

## Vietnamese Students in Tokyo, 1906-1909\*

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### I. Introduction

Vietnam's Đông Du Movement(Phong Trào Đông Du)東遊運動 launched in 1905 by Phan Bội Châu潘佩珠 had a long-term objective, which was to prepare for Vietnam's independence by educating Vietnamese youths in Japan. The movement proceeded accordingly, having brought as many as 200 Vietnamese students into Japan until it came to an abrupt end in 1908 when the Japanese government issued a deportation order to all Vietnamese students residing in Japan. The movement thus lasted for such a period of time that was certainly not long enough to achieve its professed goal(Duiker 1976: 35-50; 유인선2002: 319-323). From another vantage point, however, it is not unreasonable to surmise that hundreds of students who had studied for two to three years in Japan could have made some contribution in one way or another to the independence and modernization of Vietnam. Equally possible is to speculate that the students could have formed a company of some sort based on their

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binding memories and experiences.

Scholarly attention has so far been given mostly onto Phan Bội Châu(Vĩnh Sinh 1988; 유인선 2004) and Prince Cường Để(淸樞) who was one of the students(Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005). Few studies have been conducted on other Vietnamese students in terms of who they were, what they learned and did in Japan, and what impact their education in Japan had on their lives and possibly their motherland. This essay is an attempt to make up these lacunae, which may offer a fresh look at the Đông Du Movement. The retrospective journey starts with the historical backdrop of the period in question.

## II. Tokyo circa 1905

Before proceeding to the outcome of Phan Bội Châu's campaign, let us have a sketchy look at the historical backdrop of the period. The biggest event that marked the year of 1905 was the Russo-Japanese War. To many Asians under the colonial occupation of the Europeans, Japan's victory shattered the myth of European superiority which had long been taken for granted. To many nationalists across Asia Japan rose not only as a role model to be emulated but as a potential ally which would willingly aid fellow Asians in breaking out of the colonial yoke. Phan Bội Châu was certainly one of them and it was precisely this thought that propelled him to come to Japan(Masaya 1975; Duiker 1976: 38). In hindsight such a view came short of grasping the reality of international politics of the time. Yet Phan Bội Châu did not cast a doubt and had to spend

a few more years before realizing that Japan was not so much a country of ‘the same race’ in alliance against the European imperialists as simply another imperial power.

The first months in Japan since his arrival in June 1905 must have puzzled Phan Bội Châu. It was months before Russia’s surrender when he settled down in Yokohama and he could hardly miss the political movement against the war which went so far as to challenge the government and even the political system itself including the sacrosanct emperor. Indeed the first decade of the twentieth century in Japan was a period that can be labeled the days of hundred flowers. It was mostly during this period that leftist political thoughts were introduced and espoused in Japan. A number of books on socialism, syndicalism, anarchism, and communism were published one after another. They were not only circulated in Japan but also immediately translated into Chinese and spread to neighboring countries invariably having great impact on those seeking political alternatives to their existing systems(守屋典郎 1980). Furthermore, the Japanese authors were also deeply involved in political activities with the alleged goals of realizing the ideals professed in their books and articles. It was in 1906 that the Social Democratic Party 社會民主党 was transformed to the Japanese Socialist Party 日本社會党 explicitly advocating socialism as the party’s platform ideology. Party members were involved in organizing unions and cooperatives and other spontaneous social groups also proliferated. It is important among others to note that the Socialist Party launched in the following year the Friday Seminar 金曜講習會, a weekly seminar designed to have its platform reach the general public. It attracted a wide variety of people

including many expatriates. Of particular importance is that the seminar provided a venue for Asian expatriates to meet and share their views and thoughts concerning anti-imperialist strategies. Soon the Socialist Party organized a separate meeting called Asian Fellow Trust Association 亞洲友信會(亞洲和親會) exclusively for expatriate participants of the seminar. In 1908 the association resumed with a new name the East Asian Alliance 東亞同盟會(박종린 2008; 조세현 2010, 66-75). As will be discussed below, Phan Bội Châu took an active part in the association. Such were the circumstances of the period during which Phan Bội Châu and the Vietnamese students resided in Japan.

Another aspect of the circumstances to be examined is the presence and activities of Chinese revolutionaries in Japan. By 1905 there were over thirteen thousand Chinese activists and students in Japan. Tokyo at that time was indeed the hub of Asian revolutionaries and intellectuals, to say the least.<sup>1)</sup> The most significant event to the Chinese revolutionaries took place in August 1905. It was the formation of Tongmenghui 中國同盟會 which unified under the leadership of Sun Wen 孫文 three major revolutionary groups(興中會, 光復會, 華興會). To Phan Bội Châu and his associates nothing could be more stimulating and encouraging than this merger.

