

# The Rebirth of the Phoenix

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In *Loan*, readers find the magical light of hope and, above all, the spirit of constant struggle against fate. *Loan*, *Aus Dem Leben Eines Phönix* (*Loan*, *From the Life of a Phoenix*) was in the top 5 finalists of the 2015 Kindle Storyteller Award, a German award, attracted more than 1,000 manuscripts to compete. *Loan* is highly appreciated because the author's native language is French, but she writes *Loan* in German. This work also won the Bestseller Award on Amazon's distribution system. What makes *Loan*, the autobiography of an Annamese woman, through the pen of a Western European writer, so attractive? First of all, *Loan - Aus Dem Leben Eines Phönix*, impresses because it is the life story of the author's mother: Mrs. Dau Thi Cuc. Born in a small village near Ha Tinh town, during the semi-feudal, semi-colonial period, Mrs. Cuc was a representative of most Annamese women at that time: placed in the bottom class, despised, mistreated and had no right to control their own bodies and lives. But Mrs. Cuc never accepted that. Her rebellion is the attraction that makes readers follow the journey of that little woman. Throughout Mrs. Cuc's path, from the time she left home to avoid a barter marriage between a bride and a piece of

land, two pigs, to when she rebuilt her life in France, readers easily suffocate before the uncertainties of life, of war. Bursting out in the turmoil of the times is hope. It is also the life buoy of that little woman, on the journey to find her own life. According to the author, she rewrote her mother's journey through her mother's words. Yet, the entire Vietnamese society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is still vividly recreated by Isabelle Müller. It is not necessarily the perspective of an insider but through the lens of an outsider looking in. Perhaps, this is what makes Loan completely different from other works in the same social context. Born in 1964 in Tours, France, author Isabelle Müller works as an interpreter, translator and writer. Many of her novels have been published and distributed in Germany, through the Amazon book system. In 2003, she started writing books and the life of her mother and her distant mother's homeland were one of her great sources of inspiration. In the 1990s, she and her mother returned to Southeast Asia to learn about the origin of her Vietnamese blood. After Loan won the Bestseller Award on the Amazon system, Isabelle Müller longed to do something for her mother's homeland. In 2016, Müller surveyed schools in the highland border areas and chose to help in places where other philanthropists did not go due to the long distance and high mountains, such as Cao Bang and Ha Giang. In order to have more funding sources other than personal and family contributions, she and her friends established the LOAN Foundation. After more than 1 year of operation, the Foundation has contributed to building many houses, kitchens, and toilets for students in the mountains. The Foundation also provides monthly scholarships to poor and studious children in these places... Traveling back and forth between Vietnam and Germany, Isabelle Müller's joy now is the smiles she encounters on her journey, a journey to bring warmth and knowledge to Vietnamese children.