

## ASSISTANCE OF THE GERMANY DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF VINH CITY, NGHE AN PROVINCE FROM 1973 TO 1980

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Received on 12/9/2022, accepted for publication on 24/10/2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56824/vujs.2022sh13>

**Abstract:** From 1973 to 1980, responding to the appeals for assistance from the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Germany Democratic Republic has provided aid and assistance for the reconstruction process and contributed to the fundamental changes in the appearance of Vinh city. From a historical point of view, the article reconstructs the assistance and construction process, and simultaneously evaluates the impact and characteristics of the assistance from the Germany Democratic Republic on the reconstruction of Vinh city in the period 1973 - 1980.

**Keyword:** Aid; Germany Democratic Republic; Democratic Republic of Vietnam; Vinh city; 1973-1980.

### 1. Introduction

After the signing of *Paris Peace Accords* on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973, responding to the appeals for assistance from the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), the Germany Democratic Republic (GDR) had provided supportation in terms of capital source, machinery, science and technology and has sent experts to help Vinh city carry out post-war reconstruction program from 1973 to 1980.

There have been many studies on the assistance to the reconstruction program of Vinh city of the GDR such as: Vinh City People's Committee (2015), *Vinh City Geography*, Information and Communication Publishing House; Party Executive Committee of Vinh city (2010), *History of the Party Committee of Vinh City (1930-2005)*, National Political Publishing House; Nguyen Quang Hong (2003), *Vinh city - Formation and development process (1803-1945)*, Nghe An Publishing House; Pham Xuan Can (1998), *Urban culture with the practical experiences of Vinh city*, Nghe An Publishing House; Pham Xuan Can (2020), *Vinh city in the past* - Nghe An Publishing House, etc. In these works, the assistance of the GDR for the reconstruction of Vinh city has been mentioned only in narrow angles/aspects for different research purposes.

American scholar Christina Schwewel, who published *The Things They Carried (and Kept): Revisiting Ostalgie in the Global South; Socialist Palimpsests in Urban Vietnam*, has studied urban areas in Vietnam under the impact of the assistance to the reconstruction program from socialist countries, including the social impact of the GDR's assistance on Vinh city. Tim Kaiser has published *Transnational Impact on Urban Change Modern Projects in Vinh, Vietnam* about his research results on urban planning in Vinh and its impacts. In these publications, the assistance of other countries to Vinh city is observed from the perspective of sociology and urban architecture, not going into the overall investigates from the historical perspective.

The assistance from the GDR has altered the appearance of Vinh city from a ruin city after the war into a city with contemporary planning, and has had a profound impact on the socio-economic life of this land. Over nearly 50 years, Vinh's urbanization process has made great step forward, but the urban space and the values of GDR's assistance are still quite deeply embedded in the city's socio-economic life.

This article initially conducts an overall study from a historical standpoint and evaluates the impact and characteristics of the assistance of the GDR on the reconstruction of Vinh city in the period 1973-1980.

## **2. Research content**

### **2.1. Context of the study**

After World War II, the world entered the Cold War era which is extremely fierce between between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies, the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc. The formation of the socialist system and the establishment of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (referred to Russian as SEV) on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1949, have put a mark on the process of boosting the planned economic cooperation, of promoting the science and technology, the division of labour and produces, exchange of resources and experiences to support the national liberation movements of the socialist countries. And within that context, since 1950, Vietnam has started to receive reconstruction assistance from socialist countries, but the aid supplies took place with not as large in scale due to war circumstances. After the *Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam*, a peace treaty and also known as the *Paris Peace Accords* was signed on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973, to establish peace in Vietnam and end the Vietnam War, the demands for the reconstruction and building a *Socialist city* in Southeast Asia was posed. That context has an impact on the assistance of the GDR to Vietnam in general and Vinh city in particular.

