

From the 8th of July 2022 to the 27th of July 2022, I was able to conduct a combined teaching and research trip in Vietnam. The trip was funded mainly by the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility Scheme, from which I received a teaching staff grant, as well as my research funding from the Irish Research Council. Whilst the main objective of this trip was my teaching contribution to the host institution in Vietnam, I was also able to further my own research on the writer Anna Moï (from Vietnam) and further UCD's relationship with Vietnamese higher education institutions.

The opportunity arose through UCD's prior contacts with the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH), part of Vietnam National University, in Hanoi. Dr Christine Bonnin, from the School of Geography, received Dr Giang Trường Nguyễn (Faculty of Anthropology, USSH VNU Hanoi) at UCD and arranged introductions with my supervisor, Dr Mary Gallagher, and myself in April 2022. These introductions led to further contact with another colleague at USSH VNU Hanoi, Dr Hoàng Năm Nguyễn Thị (Vice Dean of the Faculty of Literature), who has also previously visited UCD through her participation in UCD Innovation Academy's Vietnam Ireland Bilateral Education Exchange (VIBE).

Deepening this exchange between our two universities, I arrived at USSH VNU's Faculty of Literature in order to participate in an interdisciplinary creative thinking module that had been coordinated by Dr Hoàng. This module was open to students across all disciplines at USSH, to whom I delivered talks on international mobility and the benefits of institutional exchange in higher education. The discussion that followed allowed me to interact more closely with students on questions of language learning, adaptability in different university and cultural environments, and the importance of creativity in education.



USSH undergraduate students and myself, with lecturers Dr Bích Nguyễn Thị (holding flowers, far left) Mr Việt Thanh Trần (front right, wearing a white shirt)

Furthermore, I delivered a paper titled ‘The Lens of Home: Memory and Identity in Vietnamese Migrant Literature’ to staff members and students at the Faculty of Literature. My paper, stemming from my PhD research topic, looked at Marguerite Duras’ *L’Amant* (*The Lover*) and the question of ‘home’ in this text, set in Saigon (now known as Ho Chi Minh City) in former French Indochina (Vietnam today). The paper was followed by a fruitful Q&A session that engaged with key questions of my research project and the writing of Anna Moï and Dany Laferrière, on whom my thesis is focused. The subjects of the discussion allowed me to benefit from the knowledge of Vietnamese writing of the Faculty of Literature.



Photo taken during ‘The Lens of Home: Memory and Identity in Vietnamese Migrant Literature’

During my time in Hanoi, I was introduced to other research and teaching members of the Faculty of Literature, including Dr Linh Thùy Nguyễn (French Literature), Dr Ngọc Hương Nguyễn (Vietnamese Literature) and Mr Long Nguyễn Lê (American Literature). Furthermore, I was also able to meet Dr Thủy Minh Đàm, the Vice Dean of the Faculty of French at the University of Languages and International Studies (ULIS), with whom I discussed the possibility of future collaboration. Additionally, I was placed in contact with Dr Quang Phạm Văn, a lecturer in French Literature at USSH VNU Ho Chi Minh City, whose interest in Vietnamese literature written in French could stimulate my research in the future.



Pictured: meeting Dr Thủy Minh Đàm

Finally, as I am undertaking research on the depictions of specific areas in the works of Anna Moï, I was able to conduct a short trip to two places that figure in her writing: current-day Ho Chi Minh City, the hometown of Moï, as well as Côn Đảo, an island on which Moï’s first widely acclaimed novel is centred. My stay in HCMC allowed me to visit specific streets and buildings that are highlighted in Moï’s work, whilst my trip to Côn Đảo gave me the opportunity to visit the remnants of the colonial prison in which Anna Moï’s novel *Riz noir* (meaning ‘black rice’, not yet translated into English) is set. During these visits, I was able to pursue my PhD project research, whose support by the Irish Research Council was greatly boosted through the Erasmus+ ICM scheme.

I would like to express my gratitude to all mentioned above for their aid, interest and enthusiasm in this exchange, which I hope has furthered current connections and created future opportunities. I would also like to thank Dr Mary Gallagher and Dr Christine Bonnin for setting everything in motion, as well as Daria Cornovan, from UCD Global, for the support prior to my departure.

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