

Money under the reign of Tự Đức



Before becoming the "Đồng", the Vietnamese monetary unit was called the piaster. The paper currency was imposed during the reforms instituted by the usurper Hồ Quý Ly in 1400. If money represents the economy of a country for the majority of people, it reflects for us Vietnamese, an historic evolution of our country.

It was because of a monetary crisis that the revolt of the Tây Sơn took place in 1771 in central Vietnam, not far from Qui Nhơn. The rich illegally issued money themselves. Then for fear of being discovered as it was impossible for them to use it too much, they took advantage of it by hoarding rice, which caused famines without reasons. Thanks to this revolt, the leader of the Tây Sơn insurrection arrived at unifying the country by eliminating the Trinh and the Nguyen and thus became emperor Nguyễn Huệ.

Money also evokes the memory of the young **Nguyễn Ánh**, our future emperor Gia-Long. In hiding from the troops of Tây Sơn and waiting for French reinforcements, he took refuge in a grotto in a region of Hà Tiên where he discovered pieces of money hidden by pirates during their passage. That is why the Hang Tiên grotto is often called under the name of "grotto of pieces of money" and accessible nowadays only by boat.

Each Vietnamese has had the opportunity to use the piaster and to find in the evolution of this currency part of his youth and his past.

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Money

One also find through these bills the episode when France was present in Indochina, an episode that linked the Indochinese people with the destiny of France. A collection of bills from the French episode in Indochina has been placed at the disposition of those who like to know the history of currency of Vietnam.

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