Concerning the solidarity relations with the Japanese political

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1) There were many prominent figures in the modern history of China such as Hu Hanmin 胡漢民, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, Zhang Binglin 章炳麟, Huang Xing 黃興, Song Jiaoren 宋教仁, not to mention Kang Youwei 康有為 and Liang Qichao 梁啟超. Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石 was also in Japan attending a military school, at which as will be discussed later some Vietnamese students were to be enrolled. Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀, one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party also studied in Japan from 1901 to 1908. It was without a doubt in Japan that he was exposed to communism.

activists, it is important to notice that those whom Phan Bội Châu was introduced to were the ones who offered support to the nationalist activists led by Sun Wen. On the other hand Japanese activists in the socialist camp do not seem to have been connected until the East Asian Alliance was formed. Yet the Alliance had an impact on the part of Chinese members to the extent that they eventually withdrew from Tongmenghui as ideological and strategic differences began to emerge. At first, those who participated in the Alliance such as Zhang Binglin 章炳麟, Zhang Ji 張繼, and Liu Shiwei 劉師培 began to have seminar meetings independent from Tongmenghui. In time they started publishing a magazine titled Tian Yi 天義 which carried radical opinions such as condemning marriage and family as the root of all evils. The magazine repeatedly called for solidarity among Asian countries in resistance against the feudal and colonial systems in the region. The magazine gained many readers and began to be distributed in Shanghai as well. It should not be surprising that the Chinese members of the Alliance as a result could no longer align themselves with Tongmenghui as they explicitly advocated socialism or anarchism to be the right prescription for China's future. In retrospect, therefore, it can be said that the rise and spread of radical thoughts in the first decade of the twentieth century in Japan had a direct effect on China's revolutionary movement. Then it seems probable that the circumstances had some serious impact on the Vietnamese students looking for answers to their homeland.

An episode must be brought out to render the hypothesis more probable. One day a young man named Nguyễn Thức Canh 阮式庚, one of the four students who came first to Japan along with Phan

Bội Châu, walked off home simply to lessen the financial burden. He traipsed from Yokohama to Tokyo without a single penny and after two rough days on the street found a place he liked to stay, which happened to be the publishing office of Minbao民報, the newspaper of Tongmenghui. The editor by that time was Zhang Ji. Canh pleaded with his story of destitute circumstances for permission to live there. Permission was granted. He rushed back to the residence in Yokohama and came back with two of his friends. Thereby they had lived there until their schooling began(白石昌也 2012, 97).

Even if the students had not been in direct contact with the Japanese socialists and anarchists, it is quite probable that they were influenced by the books and magazines that carried those ideas. Their residence in Yokohama was located in the heart of Chinatown where all sorts of books and magazines were readily available(白石昌也 2012, 59). Perhaps more likely is that the Vietnamese students could be befriended with Chinese students who would share the leftist ideas widely circulated in the Chinese community. Unless the Vietnamese students were completely isolated, it is very likely that in one way or another they were exposed to the newly introduced political thoughts and connected with the Asian solidarity groups(윤대영 2007; 윤대영 2011). Then the questions follow. Who were they? What did they learn? Were they involved in any of the political activities? Did they partake in engendering Asian solidarity? Answers to these questions would lead to a future research regarding if they played any role in Vietnam's liberation struggle and modernization.

### III. Students Come to Japan

It was late May 1905 when Phan Bội Châu set foot in Japan in search of ways to liberate his homeland Vietnam from colonial rule. He wasted no time before meeting Liang Qichao 梁啟超 who then was in exile after the thwarted Hundred Days' Reform 戊戌變法. They had a long written conversation tete-a-tete, part of which was later published with the title of Việt Nam Vong Quốc Sử 越南亡國史 (소남자 2007). Liang was totally empathized with Phan Bội Châu's cause, but his reformist strategy and bitter memories of having been unable to cope with the sheer force unleashed against the Hundred Days' Reform led him to suggest to Phan Bội Châu a long-term scheme focused on strengthening the capacity of nationalist resistance in place of an outright campaigns challenging the colonial government. Central to Liang's prescription was education that would build a great company of young patriots devoted, competent, and ready to drive off the colonialists from Vietnam (Phan Bội Châu 2000, 60-62). The conversation with Liang seems to have made a deep impact on Phan Bội Châu. The primary task given to Phan Bội Châu upon his journey to Japan was to secure weapons for armed struggle against the French. But after the conversation his focus shifted to education rather than an outright armed resistance, although the latter option was not completely discarded (川本邦衛 1973).

Liang introduced Phan Bội Châu to Kashiwabara Buntaro 柏原文太郎 seeking further advice on how to organize and launch such a long-term vision. Kashiwabara was a leading expert on Chinese affairs who set up the China Studies Association 支那研究會 in 1896.

In fact, he was the person who arranged and sponsored Liang's exile in Japan. Kashiwabara in turn introduced Phan Bội Châu to a number of Japanese politicians and intellectuals who shared his views and interests toward China and other Asian countries(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 63-66). The most prominent figure among them was Okuma Shigenobu大隈重信, ex-Premier as well as the founder of Waseda University. Phan Bội Châu was also introduced to Inukai Tsuyoshi犬養毅, Okuma's Constitutional Party憲政本党 colleague, who later assumed premiership in 1931. Phan Bội Châu also had opportunities to meet Chinese revolutionaries including Sun Wen as the Japanese figures above were deeply involved in supporting Sun's revolutionary movement(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 76-79). All of the people Phan Bội Châu conversed with echoed Liang's advice in recommending the education of promising Vietnamese youths who would make up the driving force of the liberation of Vietnam. Encouraged as such Phan Bội Châu smuggled himself back to Vietnam with Hải Ngoại Huyết Thư海外血書 advocating the path to liberation he chose and calling for patriotic youth to come to Japan. The recruiting campaign was launched across Vietnam(Marr 1971: 120-155; Duiker 1976: 42).

