

THE ROLE OF THE AUTHOR'S SUBJECT IN TRAVEL WRITING ABOUT THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Nguyen Huu Son^{a*}

^a*Vietnam Institute of Literature, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, Vietnam*

^{*}*Corresponding author: Email: lavson59@yahoo.com*

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Abstract

We introduce the travel literature written about the Central Highlands in the first half of the twentieth century and identify characteristics of the authors and the compositions in the context of history, culture, and contemporary journalism. Emphasis is placed on the role of the author's subject from the perspective of the narrative mode and narrative characteristics, such as witness accounts, storytelling in the first person, nonfiction and fictional literary relationships, mixed characteristics of genre content, the ability to integrate survey materials, fieldwork, records of geography, culture, ethnography, and customs. We assess the historical value of the travel literature and its contribution to anthropological awareness, culture, and literature.

Keywords: Author's subject; Category; Cultural; Literary; Travel to the Central Highlands.

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1. RATIONALE

Looking back at the sources of books and newspapers before the August Revolution, many unique journals written about the ethnic minorities and mountainous areas of the Central Highlands, including Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, Dak Nong, and Lam Dong (in their present boundaries) present many features that are different from those in journals written about other regions. Notably, these journals emphasize the role of the first-person narrative voice, cognitive conventions, and the limitations of discourse in the early twentieth century. In terms of writing form and genre, these journals belong to nonfiction and are associated with trips, experiences, and things seen and heard (Lê et al., 1992, pp. 75-76). It can be assumed that the authors were mostly journalists who visited the Central Highlands and then narrated the stories. These journal pages are not only of literary significance, but they also provide valuable survey data, accounts of field trips, and vivid records of the state of the ecological landscape and of people's lives in the Central Highlands nearly a century ago (Nguyễn, 2018, pp. 3-11).

2. TYPES OF AUTHORS WRITING JOURNALS ABOUT THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The list of typical journal authors writing about the Central Highlands in the first half of the twentieth century includes Biet Lam (Tran Huy Ba), K. D., Nam Dai, Do Huu Ich, Nhuan Khanh (Cao Thi Khanh), Thiet Luan, Mau Son Muc N. X. H., Trinh Nhu Nghe, Thanh Ngoc, Nguyen Duc Quynh, Trung Son, Xuan Son, Mai Thien Tai (Mai Huu Khanh), Thai Huu Thanh, Tieu Dieu Tu, Lam Van, and Khuong Viet (Nguyễn, 2018, pp. 3-4).

Only a few comprehensive biographies are available for these authors. In terms of women authors, the only clear biography pertains to Nhuan Khanh, whose real name was Cao Thi Khanh (1900-1962) and who was the founder of the weekly newspaper *Phu nu tan van—Women's News* (1929-1935). Her husband, Nguyen Duc Nhuan (1900-1968), was also the editor of the newspaper. Among the journalists were scientists, travelers, researchers, and ethnographers, such as Biet Lam (Tran Huy Ba, 1901-1987) and Nguyen Duc Quynh (1909-1974); journalists such as Xuan Son, Thai Huu Thanh, Tieu Dieu Tu, and Khuong Viet (Ly Vinh Khuong, 1912-1978); and a person writing under the pseudonym X for the newspaper *Cong luan* (i.e., *Cong-Luan-Bao*). The rest belong to the ranks of officials, civil servants, tourists, and students (K. D., Do Huu Ich, Thiet Luan, Mau Son Muc N. X. H., Trinh Nhu Nghe, Mai Thien Tai, etc.). In general, and in contrast to the authors writing journals about cities, plains, seas, islands, and even about the high mountains in the Northeast, Northwest, and Central Vietnam (Nguyễn, 2019), the journalists who came to the Central Highlands were often officials who performed various tasks or had the opportunity to come and relax in Da Lat. This fact indicates the different circumstances of the new, distant, and unfamiliar land with its rugged mountains and many difficulties in transportation and living conditions. This is also the reason why few authors came back to explore and continue their writing. Therefore, it is unavoidable that the number of pages written about this land are not as rich as those written about other regions.