Established on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1949 on the ruins of war, the GDR had become one of the developed countries of the Socialist Bloc, also known as the Eastern Bloc by 1974. This is a prerequisite for the GDR to support Vietnam. Establishing diplomatic relationship with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam since February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1950, the GDR began providing aid to the DRV quite early. Assistance and cooperation between GDR and DRV can be distinguished into two categories: those initiatives and projects run by the state on the one hand, and voluntary, non-state "solidarity" on the other (Tim Kaiser, 2016, pp. 67). In 1954, under the leadership of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED, Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands), The North Korean Aid Committee was turned into the Aid Committee for North Korea and Vietnam under the National Front. The mission of this organization is to coordinate solidarity and donation projects with state-run projects. In 1965, the Vietnam Committee was established under the Solidarity Committee, detached from the organizational structure of the National Front, taking over the mission of the Aid Committee (Tim Kaiser, 2016, pp. 67). The Solidarity Committee is increasingly promoting its role of assistance and cooperation funded donated by the GDR population. The largest part of GDR assistance to Vietnam took the form of inter-state cooperation financed by trade-agreements, loans or non-refundable assistance. The most important authority for aid coordination is the Committee for Economic

and Scientific-Technical Cooperation between the GDR and Vietnam (CESTC), in which both countries' State Planning Committees played leading roles (Tim Kaiser, 2016, pp. 69). Since 1965, the use of funding sources is the issue of negotiations between the Committee for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation of the GDR and Vietnam through the government agreements. Thus, the assistance mechanism for Vietnam was not formed just in 1973 but had existed since early.

Vinh city is the capital of Nghe An province, is one of the cities with a long history - culture, the homeland of the great President Ho Chi Minh. This was the center of the revolutionary movement of 1930 - 1931 with the culmination of the Nghe Tinh Soviet movement, having an important geopolitical position of the Socialist North in the resistance against the United States. From 1964 to 1972, Vinh city suffered 4.700 bombardments by the US Air Force and US Navy, with 220.555 tons of bombs and ammunition, an average of 424 tons per kilometer, 4.683 kg of explosives per person. Leave the destructive war behind, in Vinh city, there are only piles of rubble with thousands of craters of all kinds of bombs and ammunition, not to mention thousands of tons of unexploded bombs and ammunition scattered throughout the city (People's Committee of Vinh City, 2015, pp. 214). The image of the ruined Vinh city "recalls in German minds the painful memories of the German nation after World War II". This has mobilized broad support of the German citizens for the Government's solidarity campaigns, ensuring continued political and humanitarian assistance from the GDR Government. At the state level, aid to Vietnam is in line with the policy of "fraternal help" (brüderliche Hilfe) of the GDR with countries from the third world struggling against colonialism. Vinh city with its position is worthy of the aid and assistance in the reconstruction as a "Socialist city" in Vietnam.

## ***2.2. Negotiating and signing the Agreement on aid for the reconstruction of Vinh city in 1973***

Facing the need of post-war reconstruction, in May 1973, the Government of the DRV sent a diplomatic note requesting the Government of the GDR to support in planning and rebuilding Vinh city and was approved.

In June 1973, the Government of the GDR sent an expert team to Vietnam, led by Professor Gerhard Kosel - Deputy Minister of Construction and 4 members who are leading experts in planning, design and construction to evaluate the conditions of assistance for the reconstruction of Vinh city. On the side of Vietnam, the Prime Minister also decided to establish a coordination group led by Mr. Vu Duc Thuan, Deputy Minister of Construction and 6 members; appointing Mr. Nguyen Duong Diem - Member of the Provincial Administrative Committee as Head of the Vinh City Planning Committee (Union of Friendship Organizations, 2011, pp. 24). The German experts had surveyed and examined the related conditions in Vinh city from June 21 to July 21, 1973 and subsequently made an advisory report to the Government of the GDR. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1973, the German Government established the Vietnam Working Committee, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Construction, led by Mr. Hans Grotewohl. In early 1974, Mr. Hans Grotewohl volunteered to work as a direct deputy in Vinh, so Mr. Edgar Hansen was appointed as the head of the committee.

After completing the survey, with the unification between the two governments, the Accord of post-war reconstruction of Vinh city was signed by Prime Minister Pham Van Dong and the Prime Minister of the GDR in Berlin on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1973. The main content of the agreement is:

- The planning, design and construction of Vinh city with the cooperation between the two parties in the overall planning of construction and the design of residential areas including individual buildings; rationalize the exploitation and production of building materials in Vinh area and supply machinery and equipment; providing equipments for the design as well as supplying machinery and materials to residential construction enterprises; training and supplementing professional Vietnamese staff in construction in Vinh. The number of GDR experts working in Vinh is stable with an average of 40 people per year.

