



THE HUMANISTIC THINKING OF PHAN BOI CHAU – HISTORY AND TIMELY VALUEⁱ

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Abstract:

The humanistic thought of Phan Boi Chau is one of the core issues. It is a synthesis of contents: views that promote the role, status and values of people; is kindness, altruism, expressed in the love of people, race, homeland; is educational interest. All are derived from the principle are the national spirit and patriotism, with the close unity between culture and politics, between nationality and humanity; contribute to enriching and deepening the traditional humanistic spirit of the Vietnamese nation, affirming the strength of human and people of Vietnam. Awakening patriotism, encouraging, and gathering masses to stand; to fight for national independence, freedom for the country and happiness for people of Vietnam.

Keywords: Phan Boi Chau, humanistic thought, history, timely value, Vietnamese thought

1. Introduction

Phan Boi Chau (1867-1940) was a poet, writer, revolutionary, and teacher had a great influence on the cause of national liberation in the first half of the XX century. Many of his works and ideas are still full of values in the process of national construction and renewal, including humanities value in his thoughts. As a form of social consciousness, the humanities value in Phan Boi Chau's thought is also being influenced and is the absorption of previous ideological premises. They are the spirit of patriotism of the nation; the will of national independence and self-improvement; compassion and tolerance; spirit of solidarity in the national community; unique humanity in Vietnamese cultural traditions. It is also the view that upholds the role and position of human in the Scriptures, the Sutras, the Hieu's Scriptures, and the Tuan Tu, and the view that upholds moral, moral, and "ordinary" values in the Kong - Meng's thought, Dong Trong Thu's thought, Trinh Hao's thought, Trinh Di's thought, Chu Hy's thought; and progressive

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perspective of Dam Tu Dong, Luong Khai Sieu, Khang Huu Vi, Ton Trung Son; It is compassion, "*great compassion, equal beings*" (Phan, 2010, Complete set, vol 10: 37) of Buddhism, in the East. Not only that, Phan Boi Chau also absorbed and inherited the unique humanistic views of Western ideological currents, such as Socrates' view of human nature, Aristotelian morality, Platon, the evolutionary view of Ch. Darwin, Auguste Comte's altruism and selflessness, views of the role of man in the world by R. Descartes, F. Bacon and J. G. Fichte, Dateo charity's ideology of equality, progressive thought on human rights, independence, freedom, democracy and equality of J. J. Rousseau, Ch. L. Montesquieu, the utopian thought of socialism of Th. More, S. Simon, Ch. Fourier.

In particular, Phan Boi Chau has absorbed and influenced quite deeply the lofty human nature in the thought of human liberation of Marxism-Leninism. All, inherited, refined and crystallized through the intellect and personality of a culturalist, thinker, politician, patriot, unified in the person of Phan Boi Chau, creating unique humanities values in his thoughts. The article focuses on solving two questions:

Question 1: What is the humanistic content in Phan Boi Chau's thought?

Question 2: What is the meaning of Phan Boi Chau's ideology to Vietnamese society today?

2. Literature Survey

Can generalize researches, assessments on human values in the thought of Phan Boi Chau in the following topics: The first topic is the research works on the conditions, the foundation for formation, the main content and characteristics in on human values in the thought of Phan Boi Chau, including: *Research of Phan Boi Chau* by Chuong Thau (editor), Publishing House National Politics, Hanoi, 2004; *Phan Boi Chau about the author and works* of Chuong Thau and Tran Ngoc Vuong, Publisher Education, Hanoi, 2007; *Phan Boi Chau's work, people and career*, Publisher Hanoi National University, 1997... Especially, research on Phan Boi Chau has also attracted many foreign scientists. In France, there were monographs on Phan Boi Chau by G. Buodarel such as: *Mémoires de Phan Boi Chau*, France - Asie/Asia XXIII - 4, 1969; or *Phan Boi Chau et la société Vietnamienne de son temps*, France-Asia/Asia XXIII - April 1969. In the US since the end of the twentieth century, there was David G's anti-colonial movement in Vietnam from 1885 to 1925. *Marn and the 100th Anniversary of the Journey to the West Movement: Phan Boi Chau Cuong De* by Do Minh Thong. In Germany, at the Institute of Southeast Asian History, Passaw University, in 1987, Professor Bernard Dam gave topic: *Phan Boi Chau - Vietnamese cultural house, Vietnam national movement and its relations with Japan and Asia: Thought of Phan Boi Chau, the world revolution*, including 2 volumes by Shiraishi Masaya (by Translated by Nguyen Nhu Diem, translated by Tran Son, revised by Chuong Thau), Publisher. National Politics, Hanoi, 2000.