Phan Bội Châu came back to Yokohama in October 1905 along with three young men, Nguyễn Thức Canh阮式庚, Nguyễn Điền阮典, and Lê Khiết黎結. Nguyễn Thức Canh, the man who walked in the Minbao office, was 20 years of age and son of Nguyễn Thiện Thuật阮善述, Phan Bội Châu's mentor. They were joined by Lương Ngọc Quyến梁玉眷 and his brother Lương Nghị Khanh梁毅卿 who had already come to Japan by themselves. Quyến and Khanh were 20 and 16 years old respectively and sons of Lương Văn Can梁文玕, who



later served as the principal of Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục 東京義塾. It was not until March 1906 that Prince Kỳ Ngoại Hầu Cường Để 畿外侯疆柢 arrived safely at Yokohama (Phan Bội Châu 2000: 70-79). Prince Cường Để was indispensable figure of the movement as he was the symbol of the rally. The political assets of Prince Cường Để in Phan Bội Châu's judgement were that he was an estranged member of the royal family posing no threat to the court which was to be overthrown and yet a direct descendent of Prince Cảnh (Nguyễn Phúc Cảnh) 阮福景, the eldest son of Emperor Gia Long 嘉隆. Prince Cảnh's contribution to the establishment of the Nguyễn dynasty and his premature death right before the establishment had left a lasting image of an unfortunate hero who would have otherwise been the legitimate heir to the throne. Such an image of reverence and sympathy was particularly strong in the southern provinces, the bedrock of the dynasty. So was Prince Cường Để expected to play a good symbolic role to which popular support would rally and provide legitimacy to the constitutional monarchy in the future (Duiker 1976: 35). In fact, the recruit campaign was focused on southern provinces rather than central provinces in which people's loyalty to the court remained strong. Southern provinces were also considered the area of which strong economy could provide the movement with financial support. Prince Cường Để was 24 years old when he came to Japan.

Phan Bội Châu could not be more delighted as the Prince brought some big amount of money and other donations from Vietnam also happened to be delivered by that time. Phan Bội Châu rented a house and named it Bính Ngọ Hiên 丙午軒 since the year of 1906 was year of Bính Ngọ in terms of sexagenarian calendar and at the same time

the first letter Binh indicates the south which in their minds unequivocally meant Vietnam. The number of students reached ten, including the Prince(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 82-85). Then Phan Bội Châu wrote a letter to Inukai Tsuyoshi informing the arrival of Prince Cường Để and other students and requesting assistance for their school admissions.

Inukai promptly responded by contacting Kashiwabara Buntaro, General Fukushima Yasumasa 福島安正, and Nezu Hazime 根津一. Kashiwabara was the de facto principal of Toadobunshoin 東亞同文書院 of Tokyo and General Fukushima was then Vice Commander-in-Chief of the imperial army and the head of Shimbu Gakko 振武學校. Nezu Hazime was then the Secretary General of Toadobunkai 東亞同文會. Shimbu Gakko was a military school for Chinese students set up in 1903 by an agreement between China and Japan. Students upon completing one and half year education were assigned to army units for training after which they advanced to become cadets of the Imperial Army Academy(白石昌也 2012: 67). So Shimbu Gakko was Phan Bội Châu's favorite choice as his ultimate goal was an armed struggle against the French. Toadobunshoin established by Toadobunkai in 1899 was a preliminary school for college education. In contrast to Shimbu Gakko which was operated under strict regulations set by the Japanese government, Toadobunshoin was a relatively autonomous institution (白石昌也 2012: 69).

It took no more than ten days before they reached the final decision, which was rather disappointing to the Vietnamese. Only three students, Lương Ngọc Quyến, Nguyễn Thúc Canh, and Nguyễn

Điền were allowed to enroll at Shimbu Gakko and Lương Nghị Khanh was permitted to study at Toadobunshoin. As the admission to Shimbu Gakko was given on an equal condition as to the Chinese students, the three boys earned full scholarships and free boarding. They changed their names making them sound more like Chinese so as to avoid possible surveillance and troubles. Quyên adopted Lương Lập Nham 梁立岩 and Trần Hữu Công 陳友功 was the alias for Canh, while Nguyễn Điền put Văn 文 in the middle of his name. They worked hard to finish the school with excellent records (白石昌也 2012: 67).

To the disappointment of the Vietnamese students, six students were not qualified for admission. It is not known precisely why they were not accepted but it seems that many of them were underage to study at these two institutions (内海三八郎 1999: 83). Yet the most disappointing and perhaps embarrassing was that Shimbu Gakko denied admission to Prince Cường Để. Another institution Phan Bội Châu expected in confidence to accept his boys was Waseda University, because it had set up special preliminary classes for Chinese students which he thought could be open to the Vietnamese students. Perhaps he was counting on Okuma Shigenobu, the founder of Waseda University. But he had to watch his wish completely dashed (白石昌也 2012: 71). Phan Bội Châu together with the Prince visited Inukai Tsuyoshi again and asked a favor for the Prince. Inukai kindly arranged a meeting with General Fukushima and discussed the matter. General Fukushima reluctantly came up with an idea that he would make an exception for the Prince on the condition that the Prince be admitted to Shimbu School as a special foreign student with

no financial benefits. General Fukushima explained in an utmost polite manner that the Prince was not given due recognition according to his regality because Shimbu Gakko was a government school that must be in line with government policies according to which the Prince was attempting to overthrow the French colonial government that Japan had official diplomatic ties with(内海三八郎 1999: 84-85).