3. THE ROLE OF THE JOURNAL AUTHOR AND FORMS OF DISCOURSE IN JOURNALS WRITTEN ABOUT THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

From a theoretical point of view, a journal is a form of nonfiction narrative prose; the genre of a journal is that of a travel record telling stories of real people and narrating experiences in time and space. Journals rely on the narrative power of the “first-person,” “narrative voice,” “narration,” “narrator experience,” and “narrator witnessing” as well as the determination of opinion, tone, narrative text, narration, and description. With this type of nonfiction writing, narrators follow general rules defined by Tran Dinh Su:

The subjective consciousness of the narrative is also a complex phenomenon, including the implied author, the narrator (possibly multiple roles), and the characters (possibly many people). Therefore, the narrative structure has many voices, many tones, and dialogues, an issue raised by M. Bakhtin. (Trần, 2004, p. 17)

Expanding on the *narrator-text-reader* relationship in fiction and nonfiction prose, Nguyen Thai Hoa concludes:

The point of view is the starting point of a literature structure; moreover, it is also a latent structure received by the reader by interpreting meaning from the complex relationships between narrator and text, between text and reader, and between narrator and implied reader. (Nguyễn, 2004, p. 96)

From this, it is possible to apply and expand deeply the narrator’s role as a journalist writing about the Central Highlands from three basic aspects: observer-commentator-implied reader.

3.1. The role of “observer”

In the first half of the twentieth century, people coming to the Central Highlands not only faced difficulties with means of transportation but also were subject to strict control by the authorities. In an article, “A Tour in Dak Lak,” author K. D. (possibly a head official of Kon Tum province) commented after the failed trip:

Those who have traveled to Da Lat know what Dak Lak Province is like, so I should also describe the situation and discuss the complaints of people who go sightseeing there. Dak Lak is located between Da Lat and Kon Tum; it is a piece of land that L. Sabatie¹ has occupied for thirteen years and obtained “enjoyment” from the Moi² people. Many narrators found Dak Lak troublesome since most of the paths here are not cleared. Being told so, no one puts effort into arguing this

¹ L. Sabatier, whose full name was Léopold Sabatier (1877-1936), was a French ambassador to Dak Lak (1914-1926) who contributed to the discovery and study of the Dam Xan epic.

² Moi: Common name for the Highland ethnic minorities. The Chinese formerly called the Vietnamese Man di and Nam Man, and the French called the Vietnamese Annam, Annamite, Mite, and Mit (indicating contempt and discrimination in feudal and colonial times).

matter. But fortunately for me, on three cool spring days in the Lunar New Year, I and a few colleagues took a car to Da Lat. When I got there, I was filled with joy to see the beautiful scenery as I felt so much fresher. It is hard to put into words how beautiful it is. Regarding the complaints, I wondered if Dak Lak province is like what people said, so I thought it would be useful to write it down here for readers to discuss. After several difficulties on the way on the way, the car slipped into a shallow stream, so we had to hire villagers to dig for five hours to bring the car out. We left the trip unfinished and expressed opinions as follows: I think Da Lat is also a scenic place, but few dare to go there because the roads are difficult to travel on. Many people wrote letters to complain to the officials of Dak Lak that the roads and bridges were ruined, but I did not believe it and only later knew the truth. Some people wish the government to spend money to restore this land. The first wish is to build roads, repair the bridges, and make it easy for visitors and people to travel. (K. D., 1926)

In describing the strict control and management, ethnographer and civil servant Tran Huy Ba in *Ban Me Thuot Diary* said that he took a train from Hanoi to Ninh Hoa station (Khanh Hoa) and then used a car to go to the high mountains:

At nearly noon, at kilometer 56, we reached the M'Drack fort. This fort was established in 1904 on a mountain in the rural region of Rdradés-Blo. Almost halfway, there is a station where officials check passports. If you do not have enough documents, do not try to set foot in Ban Me Thuot. Please go back! Like everyone else, I had to give papers to an ethnic secretary, who was no different from the generals we just met, but better dressed with combed hair, a yellow western shirt, and white shoes without socks. He wore an indigo loincloth with several rows of blue and red stitching on the upper part. He had a big cigarette in his mouth, solemnly looked at everyone's papers in turn, and then nodded and shook hands with them all. That is how to pass a checkpoint! It was almost 5 pm when we arrived in Ban Me Thuot province. As soon as the car stopped, I saw a soldier wearing a red panel check with a yellow border shirt, with his legs wrapped in white leggings and holding a large rattan whip. He was full of the "attitude" of the soldiers serving in the provincial governor's palace, and he asked for papers again. This time, he seemed more careful; he scrutinized every detail with an even bossier attitude. When it was my turn, he asked: "What are you doing here away from Hanoi?" I had to make it clear to him. This man said: "If that is the case, you must immediately go to the main court and present the papers." The next morning, we went to the embassy to submit the travel documents. (Trần, 1942, pp. 12-13)