The second topic is the research, analysis, assessment and evaluation of on human values in the thought of Phan Boi Chau, including: *The development of thought in Vietnam from the nineteenth century to the August Revolution*, 3 volumes by Tran Van Giau,

Publishing House National Politics, Hanoi, 1997; *Phan Boi Chau - patriotism, cultural house of Chuong Thau, Culture - Information* Publishing House, Hanoi, 2012; *Phan Boi Chau's thoughts on personality issues*, Journal of Social Sciences, No. 12 (136), 2009, *Phan Boi Chau's thoughts on education*, Journal of Social Sciences, No. 4 (128), 2009.

Besides, regarding Phan Boi Chau's research works on ideology in general, human values in his thoughts in particular, and the work of the *Vietnam National Movement and its relationship with Japan and Asia: Phan Boi Chau's thought about the world revolution*, including 2 volumes by Shiraishi Masaya (volume 1 translated by Nguyen Nhu Diem, Chuong Thau edited; volume 2 translated by Tran Son, Chuong Thau edited), Publisher. National Politics, Hanoi, published in 2000, the author has focused on presenting revolutionary ideas of Phan Boi Chau, in the context of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement, the world and the region. In which the author has studied the political ideology of Phan Boi Chau through his views on the state, the people, the domestic and international situation during his period in Japan. There are also research works on different fields of Phan Boi Chau's thought such as: *Find out more about violent ideology by Phan Boi Chau*, *Journal of Historical Studies*, No. 5, 1978; Learn about Phan Boi Chau's Confucian ideology through "published Confucianism", *Philosophy magazine*, No. 6, 1999; or *Lecture on Phan Boi Chau* by Lam Giang, Tan Viet, Saigon, published in 1959.

3. Methods

The paper's approach is based on the worldview and the methodology of Marxist philosophy, and at the same time uses specific research methods such as analysis and synthesis, logic and history, inductive and interpretation, abstraction, generalization, comparison, comparison and literary methods for research and presentation.

4. Results & Discussions

4.1 Humanistic thought of Phan Boi Chau

The point of view emphasizes the roles and human values. In terms of worldview, in order to promote roles and values of human, Phan Boi Chau has studied Eastern theoretical views, Western philosophical theory and sociology to confirm: Man is a divine race in all things, which can also be called a great thing in all things" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 7: 182); and the essence of man are more than animals, that is "population", is the nature of society. "We dare to decide: man is an animal that has society." (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 7: 183) Also by studying philosophy and scientific knowledge, Eastern and Western culture, Phan Boi Chau also thinks that human is the most noble in universes. He said:

*"Judging from all things,
Human are the most precious.
Different from all species,
That's that human. "* (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 8: 11)

According to Phan Boi Chau, man is the most highly developed product of nature, is the elite of heaven and earth, not only brave by the strength of hands and feet; clarified by the clarity of the eyes and ears; Having wisdom, spirituality at the top of everything because of a wise mind, but also have emotional, always delicate because of having a sensitive heart and knowing to distinguish right and left, because of conscience (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 8: 11-12)

In terms of outlook on life and politics - society, on the basis of criticizing the superstition and ignorance of our people and the trampling on the dignity and human rights of Vietnam of the French colonialist, Phan Boi Chau has promoted human roles and values through the promotion of human personality and human rights. He considers personality to be human nature, as an expression of mankind and human rights as a divine natural human right, a person greater than all things, associated with issues such as civil rights, national authority, independence, freedom, democracy, equality. He analyzed the relationship between human self, values and human rights with the origin of the country's right, to highlight the human role through the issue of human rights:

"What people love most is nothing like my body. Above the body are the ancestor, the parents, under the body are the descendants, little-grandchildren; but in fact, they are all one of us ... My body has no value. Because there is water. If the country is lost, our value is low. Why is my body that has rights? Because there is country. If the country dies, the rights will be lost." (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 3: 26)

He affirmed that the people, especially civil rights, are the decisive factor for the rights, strength, destiny and survival of the country. These are the views that demonstrate his progressive nature. In which people have a decisive role in the destiny of the country and its root is the patriotism of the race.