What had happened until that moment tells that little seems to have been prepared before the arrival of the students even though Phan Bội Châu stayed in Japan for nearly a year. He was not informed of who and how many were coming to Japan. It was basically due to the difficulties in communicating with the supporters in Vietnam. Letters and telegrams outbound were under constant surveillance of the French authorities. In addition, it was prohibited in principle for Vietnamese to go abroad. Since the ports were checked by the police it was virtually impossible without official permission to be aboard on commercial liners. Hence the only way possible to come to Japan was to sail on a small fishing boat to offshore and then switch to a cargo carrier bound for Hong Kong where it was relatively easy and safe to get on big liners going to Japan(内海三八郎 1999: 104). Such a painstaking journey had to be done in secret with a considerable amount of costs. Under these circumstances, it was extremely difficult to know in advance who was coming and when. Having said that, Phan Bội Châu should have made some preparations with possible scenarios as to information on schools such as admission policies, rules and regulations, tuitions and fees, and so on. It seems that he was simply depending on the goodwill of the Japanese sympathizers.

By the summer of 1906 the number of newly arrived students reached sixty (Phan Bội Châu 1957: 177). They studied Japanese language at Bình Ngô Hiên, waiting for school admissions. While most of them in the end went to Dobunshoin, a small number of boys studied at Seisoku Gakko 正則學校, a secondary school affiliated to Shimbu Gakko. They were Võ Quang 武廣[慣] (Lâm Quang Chung 林廣仲), Nguyễn Thái Bạt 阮泰拔 (Nguyễn Siêu 阮超), and Nguyễn Thức Đường 阮式堂[唐] (Trần Hữu Lực 陳友力), Nguyễn Thức Canh's brother (Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 50). If they had stayed long enough to finish the school they could have automatically advanced to Shimbu Gakko. Among the three, according to Phan Bội Châu, Nguyễn Thái Bạt was unlike others in that his mind was very independent and audacious enough to come all the way to Tokyo by himself without a single penny in his hand and maintained his own traditionalist political view. When Phan Bội Châu became inclined to discard constitutional monarchy in favor of republic, Nguyễn Thái Bạt openly denounced Phan Bội Châu and quit his study. At last, he returned to Vietnam again on his own. He was later known to have passed the traditional court exam to become a bureaucrat of the Hue Court (內海三八郎 1999: 104). It is worth noting that some boys were very young and had to attend a primary school. They are Trần Văn An 陳文安 (Trần Phúc An 陳福安) and his brother Trần Văn Thư 陳文書, Huỳnh Chi 黃支, Hoàng Văn Ký 黃文記 (Hoàng Vĩ Hùng 黃偉雄), Hoàng Chung Hùng 黃仲雄, and Trần Văn Tiết 陳文節, Gilbert Chiếu's son. They went together to Rekisen Primary School 礪川小學校. Then Trần Văn Thư was only eight years old, and Hoàng Văn Ký and Hoàng Chung Hùng were also under ten. There was even

a six year old boy who came to Hong Kong and Phan Bội Châu persuaded his father to put him in a school in Hong Kong(内海三八郎 1999: 110).

It seems that there were no specific rules in recruiting students. Nor does it seem that there was a screening policy or selection process. Anybody could join the movement as long as they were able to come to Japan and pay for education(内海三八郎 1999: 104). It was rather arbitrary in that Phan Bội Châu once refused a young man at early twenties who came to Hong Kong on the pretext that the movement had a long-term vision and a young and mature man like him could make more contribution by joining other resistance forces (内海三八郎 1999: 93). There could be some untold reasons for this case but it is very likely that it was because the young man could not pay for his travel and education(白石昌也 2012: 97). Nguyễn Thái Bạt was rejected at first for financial reasons, but he was tenacious begging for one-way fare to Japan. That was how Bạt came to Japan. Though he was enrolled at Dobunshoin, he had to support himself with many part-time jobs only to collapse on the street due to malnutrition. Another case in point is Nguyễn Đức Công阮德功(also known as Hoàng Trọng Mậu). When he came to Japan to join the movement, he was 35 years old(後藤均平 1979: 74). Such a wide spectrum of age illustrates that the movement was not initiated on a concrete and detailed plan. Many of the young Vietnamese who came to Japan could do so simply because they were able to afford it, at least at the beginning. Yet the most pressing concern was always the budget, which had to be allocated not only onto education but to living expenses, printing pamphlets, and even purchasing weapons

(白石昌也 2012: 95). In any event Phan Bội Châu was busy in recruiting more students and made trips to Hong Kong to encourage the recruit campaign.