In addition to narratives and self-introductions, the authors all played the role of "observers" to reflect, report, and describe reality according to their perspectives. The scope of this reflection primarily depended on the author's point of view and the purpose of his writings in the context of contemporary findings. Here, the author only wrote a brief article on the occasion of the excursion and focused on discussing a specific problem. Travel writings were sometimes published in multiple issues (Trung Son and Nam Dai with *Seven Days in "Moi" Land* and Tran Huy Ba with *Ban Me Thuot*, 3 issues).

Other times, they were published in many issues (X with *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed*, 25 issues). Authors even published in many issues and divided the writing into different articles and sections (Thai Huu Thanh with three research reports: *Moi in Dong Nai Thuong*, 5 issues; *15 Days with Monkey-tailed Moi*, 2 issues; and *Moi “Xa Nien,”* 5 issues).

From many pages of *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed* of journalist X, it can be said that this journal represents the characteristic features of journals written about the Central Highlands in general and the development of Da Lat in particular. Besides the detailed account of the reason for the resort trip and the train ride from Saigon to Da Lat, the author emphasized the journalist’s job (making field trips, gathering news, buying photos to send to newspapers, meeting and interacting with collaborators, planning content, and polling readers, etc.). The journal also reflects extensively on various topics and themes: reality and development trends of Da Lat and the Central Highlands, French-Southern relations, national consciousness and ethnicity, harmful traditional practices and improvements, preservation of traditions and rules of modernization, the relations between the Mekong delta and Central Highlands and the role of urbanization, the reality of spiritual life, and the natural and social-ecological environment. In social relations, the author met the restaurant owner Nguyen Ngoc Chuc, Mr. Tran Van An in charge of the restaurant, Mr. Lai of the Department of Artifacts, officials and local soldiers, the photographers Chau and Loan, the vice president Le Cour, and Mr. Meyer, a civil servant of the Department of Agriculture. When coming to a market, the journalist observed and commented on the differences in clothing and lifestyle of the indigenous people:

There are also Moi people walking around in the market: male, female, old, and young. I was shy since I rarely see Moi people in everyday life. The man’s body is only wrapped with a piece of dirty cloth about three inches wide, enough for them to wear as loincloths to cover their nakedness. Women also wear clothes but with naked breasts. They are so comfortable and leisurely. Let’s imagine people in Saigon wearing the “fashions” of these people; they cannot help but be sued by those foreign ladies. (X, 1929b)

It also emphasizes the changes, the ability to integrate, and the progress of development through the images provided by the official:

The Moi also know about civilization. What is their civilization? They wear the same clothes as me as we have seen with the ethnic official and the ethnic soldier. Some of them wear a black scarf and a shirt studded with silver and ivory. The others also wear shabby clothes, a plaid shirt, and a medallion on their chest. I have often met a Moi official passing by the restaurant; he wore long clothes to work. I do not know if anyone at the embassy called him Moi. He is a rather fat man, wearing a long shirt, a black scarf on his head, wearing shiny boots or sometimes shiny leather sandals. This ethnic official has a wife from Hue. They lived together with golden hearts. He loved her deeply and rarely let her go out of the house. As for civilians, some men I saw at the market here are also very

sensible. When the weather is cold, they know to put on coats to keep warm. (X, 1929b)

In a trilogy of studies on people's lives in Moi Dong Nai Thuong, a province of Upper Dong Nai (now in Lam Dong Province), journalist Thai Huu Thanh entered the village, deliberately observed people from the perspective of ethnography, and later divided his writings under several headings to explain the following: the journey, bodies, clothing, houses, lifestyle, customs, hygiene, rituals, love, and association. The journalist's observations and comments are as follows:

When it comes to their business, we have to express our admiration. Early in the morning, they get up to cook. Then, when the sun starts to rise, they begin their work: mowing grass, digging holes, cutting trees, etc., until noon or evening. They rarely drink or eat anything. When night comes, they go back home and eat. That is two meals a day, but they work very hard and constantly. While working, they barely talk or chat, and they know their duties very well as there is no need to rush them in doing anything. But there is a particular characteristic of these people that not only Southern people, but even the French who own plantations here must also abide. That is, if you promise them a "phoi" – a period that people work in the fields, which is about 15 days, then on the last day you have to give them the money right away. If the payment is late, there will be trouble for sure. They pile into the house and office to ask for money, and from men to women, they all lie down until they receive their money. After the last day of a "phoi," even if offered one more day of work and to be paid 10 times more, they would refuse to work. Their words match their actions without misrepresentation or greed for money. (Thái, 1943, p. 5)

This proves that the author has made a close observation, characterizing the personalities, ways of thinking, habits, and the honesty, sincerity, and consistency of the ethnic minorities of the Highlands.