4.1.1 The point of view heightens kindness and selflessness

To clarify the content of the point of view "*kindness*", "*selflessness*", Phan Boi Chau gave a rather profound definition of "*kindness*". He thinks that "*kindness*" is the "*compassionate*" heart of people; is love for people, including love for people, race and fatherland; is the good nature "*embryo from the womb, with new humanity, human beings, is the kindness endowed to us; Kindness is the qualitative difference between humans and animals, between human beings and the inhuman*" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 8: 41). In particular, in the concept of kindness and altruism, Phan Boi Chau does not stop at the abstract concept, in general, but it has been vividly expressed in his perspective of love which is broader and deeper. They are love for the people, love for the human kind, and love for the country; in deep hatred the colonial empire invaded. In which, he praised the role of the working people; he affirmed that "*a prosperous country is thanks to the people*", so "*our country's destiny is held by our people*." (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 2: 179).

Because of clearly seeing the role and great strength of the people, when advocating revolutionary violence, Phan Boi Chau always called on the entire people to unanimously stand up and expel the invading French colonialists. Phan Boi Chau also

criticizes people, although they are from the same race, the same country, but do not know how to love each other, they are suspicious, separated, or killed each other. Therefore, he wrote: "*for the people who seek happiness, even sacrificing oneself will not regret.*" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 4: 73)

With regard to love of race and Fatherland, with his scientific knowledge and profound philosophical point of view, Phan Boi Chau thinks that by nature being human, having the same race, we must know to love each other. Otherwise, humans are just ordinary creatures. Therefore, in his mindset, Phan Boi Chau always deeply expressed his patriotism and pride in the descendants of the Dragon and the Fairy descendants, of Hung Vuong descendants with more than four thousand years of history of building the country. keep the water glorious. Since then, he appealed to every Vietnamese citizen not only to: "*Make the Lac Hong blood become well-know*" and make: "*The Dragon and the Fairy's traditional glory*" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 3: 413), but also to know solidarity, love each other, forming great power to build, develop and protect the country. Besides the great and deep love for people, for our race, ethnicity and Fatherland.

4.1.2 Points of view on education

According to Phan Boi Chau, education with the most general meaning is to nurture and educate a comprehensive person both physically and mentally, to train a perfect human. In the issue of Education - the use and value of literature, he analyzed and explained quite deeply the meaning of the concept of education: "*the two words of education were originally in Chinese literature, but now they have become National language, "giao" means teaching, "duc" means raising*" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 7: 213). According to him:

"Everything that our people need to learn, we invite teachers, open schools so that any people in our country who are rich and poor, cowardly, boys and girls, who are five years old or older, go to a nursery school to take the upbringing of the childish level; eight years old or older, then enter the primary school to take the education of the elementary level; fourteen years old or older, then go to high school to take the high school education; By the age of eighteen, the talents were quite good, then went to the college to take the professional college education." (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 7: 184)

Phan Boi Chau criticizes the scholarly, conservative, backward and one-sided learning style that has been deeply ingrained in our country for thousands of years and exposes the content of education that is misleading, enslaved, aimed at coercing the Vietnamese people became slaves, buffaloes and horses that the French colonialists carried out in our country, saying: "*Since the lost of the country, of course the French not only did not provide the Vietnamese with a good education, but they are increasingly Forcing Vietnamese people to follow the education of slaves, buffalos and horses... to encourage learning from chapters, exams, such as ancient literature, poetry, supportive training, from chapter*" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 7: 280). Since then, he advocated an educational and academic renewal, a neo-liberal from school opening to content, educational methods and also the appointment and use of talented people after being trained. He advocates

that "if people have enthusiasm, they can recruit talented people to teach them useful learning and give up fictional studies, still respecting the goodness of the holy book that must supplement Thai Tay's learning. The exams set up new rules, not the exams of literature" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 1: 99). He said that the content of education must be comprehensive; must educate both education, ethics and physical education; educate both knowledge of natural sciences to social sciences; It is particularly important to educate knowledge about economics, military, jurisprudence, information, industry, agriculture, commerce, forestry, medicine and social issues, such as democracy, independence, freedom, equality, and the foundation of patriotism (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 2: 184-185). He advocated for the renewal of the examination method, saying: "The exam establishes a new regulation, not a literal exam" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 1: 99) and proposes "to grant the emigration scholarship. Study abroad well to help training talented people for country" (Phan, 2000, Complete set, vol 1: 99).