In August 1907 Phan Bội Châu returned from Hong Kong with one hundred or so new students. About forty of them were from southern provinces while the rest are from northern and central provinces(Phan Bội Châu 1957: 179). It must be noted that Japan and France signed the Franco-Japan Treaty in June of the same year and France had already begun pressuring the Japanese government concerning the Vietnamese students in Japan. But Phan Bội Châu was determined and paid little attention. It was quite a scene when he disembarked at Yokohama Port with one hundred young Vietnamese (内海三八郎 1999: 110). In parallel to the increased number of students he faced more tasks. First of all, the financial burden was more than serious. The movement was heavily depending on donations coming from Vietnam which had never been sufficient. The budget had to be doubled up at least for the basic subsistence of two hundred students. And it could spiral out of hand when school tuitions were charged. Yet Phan Bội Châu had no alternative but to simply raise more fund(유인선 2002: 322). Another problem was that all of the two hundred students had yet to be admitted to schools.

It turned out that Phan Bội Châu was totally unprepared for these problems. Only after he came back with one hundred more students he began to contact schools to learn that no school was willing to accept the students against rules and regulations. None of the students could be qualified for public schools because application had to be submitted with documents issued by the government, which in their

case was the French colonial government. And all schools made it a rule that students be fluent in Japanese. Private schools were not different in that respect. Even if they had been admitted to private schools, they could not have afforded the tuitions. It appears that Phan Bội Châu had no intention to send the students to private schools not because of the tight budget but because he insisted on military exercise in school curriculum, which was not available in private schools. The worst part in reality was that tuitions were supposed to be paid every month on designated dates. As the fund from Vietnam was delivered intermittently and in varying amount, it could not be guaranteed to pay tuitions on time. Even if all of these had been prepared, it still would have been a challenging task to put students as many as two hundred to appropriate schools at once(内海三八郎 1999: 111).

Phan Bội Châu turned to Inukai Tsuyoshi again. Inukai took Phan Bội Châu to General Fukushima's residence to discuss possible ways to solve the problem. What was waiting for them was a flat refusal from the General. He made it explicit that no more students would be accepted by Shimbu Gakko. He was firm on the issue saying in an admonitory manner that he was a government minister running a government institution and could not allow his personal relationship to interfere in performing his public duty. He continued that however sympathetic to the cause of the Vietnamese in Japan he could be, having Shimbu Gakko become a training camp for Vietnam's independence would be the same as the Japanese government being a participant in anti-government struggle against a state with which Japan had official diplomatic relationship. Whether it was just or not,



he maintained, doing so was very against the Japanese government as well as the principles of international relations. Furthermore, General Fukushima assured, having more Vietnamese students would definitely alert the French to take extraordinary measures to disrupt the whole movement(内海三八郎 1999: 111-113). As it turned out later, General Fukushima was correct on foreseeing the disastrous repercussions. He was well aware of the diplomatic pressures coming from the French after the Franco-Japan Treaty. Instead, he recommended Dobunshoin. Since it was under the Japanese government jurisdiction but operated with the support of China, it was less likely to be pinched by the French. This means that only four students including Prince Cường Để had been able to study at Shimbu Gakko, seemingly against Phan Bội Châu's ultimate wish.

Phan Bội Châu and Inukai turned again to Kashiwabara Buntaro who was then in charge of academic affairs at Dobunshoin. But the number of students to be accommodated was so large that it was far beyond the purview of Kashiwabara. He discussed the matter with the Board of Trustees. They reached a decision at last, which was to accept all Vietnamese students. But the school did not have extra classrooms enough to host two hundred students. The Japanese helpers came up with an idea of setting up separate classes exclusively for the Vietnamese students. And they also agreed to donate their own money to construct five new classrooms and a dormitory building for the Vietnamese students(内海三八郎 1999: 115). After all those twists and turns the schooling had finally begun.

Two points deserve to be mentioned. One is that the generosity of Toadobunshoin cannot be exaggerated enough. Had it not been for

the benevolent offer the Đông Du Movement could have ended up in a complete disaster with students having no opportunity for education at all. The other point is that the whole project was less than well prepared. Phan Bội Châu was evidently not meticulous enough to take necessary measures in advance. Rather, the movement proceeded haphazardly. Only after the students came did he start looking for ways. It was invariably the Japanese helping hand that saved him out of impasse. It is somewhat understandable given that Phan Bội Châu was in the middle of a foreign country being unable to command the language without proper knowledge on the parochial laws and customs. Even so, it seems hard to deny that the movement was short of detailed plans and accordingly was subject to the mercy of fortune. Neither did Phan Bội Châu pay much attention to the constrained budget. In late 1908 the balance once reached zero with no immediate donation being expected. He desperately knocked on the residence of a Japanese medical doctor, Asaba Sakitaro 淺羽佐喜太郎, who was sponsoring Nguyễn Thái Bạt. Luckily he was given a considerable amount of donation more than enough to stave off bankruptcy. Although no records mention the health status of the students, it is hard to assume that they were well nourished with the constricted budget. Indeed, the story of Nguyễn Thái Bạt shows that quite the opposite was more likely. As mentioned earlier, Nguyễn Thái Bạt fell on the street due to fatigue and malnutrition and was helped by Asaba Sakitaro who by chance was passing by right at that moment(内海三八郎 1999: 133). Nguyễn Thúc Canh describes the circumstances at that time: ‘Eight to nine of us, confined in a very small house, were running out of funds and without forthcoming

resources... Being crowded and with extremely harsh conditions for any operations'(Trần Trọng Khắc 1971: 21, quoted in Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 56).