3.2. Role of the narrator and tone of the "commentator"

Aligned with the observations, notes, and reports, it can be seen that the external voice and tone of the "commentator" also closely followed the author's position and role. On the one hand, the way of observing and reflecting reality, itself, reflects the author's point of view. On the other hand, the tone of the "commentator" continues to be the expression of a direct, personal, and subjective attitude as well as the opinions of the author. This discourse orientation firstly depends on the social position, observation level, knowledge, experience, level of understanding, and insight of the author into people's lives in the Central Highlands in the first half of the twentieth century.

Since information was still limited, readers in other regions did not understand much about this area, so they just weaved tales and spread many thrilling, strange, and mythical stories about the Central Highlands. Due to a lack of understanding, many people assumed that all ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands are "tailed people,"

“cannibals,” “fermented frog consumers,” “Xa Nie ³ eating raw meat,” and “practitioners of dark magic.” Nguyen Duc Quynh, after penetrating the reality, based his comments on the concept of geo-culture to analyze, argue, affirm, and appreciate the rationality and objectivity of the subsistence lifestyle:

As this matter is considered, they do not follow anyone since they do not need to depend on anyone. For food, they grow rice to eat. For clothing, they weave cloth to wear. For shelter, they build thatched huts to live. They have salt, meat, fish from streams, fruit, fire, rocks, and the “foot bike”—a pedal-less bicycle. All the necessities for life are in their world; they are not lacking anything. What do they need to ask for? In terms of weapons, they have those they forge; for clothing, they have available sources from nature. Their hair is worn pulled up. For adornment, they have shiny peacock feathers, pearl necklaces, and stone bracelets. With many precious, beautiful, and beneficial things, they refuse to rely on anyone else. Therefore, it is perfectly fine for them to live all well together. (Nguyễn, 1930, p. 14)

In addition, the author goes in depth to explain and comment:

Kon Tum of the Moi is in no way different from our Cho Lon–Big Market. Yes, we are good at robbing people and being robbed. Borrowing comes hand-in-hand with paying! There are big churches and big restaurants with vegetables, fish, and meat. Everything. I came to realize that sitting at home and judging is a sign of ignorance. Please inform anyone who is going to Moi land that they should not think less of the ethnic people or agree with the idea that they eat fermented frogs. Ethnic people are happier than our people. Their environment is more open than ours. Their scenery is more beautiful than ours. Their temperament is tamer than ours. In terms of the three “necessities” of eating, living, and wearing, they all have more surplus than we do since they just eat to get full, live simply, and wear just enough clothes. Is it pure happiness? It is only a pity that the Southern people, even in this land of ethnic people, are not treated equally with Moi. (It is a fact that they are precious.) Hence, I advise you, my brothers and sisters, not to be fooled by external appearances. (Nguyễn, 1930, p. 14)

In his *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed*, journalist X tells about a trip to Dan Kia and describes the lifestyle, labor, and costumes of the mountain people:

From a great distance I saw a small three-roofed house made of tall thatch. I looked at the land. In the yard in front of the house some ethnic girls were standing and pounding rice. Their pestle was a smooth stick like a pestle used for crushing chili. It did not look like our pestle for crushing rice, which is easily used to get the white rice quickly without using too much force. There was an ethnic woman with only a slat underneath. Every time she bent over to lift the pestle up and

³ Xa Nien is a phrase for a mythical creature—a person who has been lost in the forest for a long time and eventually turns into an ape.

down, we could hear the sound of her breasts thumping against her chest! (X, 1929e)

The author Mau Than Muc N. X. H. re-identifies the position of Da Lat and the Central Highlands in the overall reference system of anthropology, national history, and geopolitics of the whole country:

