtiêng). The people live scatteringly in the North – East, Central – Central Highlands and South VietNam. They live mainly on cultivating burnt-over land by making holes for the seeds with a digging stick. Architectures of communal house and long house on the Central Highlands and pagoda of Khmer people; weaving handicraft and community cultural festival are unique cultural features of the Môn – Khmer people.

Showroom No. 5: Exhibits and introduces cultures of ethnic groups of the Austronesian language family (Chăm, Gia Rai, Ê Đê, Raglai, Chu Ru) and Han language (Hoa, Ngái, Sán Dìu). Ethnic groups of the Austronesian language family inhabit mainly on the red-

soil Central Highlands and coastal stretches of land in Central VietNam; the Austronesian culture has the matriarchal characteristics. Ethnic groups of Han language family inhabit in the North, Central and South VietNam; Han culture has the patriarchy characteristics.

With more than 4,500 original documents, artifacts, films, pictures and 735 supplementing scientific documents, the museum exhibition system was built in an advanced and modern way. Electronic information technology equipment and audio softwares help revive the settlement landscapes and cultural life of 54 ethnic groups, attracting the visitors.

Apart from the fixed exhibition, every year, the museum conducts dozens of mobile exhibitions all over the country, from remote areas to borders and islands, meeting the people's demand to enjoy culture.

Together with activities of the museum, its officials often participating in topics of ministry and institute levels on ethnic cultures. In addition, the lectures, talks and exchange of experience are also carried out by its staff to introduce and popularize the values of ethnic cultures.

At present, the museum's outdoor exhibition system has been completed with spaces of 6 cultural areas: Mountainous area in the North, Valley, Middle land – North VietNam, Central VietNam – Coastal area, Trường Sơn – Central Highlands and South Vietnam Plain. Every cultural area has a space of organizing festivals with landscape structure of its own characters and a specific house as a focal point to introduce the cultural values of the Vietnamese ethnic groups to visitors.

Hall a – ceremonial room

The ceremonial room of the Museum is the place for receiving visitors. In this place, the general features of cultures of Vietnamese ethnic groups are introduced. At the big vestibule, we can admire the statue of President Hồ Chí Minh, the Vietnamese people's beloved leader. He embraces three children representing three areas North – Central – South. It shows his immense affection to children of three areas as well as the policy of unification, diversification and great unity of the Vietnamese nation.

Behind the statue is a big wooden relief describing typical and traditional festivals of ethnic groups from North to South: Khèn dancing in mountainous periodic market, Lion dancing in spring festival in the valley, Ka Tô festival of the Chăm people, Buffalo stabbing festival of the people in the Central Highlands boat race festival of the Khmer.

History

The Museum of the Cultures of Vietnam's Ethnic groups, after 50 years of the development and growth, has through the stages as follows: – The period 1960 – 1975 – The period 1976 – 1990 – The period 1991 – 2009

History of the period 1960 – 1975

On 19/12/1960 in the town of Taiyuan, the capital of the autonomous region, the center of Viet Bac base, a ceremony for construction of the Museum of the North Vietnamese. A scale construction works almost the beginning of a major cultural projects in the Northeast region of the country. 1963 completed and opened the history of Viet Bac base. On 1/1/1964, the Museum of the North Vietnamese honor of Uncle Ho visited and recorded in the autograph souvenir gold. Period against the destructive war of the American Empire (1965 – 1975) with the number of small, but the entire document artifacts, treasures, assets are transferred to a safe evacuation. Sites: Cuc Duong, Han Van, Minh Lap, quiet ... is recognized in the development of the Museum. Period in addition to the display base Viet Bac, also has an introduction to the natural and human autonomous regions, the Museum also conduct roving exhibitions and collection of additional objects and for storage and display facilities.

History of the period 1976 – 1990

In 1976, the autonomous region to fulfill its historical destiny of the country, the Museum of the North Vietnamese transferred to the Ministry of Culture and Information Management. This is the content navigation activities. From synthetic Museum to Museum of professional national culture. After the years established itself as the new orientation, the scope of activities across the country with new functional tasks: research, collect, preserve and promote propaganda and cultural heritage education 54 ethnic Vietnamese. The collection of documents, artifacts and conducted expeditiously, the gallery introduces national culture gradually adjusted and supplemented, in time to welcome visitors to the festival, festival, carnival in region. Mobile exhibition to the work area and border. This period Museum also welcomes many of the leaders of the Party and State to visit and encourage as: late Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, General Vo Nguyen Giap, Nguyen Thi Dinh, Deputy Prime Minister Tran Huu Duc, Minister of Culture and Information Tran Hoan, Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet, Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Khanh directly visit the exhibition: "Typical northern ethnic culture" at the exhibition 15 years of liberation held at Ho Chi Minh City in 1990. 31/3/1990 – North Vietnam Museum was renamed the Museum of Vietnamese ethnic culture, with some 508/QD-BVH-TT decision.

History 1991 – 2009

During renovation from 1990 to 2000, the Museum of Vietnamese ethnic culture really improve functional activities in accordance with its mission. Architectural works, after decades of construction and due to the impact of the bombs has been degraded, is now the Museum of maintenance and maintenance, anti-down. 1996 architecture art was awarded the Ho Chi Minh phase I. This is a work of art culture for people in particular, the family of the Vietnamese people in general. Implementation of cooperation programs funded by

Swedish SIDA development: advanced operations Museum 1993 – 1998, renovated streamlined the work area and the gallery system. System storage facility was renovated and upgraded with modern equipment, ensuring preservation mode durable material artifacts. The period 2001 to 2009, the Museum is a great investment on infrastructure. The size of the collection is larger, wider, collected on the basis of warehouse ... Museum exhibits document. Early completion of the collection of rare and valuable science, history and art. The inventory, preservation of gradual improvements in scientific record system, initially managed by information technology artifacts. Artifacts preserved by the modern equipment; galleries system be upgraded in conjunction with the art technical solutions and modern equipment such as: touch screen system; System Digital audio support combinations on display; lighting system as highlighting art display combinations contribute to attract the public and meet the increasing demand for cultural enjoyment of the people . The Museum also organized many exhibitions all over the country for the holidays in the country. Scientific research with many flourishes, creating conditions improve professional activities of the unit. During this period the museum has made a link, multi-faceted cooperation with the National Museum, the museum of professional, local museums in the country and some foreign museums. The museum also invites experts in the field of museum organized several seminars and training courses to improve business for the unit. The campus overall project planning museum and exhibition projects with outdoor cultural areas gradually developed and perfected. Expected outdoor exhibition area will inaugurate open to visitors from 19/4/2010.