Phan Bội Châu seemed to be such a person as one who makes a foolhardy rush once a goal is set and one who makes grandiose goals without taking reality into much consideration. Perhaps extraordinary times like the one he lived through may call for leaders of such a kind. Be that as it may, luck had certainly played a great part in the adventurous movement until the government decision put a complete end to the movement.

#### IV. Life and Study in Japan

Students continued to come despite the precarious circumstances that might jeopardize the whole movement and the number increased steadily to become over two hundred. Up until 1908 many young boys particularly from southern provinces were sent to Tokyo. Aforementioned boys of primary school age like Trần Văn Thư, Huỳnh Chi, Hoàng Văn Ký, and Trần Văn Tiết are the ones who joined the troupe at that time. In addition, scores of young men recruited by the catholic community in northern provinces were dispatched to join the movement. Only four of them have been identified. They are Lê Kim Thanh 黎金聲, Lê Hồng Chung 黎鴻鍾, Nguyễn Mẫu Đơn 阮模單[牡丹](Phan Bội Châu 1957: 115).

The majority of the two hundred or so students were educated at Toadobunshoin, except about a dozen who went to Shimbu Gakko,

Seisoku Gakko, and the Rekisen Primary. Classes at Toadobunshoin were divided into the morning and afternoon classes. The morning classes included the Japanese language, mathematics, geography, history, chemistry, physics, and ethics. Afternoon was devoted to paramilitary exercise and outdoor training. A retired army sergeant was put in charge of the afternoon hours. Everything appeared to be on the track and Phan Bội Châu was pleased with the afternoon classes. He was overwhelmed with joy watching the students march in uniform (内海三八郎 1999: 119). The following is a French surveillance report that offers a glimpse at the Vietnamese students at Dubunshoin during the period of 1906-1907(Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 51).

They wore black and blue uniforms, with an official collar and five leather buttons. They wore a hat of military cut, with the relief emblem of Character Dobun in the middle... They resided in three buildings close to Cường Đê's residence, where they took meals and slept. Each building had a kitchen, a refectory, and a row of little rooms, each of which housed two students. The buildings were surrounded by gardens and big beautiful pine trees.

It must be noted that the Vietnamese students were put in classes separate from the regular classes, thus without having many opportunities to mingle and make friends with the Chinese students. By studying, eating, and sleeping together, they have rather run into quarrels as much as they have become close friends. It did not take long before Phan Bội Châu felt some need to take measures with which the students could be put under control. He organized in late 1907 a student body called Công Hiến Hội公憲會 with a set of rules

and regulations designed to maintain order among Vietnamese students both at home and school(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 119). Prince Cường Để was made the head of the organization and Phan Bội Châu the president. Công Hiến Hội installed four divisions, each headed by students Châu trusted most. Đặng Tử Kinh鄧子競 was put in charge of finance and Nguyễn Thức Canh for public relations. Representing three regions of Vietnam, Đặng Bình Thành鄧秉誠, Đàm Kỳ Sinh譚其生, and Phan Bả Ngọc潘伯玉 were jointly in charge of discipline. Phan Bội Châu proudly labeled Công Hiến Hội a kind of provisional government in exile and it has been considered so(Phan Bội Châu 1957: 93; Marr 1971: 143). But it is a far cry from what it really was. Perhaps the name công hiến and the figures who headed each division might have led to an impression that the organization was a semblance of government. Yet the word hiến means constitution as well as discipline. And the fact that as many as three men were put in charge of the disciplinary division indicates that discipline and order was the foremost goal of the organization.

Every Sunday morning Công Hiến Hội was convened at the auditorium of Dobunshoin and Phan Bội Châu always took the occasion to preach the goals and principles that students should keep in mind with a heavy emphasis on harmony and order. In addition to the weekly meeting Phan Bội Châu frequently convened the students to instill patriotism into the students and propagate his vision of saving the country. He did so because many boys particularly of southern origin came to Japan simply out of curiosity without much understanding of the cause of the movement and some of them even behaved as if they were on sightseeing(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 120).

Yet it is not surprising since the majority of the students were at their teens, many at early teens. Such an age distribution was a direct result of the recruit campaign that had no age criterion for selection. For that matter, in fact, there was no screening policy at all so that anybody could come. Another issue he often emphasized to the students was order and harmony as quarrels among the students began to surface. As they were very young and living together in a crowded house, they often got involved in brawls for trivial matters. What really made Phan Bội Châu worried was that students were divided along their home regions. Of the two hundred students, roughly a half was from southern provinces while students from central and northern provinces were about fifty and forty respectively. It is interesting to review the comments Phan Bội Châu made on the traits of students by the region(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 117).

Southern boys are in general docile and yet impetuous. They like visiting bustling streets. They tend to be tenacious on monetary matters. Boys from central provinces value being moderate and yet love adventures. They tend to be loose on matters but do not get along with foreigners. Northern boys in general are pompous in attitude and in need of being sincere and honest. They make a league of their own and make no compromise with others. It is extremely difficult to put them under control.