I went to Da Lat with a mixed feeling between happiness and worry. Why does it bother me? In terms of these plateaus in Indochina, such as Chapa, Taphinh (belonging to Lao Kay), Kon Tum (Ai Lao), and Da Lat (Trung Ky), if you compare Indochina to a human figure, these plateaus are no different from the head. If we do not nurture the head by coming and living here, the body probably will not be as strong anymore. In the book entitled *Complete Annals of Đại Việt*, an official historical text, it is also said that the strength flowing from high to low is no different from a pitcher of water falling from the roof of a house. Therefore, our country has faced many difficulties with the Chinese as their position is higher than ours. Now, let's consider our people. Have our people been enslaved? If so, are we not concerned? As it is concluded: The plantations of the French in some ways benefit us since a Frenchman who owns a plantation has to bring a few hundred of our people there to work, which is no different from the emigration of our people to the mountains. In short, when our people have come to the highlands and mountains, they will completely belong to the Indochina peninsula. Since some governors-general decided to make Da Lat the capital of Indochina, it is enough to acknowledge the vital role of these highlands. (Mẫu Sơn Mực N. X. H., 1928, p. 459)

The country's history from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day has clearly shown the characteristics and regularity that the author has perceived, speculated, and predicted.

3.3. Narrator's role and convention of "implied reader"

The "commentator" tone is often expressed in a relatively neutral manner in favor of objective perception, while the "implied reader" discourse serves to imply or to voice opinions and directions toward a specific group of the audience. In other words, in conventional discourse, the "implied reader" expresses the narrator's outlook toward readers and receivers, thereby reflecting a view, vision, predictability, the ability to evoke emotions, and voices the author's thoughts concerning the "expectations" of the readers.

From the position of the provincial manager, K. D. has confirmed and posed a question: "In Kon Tum province, many people say that ethnic people hate people from Langsa—a city in the Aceh province of Indonesia. And The "Moi" people hate people from Langsa, while the Annamites are tolerated. Why is it so? That question is difficult to discuss accurately." Eventually, the reason people did not help the car stuck in the stream was exposed: "When getting to the place, we were all tired. We asked a worker here for his help. He answered affirmatively that the senior resident said that it was forbidden to

rescue the Langsa people (some members of my group are from Langsa).” The author also suggested that the government needed to build roads and made commands according to personal feelings: “Secondly, it is forbidden for ethnic people to stand back when there is any trouble happening to the Langsa people. Come out and help them” (K. D., 1926). The question and request are certain to belong to a bureaucratic head of the province who never put any effort into getting to know his people.

Observing and empathizing with the miserable situation in which deaths outnumber births, journalist X, in his journal *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed*, considered the matter over and over again in frankly expressing his opinion:

It is not difficult for ethnic people to eat well and dress properly like us, but it seems that they hate this material civilization. When we or foreigners come here, they shun us and refuse to interact. Why does that happen? Although they are accused of being barbaric, they still know how to deal with civilized people, inevitably fall into strong and weak situations, so they do not have to be slaves for the rest of their lives. They neither work hard nor are slaves to anyone, their hands work for their mouths, they work when they need to, and they live without caring about tomorrow. Are they free? Coming to this point, I recall that the colonial government had lured ethnic people to submit by bringing them clothes, pots, pans, and promising to support them. (The Department of Censorship removed a paragraph.) To say that the ethnic people submit to the French government concerns just a portion, a few hundred people at the maximum. They agreed to work as hired laborers to clear mountains and build roads just for money to feed their mouths. But in no way can the French oppress them. (The Department of Censorship removed a paragraph.) (X, 1929a)

It can be seen that the passage must have offended contemporary social institutions, so the Department of Censorship decided to cut out those “marginal” and “rebellious” ideas.

Journalist X, with his journal *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed*, is also an embodiment of expressing opinions and attitudes towards the colonialists and ruling circles in the Da Lat—Central Highlands region. The following dialogue with a soldier clearly shows what the author meant:

I said: “Perhaps your people never became soldiers before?” An ethnic man nodded his head with a sad face and said: “People like us refusing to submit to foreigners are called *Ma*. All of them are very far from here. It takes two or three days to walk there. In the past, they lived in Da Lach until the Annamites and Westerners arrived, then they gradually moved away and hid in the jungle. Those people only deal with a few Annamites who come up to their place to exchange cattle. But they kill foreigners trying to approach them. Many Westerners came up to their place to live and convince them. The result is that they killed them all and hid away.” To this point, I remember that Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Chuc was able to buy some handmade products from the ethnic people, such as bronze shields and bedspreads. Their bedspread is no different from a Western bedspread, but it

is thickly woven, very sturdy, with four borders, and well-hidden seams. The Westerners find the bedspreads made by the ethnic people very skillfully made and steadily look for them. So, the price is now very expensive, up to fifteen or seventeen dong per bedspread. (X, 1929c)