- The planning, design and construction of Vinh city will be carried out from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1978.

- The delivery of goods and other services in the period of 1974-1978 will be implemented within the framework of the sums for those years, set forth in the Annual Agreement signed between the two governments. Funding from the German Democratic Republic for aid, planning and reconstruction of Vinh city come from two sources: refundable funds according to the Government financing and non-refundable funds according to the voluntary donation by GDR population. In 1974, the GDR aided the design, planning and construction of Vinh city in the amount of 900.000 rubles and provide several necessary machineries, come from non-refundable sources as 2 crane trucks ADKG 63/2, 4 multipurpose excavators UB 1212, 10 one-wheel trucks W50, 10 dump trucks W50, 1.200 tons of lamination steel; and 2.700.000 rubles refundable funds to provide machinery and equipment for the design and construction of Vinh city. In addition, the GDR provides 3-6 million rubles (refundable and non-refundable) for the supply of construction materials listed in the retail categories.

- The government of Vietnam will appoint 01 person as commandant of the construction site, as well as ensuring the collaboration with GDR's experts. The Government of the GDR will send an expert group to work directly. The Vietnamese government is responsible for the design and reconstruction of Vinh City. The Ministers of Construction of the two countries set up a coordination advisory agency.

- The two governments ensure that, by the end of 1973, the necessary decisions to implement the Agreement will be concretized and submitted to the chairmen of the sub-committees of the Committees for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation of the two countries for approval (Archive Center of Nghe An Provincial People's Committee, 1973, pp. 1-6).

Until 1978, based on the actual situation of implementing projects in Vinh city, the Government of Vietnam has proposed the Government of the GDR to extend the assistance program and was approved. The Agreement was then extended from July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1978 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1980.

### ***2.3. Specific assistance content of GDR for Vinh city***

#### *2.3.1. Develop the overall planning of Vinh city*

Implementing the contents of the signed agreement of post-war reconstruction of Vinh city, the GDR has assisted Vinh city in developing the overall planning of Vinh

city, which was built thanks to the cooperation between German expert group and Vietnamese experts who come from Vietnam Institute of Planning and Design. At the end of 1973, the first expert group was sent to Vietnam and has embraced their mission in Vinh city. After a brief time working with leaders and the staff specialized in planning, construction design of the province to conduct field surveys and discuss relevant issues, groups of domestic and abroad experts start drawing the overall planning of Vinh city on February 14, 1974.

After almost one year of surveying and investigating, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1974, leaders of the Construction Department, Institute of Planning and Design together with German experts had presented before the Provincial Administrative Committee about the construction planning of Vinh city along with the projects that are expected to be invested in upgrading and renewing machinery and equipment, and also the completely new constructions. The Administrative Committee approved and then submitted to the Ministry of Construction for a decision.

The overall planning of Vinh city in 1974, which was later supplemented and completed in early 1977, consisted of 5 areas: Spatial and residential area planning; Construction planning of administrative areas; Construction planning of industrial zones; Planning the park - culture - sport areas; Lake area planning. Twenty-four construction entities that need to be invested have also been identified and clearly reflect the spatial distribution planning of Vinh city and the necessary locations for each construction entity.

The overall planning of Vinh city, published in 1974, supported by the GDR with a magnitude of 140.000 people, was considered to be a fairly complete plan, which has helped the Provincial Administrative Committee establish the spatial structure of architecture, construction and developing the city in both the immediate and long-term. Mr. Truong Huy Chinh, former Director of the Institute of Planning and Design commented: "Based on scientific arguments, German experts have closely coordinated with us to form the overall planning structure of Vinh city including the following functional areas: administrative center, industrial regions, commercial and service area and have planned a system of greenery as well as the park and lake systems. Up to now, I can declare that the German experts helped us to establish the spatial structure of architecture, construction and and developing the city in both the immediate and long-term after the war was a great success. The planning has created an ideal urban model... as a scientific basis for further adjustment of the planning (Union of Friendship Organizations, 2011, pp. 37).