The students were divided by region and often quarreled with each other. For two hundred teenagers studying and living together it would rather be unusual if no quarrels occur among themselves. But the schism between Phan Bội Châu and Cường Để that had surfaced since 1908 deepened the division among the students. While Phan

Bội Châu increasingly became inclined toward republic instead of constitutional monarchy, Prince Cường Để moved to the opposite direction. He often put on royal garb and demanded students to pay him full tribute as if he had been an emperor. Moreover, he quit Shimbu Gakko and transferred to Waseda University in 1908, further disappointing Phan Bội Châu. Cường Để's performance at Shimbu Gakko was very poor and did not enjoy the military training at all(白石昌也 2012: 76). The subtle cleavage divided the students further, southerners in general backing the Prince and the rest supporting Phan Bội Châu.

Another issue that made the situation worse was of the finance. As mentioned earlier, the budget was relying heavily on donations coming from Vietnam. But most of the donation was in fact offered by the parents of southern provinces as the majority of southern students were from relatively affluent families(白石昌也 2012, 88). Some parents even made visits to Tokyo to see how their children were educated. In other words, the budget was depending heavily on a small number of wealthy parents of southern provinces. As far as fund-raising is concerned, it could be argued in that respect that the movement was not so much a nationwide campaign as a regional campaign centered around the south. Put together with the comments made by Phan Bội Châu on the lack of maturity among young southern students, this issue regarding the fund-raising makes it clear that many of the young students were sent by their parents who simply took the movement as a good opportunity to educate their children in an advanced country rather than to participate in the nationalist struggle.

As this was known to the students, students from southern provinces began to consider and express that they were paying for students from other regions. Comments to that effect were surely embarrassing and even humiliating to students from other areas. In consequence, quarrels over this matter did not cease until it came to a head when Trần Đông Phong 陳東風, a student from Nghệ An province, committed suicide by hanging at a nearby Buddhist temple(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 155). According to his suicide note, he could no longer bear the disgrace upon living and studying at the expense of other students. It was uncovered that his father was a well-known man of grand fortune in the province. He wrote many times to his father begging for support but his father never replied. The frustrated young man could not stand it any longer. For better or for worse, the tragic suicide subdued the quarrel but the budget situation remained unchanged. To be precise, the budget became more dependent on parents of southern provinces as more students continued to come and as they were mostly from the south. In retrospect, it was inevitable as the movement was simply pushed too far. Careful considerations on possible effects were absent. As Phan Bội Châu later admits on reflection, he was “passionate but very poor” in managing the whole venture(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 156).

## V. Students in Solidarity

As mentioned at the beginning, the first decade of the twentieth century witnessed the proliferation of political thoughts and



movements in Japan. It was also during that period that Japan provided the revolutionaries from all over Asia, particularly from China, with a political asylum. These Asian revolutionaries joined together with renowned Japanese socialists to form an association where they shared visions, analyses, and strategies for their motherlands under colonial rule. It was the Asian Fellow Trust Association 亞洲友信會(亞洲和親會) organized in the summer of 1907. The members included revolutionaries from Japan, China, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, and India, and Phan Bội Châu. According to a Japanese member who took part in the association, four to five students used to come to the seminars(白石昌也 2012: 123). Who the Vietnamese students were is not known. It is likely that Nguyễn Thúc Canh was one of them since he had made acquaintance with Tongmenghui people during his stay at Minbao office. The association lasted for about one year until it was dissolved by the Japanese authorities. However, the association quickly resumed with a new name called East Asian Alliance 東亞同盟會. Phan Bội Châu's memoir says that he was the man who took the initiative in regrouping the Asians. Although his memories on this matter are inconsistent and contradict other established facts(Nguyễn Khắc Kham 1988), it seems certain that the association continued to exist as the locus of Asian solidarity. Yet only a limited number of the Vietnamese students had an opportunity to join and learn from the solidarity. Phan Bội Châu recalls that about ten students including Nguyễn Quỳnh Lâm 阮瓊林 and Đặng Tử Mẫn 鄧子敏 joined the Alliance(內海三八郎 1999: 135).

As pointed out earlier, the majority of the Vietnamese students was

at their teens and enrolled at Dobunshoin, where they were confined within a narrow boundary with no chance to experience the outer world. Those at Shimbu Gakko and Seisoku Gakko in contrast appear to have been in good terms with their Chinese classmates, many of whom were members of Tongmenghui. The following is Nguyễn Thức Canh's recollection on his classmates at Shimbu Gakko(白石昌也 2012: 119).

Chinese classmates looked at us with indifference at the beginning. Soon one Chinese student from Guangxi who was able to understand Vietnamese language found out that we are members of Vietnamese revolutionary movement and spread it to others. Then their attitudes toward us changed. Chinese students, particularly those from areas adjoining Vietnam such as Yunnan, Guangxi, Guangdong became good friends of us. We made pledges that we join together in the future to fight the French aggressors.

Thus the Vietnamese students were connected with the like-minded from China. Taking advantage of the network germinated at Shimbu Gakko, Phan Bội Châu made contacts with the leaders of the student associations of Yunnan, Guangxi, and Guangdong. They agreed to organize a union and Phan Bội Châu made a donation of 250 yen. Yet the union did not bear much fruit except that Phan Bội Châu had his articles printed in the journal published by the Yunnan Student Association because before long Phan Bội Châu and the Vietnamese students were forced to leave Japan(内海三八郎 1999: 136; 白石昌也 2012: 118-119).