Sometimes the author by pretending to be "surprised," but emphasizing the injustice and irrationality, thereby evoked a sense of citizenship, nationalism, and ethnicity:

I heard that every year the government issues a lot of subvention money for this restaurant and Desanti. Granting money to help these restaurants provide cheap food portions, I find very strange. Our restaurants do not receive any money. Speaking of subsidies, I think of the poor people who exchange a bowl of sweat for a bowl of rice, yet still have to pay heavy taxes so that the rich can come to Da Lat to relax and pay less in restaurants. Those Western restaurants, with mostly Western owners, have other subsidies each and every year. I burst into laughter looking at that large restaurant, yet managed to say only one sentence: "This restaurant is a Western restaurant, but this land is Vietnamese land." I immediately went down to the lake to enjoy the scenery. (X, 1929c)

The issue continued to be pushed further when the author narrated Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Chuc's comparison in terms of management and salary at Dan Kia Agriculture Department between "Westerners" and "our Annamites":

No, if this department is owned by the Annamites, it will save more money for the public, and it will immediately make profits. Let's consider how much it is to hire a man to work in the fields. How much does it cost a month, and then for a year? If this department were under the control of the Annamites, it would not have to cost as much. (X, 1929c)

On the train back to Saigon, hearing a Western couple scorning the Annamites, the journalist monologues in his mind, just "whispering," "recalling," "missing," "remembering," "knowing," "realizing," and "remembering," but imbued with feelings, like a summons or reflection, awakening on the fate of the enslaved people:

I lie down and remember the story of the great priest and his wife feeling numb, thinking about what kind of a citizen I am. Then I said to myself: "That is right, I should not be sad. So, this lets me know I am a cowardly person as well as twenty-five million other people in this country. Oh, it reminds me of those people who got on the carriage and got off the horse, dealing with the Westerners. They forgot they are also vile people like me, but when I knew my lowliness, I knew how to love my people and my country." (X, 1929c)

Until the end, the journal becomes lighter when the author borrows the words of his great grandfather praising the beauty of the Highlands:

Da Lat is beyond what it is; the landscape is like Vosges province, a mountainous region in France. The climate here is even better than in countries in Europe and

America. In Europe and America, there are four seasons; winter is too cold and summer is hot. In Da Lat, from the start to the end of the year, it is always cool. The climate is beautiful every day, every month, just like heaven. The beauty of the Da Lat landscape is undeniable. (X, 1929d)

He also directly expressed respect and admiration:

The words of the old man were generous and meaningful, but I heard enough to understand what he wanted to say. He also spoke of many other issues that made me respect him as a man who takes care of spiritual affairs, not the outside world. It is as it should be to keep righteousness and take care of national affairs. (X, 1929d)

To a certain extent, along with many other authors, journalist X of *Cong-luan-bao* with his journal, *One Month in Da Lat—Things Witnessed*, has expressed and conveyed his opinions to the "implied reader" on many subjects, scopes, purposes, methods, and at different in-depth levels.

4. CONCLUSION

In the first half of the twentieth century, the Central Highlands was still a relatively unknown and isolated land. Thanks to these journals, readers knew more about this place, thereby contributing to gradually eliminating differences and misunderstandings. Based on the "nonfiction" style of writing and the narrative method, the narrative characteristics of the "observer" and "first-person narrative" have been determined. They also establish the characteristics of mixed genres of literature and journalism, and the ability to integrate survey materials, fieldwork, records on geography, culture, anthropology, ethnography, customs, practices, and the ecological environment. Besides research, the journals increased the role of the narrative voice, the voice of political opinion, and the lyrical theme, thereby creating a connection, prediction, and orientation of public opinion between the author and the reader. In terms of both text collection and research, journals written about the Central Highlands in the early twentieth century continue to be an object for students of literature, interdisciplinary social sciences, and humanities to explore and draw experience, which contributes to the construction and development of the Central Highlands today and tomorrow.

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