In addition to the overall plan of the city's architectural space, the GDR has collaborated to carried out the detailed plans such as: Planning of Quang Trung residential area and other auxiliary buildings; Planning on upgrading and building new construction of industrial production facilities, production facilities of building material components such as: Water mills, Brick enterprise 22/12, Precast concrete factory, Oxygen factory, Construction mechanical factory, Cau Duoc cement factory and Quarry Ru Muou, etc.

It can be argued that the overall planning of Vinh city is a harmonious synthesis between modern Western architectural thinking with strict requirements on geometries, technical infrastructures, environmental landscape, etc. which are relatively comprehensive and the mindset of Vietnamese experts who are knowledgeable about the specific conditions of climate, culture and habits of Vietnamese people in general and Vinh city

in particular. Therefore, the actual implementation of the overall plan of Vinh city has brought about a modern urban space of that period, but also left many foundational values for Vinh city in the future.

### *2.3.2. Expert support and training technical expert assistance*

One of the important issues that is clearly shown in the content of the Accord of post-war reconstruction of Vinh city is the support of experts. By the end of 1973, the first expert team of the GDR was sent to Vietnam, including experienced cadres. In that group were Dr. Schlesier and architect Grotewohl who were the leading experts on planning and construction architecture in Germany at that time.

From 1973 to 1980, there were 213 German experts who came to Vinh, an average of 40 people each year, including: Architects, engineers, designers, construction material production technology, master craftsmen, economic staff and pedagogical engineers with vocational training in the field of construction to teach the following academic subjects: Architectural planning, geological survey, transportation, ground filling, drainage, electrical and water engineering, architectural physics, urban economics, urban sociology, etc. They had conscientiously imparted their professional knowledge and experience, especially the methodology of urban planning and construction design, to the staff of the institute. In addition to the delivery of the machinery, the GDR also guided and trained Vietnamese officials and workers to use newly transferred machinery and technology lines. The experts of the GDR had enthusiastically guided the technical workers in factories on how to operate the chains for transporting stone and bricks, preserving and operating the warehouse, etc. The GDR also provides vocational training classes to satisfy the high labour demand. On the other hand, GDR also facilitated the organization of delegations of professional and technical staff of provincial construction industry to visit and learn experience in planning, design and construction in Germany.

Therefore, after helping Vinh reconstruction the city, the GDR had brought to Nghe An construction industry an invaluable human resource, effectively serving the program of planning, designing and building the country in the future renovation period.

### *2.3.3. Financial and technical assistances*

Regarding the financial assistance, according to the signed agreement, the GDR had provided Vinh city with government funds, including two types: refundable and non-refundable, and funds donated by the GDR population. In case of the refundable and non-refundable government funds, base on the financial standing, the GDR had annually deducted a part of the budget for Vinh city according to the practical requirements of the work. On the other hand, the GDR had organized campaigns and propaganda for the population to support the Vietnamese compatriots to recover from the war. "At that time in East Germany, the movement to donate and support the Vietnamese people was very ebullient because of the legitimacy of the struggle to unify the country in Vietnam" (Nghe An Provincial Labor Confederation, 2008, pp. 43). Thanks to the strong support of the majority of the GDR population, the GDR had collected a large amount of money and other resources, which was used for supporting the machinery and equipment.

In terms of science and technology, the GDR's assistance includes equipment, machineries, technology chains, construction materials, which had been delivered, as well as

training of cadres and workers, which are long-term resources to serve the construction and development of Vinh city in the future. In terms of machinery, the GDR had supplied Vinh city with machines and vehicles for the construction such as: FH-1600, used for lifting concrete bales to high floor; Tower crane MB-88 and all kinds of large and small cranes to ensure sufficient conditions for large construction (Union of Friendship Organizations, 2011, pp. 42).