5. Practical significance of humanities values in Phan Boi Chau's thought

The humanistic thought of Phan Boi Chau has contributed to enriching and deepening the contents of concepts, categories and views in the content of spiritual thoughts and human values of the Vietnamese people, from there enrich the cultural identity and traditions of the Vietnamese people. Not only that, the humanistic value in Phan Boi Chau's ideology has contributed to the development and supplementation of the Vietnamese traditional ideological content, human values, concepts, categories and opinions, points with new and progressive connotations and properties, such as personality, human rights, civil rights, national rights, associated with issues such as independence, freedom, democracy, equality..., creating a change of thought Vietnam at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. With such profound theoretical value, the humanistic value in Phan Boi Chau's ideology has become one of the theoretical premises for future thinkers to inherit and develop.

Phan Boi Chau's humanistic thought has great significance and is a breakthrough in arousing the strength and confidence of the people. It is the bell that awakens the independent will, self-reliance and resilience of our people, arousing the strength and confidence of our people; thereby helping our people to have enough spirit, energy, will, courage, courage, to stand up unanimously to drive away the invading French colonialists, to regain independence for the nation and freedom for the country. The humanistic values in Phan Boi Chau's thought also have high value and deep meaning in awakening and raising the patriotic spirit of the Vietnamese people; not only that, it was also a great source of motivation, a great spiritual power that promoted the spirit of the revolution, encouraged, gathered, unified the entire people, unanimously stood up and chased away the French and saved the country, save the house.

However, the humanistic thought of Phan Boi Chau still has certain limitations.

Firstly, Phan Boi Chau has tried to inherit, critically on Nho's views and absorb scientific knowledge and new points of view and progressive perspectives of bourgeois democracy, but in general, in his thought, he still being influenced by many Confucian

concepts, categories and views both in content and form and he often explained them under the lens of a patriotic Confucianist.

Secondly, Phan Boi Chau does not have a really scientific worldview to present and explain issues of content of human values in a scientific way. The feature of Phan Boi Chau's worldview is the inconsistency and ambiguity, mixing the point of view of Confucianism with some scientific knowledge of the West. Therefore, making him do not have a truly scientific explanation of the content of his human values. Also, because there is not a scientific worldview and a certain knowledge of sociology, dominated by class stance, so Phan Boi Chau does not have a correct view in determining the role and position. people's mind. He did not rely on economic interest relations to divide social classes, but sometimes he relied on occupation, social status, when he relied on bloodline, religion to be the criteria for the that division.

Thirdly, Phan Boi Chau still has ambiguity in identifying revolutionary forces, especially in determining the core force of the revolution. Phan Boi Chau also has fluctuations, inconsistencies, even compromises and tend to reform in revolutionary policies and methods. That is also the general crisis of the lines of patriotic movements this period.

The above limitations are because of Phan Boi Chau is in the process of transforming his ideological stance, from authoritarian monarchy to bourgeois democracy and approaching Marxism-Leninism, so he has not completely escaped from the influence of the old worldview, at the same time not fully absorbing new and progressive ideas at that time. Moreover, due to the limitations of historical times, he is not qualified enough to have a comprehensive view of all the changes of the time. So, he has not been able to shape a scientific worldview to properly explain the problems posed. If you ignore these limitations, his human values are still useful historical lessons for the renovation work as well as for the current cause of national construction and defense. It is a lesson all for human, and for people; lessons to promote the value and promote the role of human and the people, and lessons of concern, education and complete development of the Vietnamese people today.

6. Conclusion

The content of the humanistic thought of Phan Boi Chau is a rather unique and progressive ideological system on the role, status and values of the human and the people; is benevolence, selflessness; is educational interest. The aforementioned contents, if ignoring certain historical limitations, still remain valid in a certain aspect that we need to inherit. Currently, the problem of building and developing comprehensive human is one of the issues that Vietnam is very concerned with with the view that "*People are the center of the development strategy, and at the same time the development subject*" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016: 126).

With progressive and humanistic thoughts of Phan Boi Chau. Ho Chi Minh commented on Phan Boi Chau: "*A hero, an angel, who has dedicated himself to independence,*

is worshiped by twenty million people in slavery life" (Ho, 2000: 172.) These views of Phan Boi Chau are still useful lessons for human development in Vietnam today.

Conflict of Interest

The authors do not have any conflict of interest to declare.

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