In addition, when implementing the minor constructions such as: Brick enterprise 22/12, Quarry Ru Muou, Cau Duoc cement factory, Construction mechanical factory, Oxygen factory, Water mills, Vietnamese - German Garment Enterprise, the GDR had provided necessary machinery and equipment such as bulldozers, excavators, kneading machine, etc. as well as modern production lines, which will be presented in detail in the following section. The amount of machinery and materials delivered to Vietnam by the GDR was quite high. 61 maritime shipping had been prioritized to deliver materials, machinery, equipment and specialized vehicles to Hai Phong and Hon Ngu ports. On average, an amounting of 5.000 tons of goods was delivered per year. During the period of 7 years, from 1973 to 1980, Vinh city had received about 37.531 tons of goods with an estimated value of 19.5 million rubles (Nghe An Archives Center, No. 49, pp. 2).

**Table 1:** *Quantity of goods supported from the GDR in the period 1974-1980*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Quantity of goods (tons)</b>
1974	4.773,5
1975	4.933,5
1976	5.226,1
1977	4.900,9
1978	5.406,5
1979	5.778,4
1980	4.873,9
<b>Sum</b>	<b>370,531</b>

**Source:** *The data was provided by Mr. Ngo Dang Yem, a former interpreter for the German expert groups in Vinh.*

The assistance of the GDR to Vinh city in terms of finance, science and technology was also represented by the concretization of materials, machinery and equipment for the construction and renovation of specific works.

#### **2.4. Supported construction and renovation projects**

In a relatively short period of time, with the assistance of the GDR, Vinh city had had a synchronous infrastructure, with 19 new construction projects, 10 renovating and upgrading projects, contributing to changing the appearance of a city that was ruined after the war.

Along with the spatial overall planning of Vinh city, professional cadres of the Institute of Planning and Design of the two countries had coordinated to develop a detailed plan for Quang Trung high-rise apartment building and auxiliary works, including

electricity, water supply, wastewater drainage, kindergarten, school, playground, flower garden, etc. This was the key project, the largest investment among the reconstruction entities of Vinh city.

The detailed planning of Quang Trung high-rise apartment building was completed in November 1974 and was approved by the Ministry of Construction in Decision No. 29947/BXD, signed by Deputy Minister Vu Quy on November 13<sup>rd</sup>, 1974. The apartment complex was located on an area of 30 hectares with a total area for residence of 65.800 square meters. According to the standard living area of 4 square meters per person, Quang Trung apartment building ensures 2.480 apartments, of which 70% are family-style apartments and 30% are collective apartments, providing accommodation for 15.600 habitants (Pham Xuan Can, 2020, *Part of Quang Trung apartment building can be preserved*). The width of the streets includes: Quang Trung Street 46m wide, Dinh Cong Trang Street 11m wide, Phan Chu Trinh Street 11m wide. The standard of daily water supply and wastewater drainage was 150 liters per person. There were 7,910 square meters of ditches for rainwater drainage. Power supply standard is 120W per person (Union of Friendship Organizations, 2011, pp. 33).

After the approval of the detailed plan, on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974, the project was started. Mr. Do Muoi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, was the one who laid the first brick to build Quang Trung apartment complex.

In 1980, due to the lack of funding support as well as the completion of the implementation time, the construction of subdivision D was interrupted (1 block of D2 building was completed), the construction of subdivision E could not be done. Thus, the GDR had assisted Vinh city in the construction of 1.829 apartments out of a planned total 2.940 apartments, providing accommodation for 8.820 residents out of a planned total of 15.035 habitants (Details are shown in Table 2). Total construction area was 30 hectares, including the East and West of Quang Trung Street. With the agreement between German and Vietnamese experts on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974, A1-A4 buildings were build according to the design of The Institute of Civil design - Ministry of Construction of Vietnam, while the rest used the design of Germany.

**Table 2:** *Layout plan for housing construction and actual implementation [9]*

Subdivision	Housings		Acerage		Number of flats		Residents	
	Plan	Imple-mented	Plan	Imple-mented	Plan	Imple-mented	Plan	Imple-mented
A	6	6	8.968	8.968	220	220	2.180	2.180
B	6	6	10.040	10.040	420	420	2.310	2.310
C	9	9	16.525	16.525	880	880	3.870	3.870
D	9	3	17.814	5.700	920	390	4.140	460
E	6	-	10.778	-	500	-	2.535	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>64.125</b>	<b>41.233</b>	<b>2.940</b>	<b>1.829</b>	<b>15.035</b>	<b>8.820</b>

In addition to the high-rise residential system, Quang Trung apartment complex was also supported to construct ancillary entities for life requirements of the entire habitants. Kindergarten, playground, the system of sports courts for children and the elderly



were all available in all sub-zones. Kindergarten, primary and secondary schools were well - equipped by the donated finance of the GDR population. The water supply and drainage system were fully designed and invested, the pipeline was highly durable, and the drainage ditches were led to the waste treatment area in Vinh Tan commune to ensure environmental sanitation. The power distribution system was installed with a total length of 20.000 meters, 04 electrical substations had been equipped to ensure electricity supply for households and collectives, reaching an average of 120 kilowatt per resident.

To serve the consumption needs of apartment households, a commercial center with an area of nearly 2000 square meters had been designed and constructed next to the 12-9 theater. However, because the Quang Trung apartment building is not far from Vinh market (about 300-500 meters away), the commercial area was later used as a provincial library.

In addition to Quang Trung apartment complex, a series of construction projects had been invested and constructed such as:

- Construction Mechanics Factory (located in Le Loi ward, near Vinh station market): Started in August 1974 and completed in June 1976, the task of the factory was to repair vehicles, construction machines and to manufacture steel structures to supply the construction need.

- Quarry Ru Muou (Hung Dao commune): The enterprise came into operation at the end of 1974 and was equipped with modern machinery and equipment for the exploitation and production of stones by the GDR at that time.

- Precast Concrete Factory: was built from December 1975 to February 1976, providing reinforced concrete structures with high bearing capacity, used for assembling solid constructions.

- Oxygen factory: Started in November 1978 and completed at the end of 1979, the oxygen production plant was expected to fully meet the requirements for welding technology of the whole province.

- Vietnam - Germany Children's Culture House (Tenloman - Thälmann): Built in late 1977 and started operation in early 1979, was the first institution in the Central region to train and foster young talents who are gifted in art and music at the age of teenagers and young children.

- Vinh market: Started construction at the end of 1977 with a total area of nearly 32,000 square meters. After completion, Vinh market attracted about 4.200 business registrations inside and outside the market. During this period, Vinh market had the largest construction scale in the North Central region.

- The tarpaulin hall: Delivered synchronously from Germany, assembled by experts, officials and technical workers in the construction industry of Nghe An province in mid-1974, which had a construction area of 1.200 square meters with steel frame structure. The roof was covered with waterproof and durable canvas. The hall was equipped with modern equipment to meet the requirements of large meetings and performances by art troupes with an amount of 300 audience.

- Vietnam - Germany school of construction workers: Responsible for providing skilled human resources for the construction companies in Vinh city. The school officially started in early 1975 and by the end of 1977 the important entities were basically completed, meeting the vocational training requirements. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1975, the first

course was opened with 160 students, trained in specialties in masonry, finishing, carpentry, water supply and drainage, construction machinery and welding (Union of Friendship Organizations, 2011, pp. 44-115).

Besides, there were also upgraded and renovated construction entities such as: Brick and tile enterprise 22/12 (Hung Chinh Commune, Hung Nguyen District), Thong Nhat carpentry factory, Cau Duoc cement factory, Vinh water factory, Vietnam - Germany garment factory, Theatre 12/9, Vinh city stadium, etc.

### ***2.5. The impact of the assistance of the GDR on Vinh city***

The assistance of the GDR has a strong impact on all areas of the city's political, social, economic and cultural life. A new generation of city dwellers was born from high-rise apartments with modern public facilities, forming new social effects and lifestyles that lasted for many years afterward. Vinh City had inherited a relatively synchronous transport, electricity and water infrastructure. In terms of economy, the factories and enterprises, although initially built, also contributed to creating a new appearance for the city, taking the shape of an industrial city. Factories and enterprises had initially met the demand for construction materials for key projects of the city, contributed to improving the production value of the industry, was an important factor contributing to the city's completion of the assigned plan, reaching 30% of the total industrial value and 20% of the total handicraft industrial value of the province (Party Committee Executive Committee of Vinh city, 2010, pp. 4). Vinh market was invested to become a trading center for both Vinh city and Nghe Tinh province.

In the field of culture and education, schools at all educational levels, Vietnamese - German Vocational School, Viet Duc Children's Cultural House and cultural houses in apartment buildings, cinemas, fountains, parks, etc. had contributed to building a new cultural life in Vinh city. In general, the assistance of the GDR has helped Vinh city quickly overcome the consequences of the war, had revived strongly, become a major political, economic and cultural center of Nghe Tinh and the North Central region.

The assistance of the GDR for the reconstruction of Vinh city has outstanding features which took place in a relatively short duration but was comprehensive across all areas, with the goal of building a complete "socialist city" which is different from the assistance for individual construction entities of other socialist countries in Quang Binh, Thanh Hoa, Ha noi, Thai Binh, Nam Dinh, etc. Supported fields included civil engineering, industry, science and technology, education, etc. which affected many aspects of politics, society, economy, culture and education. The assistance of the GDR was synchronous from the development of overall plans, detailed planing for specific construction entities, the dispatch of expert groups to coordinate the implementation of plans, the training of operating personnel. In addition to the support of finance, science and technology (machinery, production lines), the GDR also sent experts to Vietnam to directly implement the projects. The assistance of the GDR in training experts and skilled workers had long-term significance, contributing to the city's future.

Due to the comprehensive and synchronous, the construction planning and design processes had long-term sustainability, which is clearly reflected in the long-term planning of Vinh city in which the population growth rate had been considered, the training of adjacent human resources was approached by two methods: on-the-job training and

sent for training in the GDR. The valuable lessons on urban development left behind by the Germans are of profound value to the development process of Vinh city in particular, and urban Vietnam in general.

### 3. Conclusions

In the period from 1973 to 1980, except for the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic was the socialist country with the largest support for Vietnam, which was comprehensive, synchronous and had long-term significance, contributing to the city's future. That, first of all, come from the sympathy of the GDR population about the war memories, the admiration for a heroic Vietnam standing on the front lines against invasion. Besides, the building of the image of a strong and responsible Socialist Germany in the socialist system and in the Third World was also a motivating factor for the Government of the GDR to support Vietnam. The initiative of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in negotiating and signing, in choosing Vinh City as a locality to call for investment, was important factors for Vinh to be invested to become a model city of socialism in the North at that time.

The overall and detailed plan for the reconstruction of Vinh city had shown a long-term vision with synchronous investment in all areas of economic, cultural and social life. The construction entities, supported by GDR, with the typical example being the Quang Trung apartment complex, was an important expression of solidarity between the GDR and Vietnam. It can be seen that the projects funded by the GDR not only have a material existence, but also deeply affect the minds of many generations of city residents until these days. Currently, there are few construction entities, which were built by the supportation of GDR, most of which have been dismantled or converted for operational purposes. It is necessary and justifiable to preserve some of these construction entities in order to retain an imprint of Vinh city in the post-war reconstruction period, and at the same time create a symbol of Vietnam-Germany friendship.

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## TÓM TẮT

### VIỆN TRỢ CỦA CỘNG HÒA DÂN CHỦ ĐỨC ĐỐI VỚI CÔNG CUỘC TÁI THIẾT THÀNH PHỐ VINH TỈNH NGHỆ AN TỪ NĂM 1973 ĐẾN NĂM 1980

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Ngày nhận bài 12/9/2022, ngày nhận đăng 24/10/2022

Từ năm 1973 đến 1980, hưởng ứng lời kêu gọi của Chính phủ Việt Nam Dân chủ cộng hòa, Cộng hòa Dân chủ Đức đã viện trợ tái thiết, tạo nên những thay đổi căn bản diện mạo thành phố Vinh. Dưới góc độ lịch sử, bài viết phục dựng quá trình viện trợ, xây dựng và đánh giá tác động, đặc điểm viện trợ của CHDC Đức đối với việc tái thiết thành phố Vinh giai đoạn 1973-1980.

**Từ khóa:** Viện trợ; CHDC Đức; Việt Nam; thành phố Vinh; 1973-1980.