## VI. Students Leave Japan

In September 1908 the Japanese government issued a deportation order to all Vietnamese students residing in Japan. One day police came to Toadobunshoin and had all Vietnamese students identify their original names and home addresses. Then the students were ordered to write letters to their parents saying that they would return home. Students were menaced by the police warning that those who refuse to write would be under arrest and handed over to the French embassy. All of a sudden the young Vietnamese students were horrified and panicked. Every single of them finished writing in fear and then the police left with the letters. The news soon reached Bình Ngô Hiên as a huge shock, which until the very moment was in festivity preparing for a party to celebrate the graduation of students from Shimbu Gakko(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 127-128).

Phan Bội Châu rushed out of despair to visit Inukai. Inukai replied that it was beyond his capacity to have the government order cancelled and suggested that it would be better to wait in silence for the time being because the French might stop hassling over the issue and that it would be best if the students could be scattered and remain out of police surveillance because then the government would have a good excuse to the French(内海三八郎 1999: 144). But Phan Bội Châu knew that it was virtually impossible to do so for an indefinite period of time.

Phan Bội Châu convened all students and made it official that there was no other way but to leave Japan soon. As soon as it was announced, many students began to weep and burst into tears. Some

expressed in a loud voice mixed with tears that they wanted to go home right away. The boys were too young to cope with the chaotic situation. Phan Bội Châu had to calm down the students before making up a departure plan. Then, according to the plan, twenty students were selected to stay behind and save the foothold in Japan. When asked if any was willing to remain, only five out of over one hundred from southern provinces raised their hands while most of those from northern and central provinces volunteered(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 128).

Meanwhile, the chaos continued. Education was virtually suspended but new students continued to arrive as it was not known in Vietnam or Hong Kong that deportation order was issued. Students were once again horrified when they received letters from their parents saying that “as long as you return and turn yourself in your family members will be released from prison and you will also be pardoned.” It was true that some parents were charged for sponsoring anti-French movements and put in jail. Some students, mostly southerners, began to pack and leave on their own. By the end of 1908 about ninety students had left Japan. Sadly, many of the returnees were jailed right upon arrival(Trần Trọng Khắc 1971: 21, quoted in Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 56). In the meantime Phan Bội Châu was going through an ordeal to secure money to pay for the travel of two hundred students back to Vietnam. Once again he was saved by Inukai, who handed him one hundred free tickets on a postal carrier. At last the Đông Du Movement came to an end when all of the students except about twenty departed. It was February 1909.

## VII. Sojourners

One remaining issue was how to support the twenty students who had decided to stay. Phan Bội Châu looked as usual to Kashiwabara Buntaro for his help. Kashiwabara who had looked after the students like a father agreed without hesitation. The students were accommodated at the dormitory of Toa Commercial School 東亞商業學校 founded by Inukai and managed by Kashiwabara (白石昌也 2012: 191). In spite of Kashiwabara's effort, however, the students had to face hardships they had never experienced before. As time went by they had to find ways to earn their rice. What was worse, they were constantly followed and watched by police. They were all summoned to the police headquarters and threatened that they would be severely punished for any inappropriate and disturbing actions (白石昌也 2012: 130-131). With their hope and strength dwindling they began to leave the country one by one except a few. The following is stories of those sojourners and a few others (Phan Bội Châu 2000: 129-145; 後藤均平 1979: 53-81). Let us begin with the three youngest.

Hoàng Văn Ký 黃文記 (Hoàng Vĩ Hùng 黃偉雄), originally from Vĩnh Long, attended a middle school after finishing Rekisen Primary School. Shortly after the Xinhai Revolution he moved to China where he graduated from Beijing Military Academy. According to Phan Bội Châu, he died of a disease in 1917. But another story tells that he joined the Guomintang Army and became a general.

Trần Văn Thư 陳文書 (Trần Ngọc Thư 陳玉書) from Vĩnh Long is

known to have continued his study in Japan and eventually graduated from Waseda University. Neither how the little boy had survived nor where he moved to is known.

Trần Văn An(陳文安)(Trần Phúc An(陳福安, Trần Văn Định(陳文定, Trần Huy Thánh(陳輝聖) studied at Waseda University along with his brother Trần Văn Thu. He remained loyal to Prince Cường Để and worked for Việt Nam Phục Quốc Đông Minh Hội, organized in 1939 by the Prince(白石昌也 2012, 214). It is not clear whether it was before or after 1939 that he moved to Singapore, where he acquired British citizenship. In any event, he returned to Vietnam and assisted the Japanese Army as a way of resistance to the French colonial rule. But after the defeat of Japan in the Pacific War he was arrested by the French in Saigon.

Nguyễn Xương Chí(阮昌志) accompanied Prince Cường Để's trip to Europe and returned to Vietnam. No more is known about him.

Hoàng Mỗ(黃某[黃興]) was known to have managed to survive in Japan doing all sorts of menial works. He was arrested for attempting to make a bomb and handed over to the French authorities. He was transferred to Côn Đảo Prison. When released, he applied for admission to the Army Academy of Japan but he was refused. He moved to Beijing where he attended a military school. Not long after he finished the school he died of disease in 1917.

Nguyễn Mạch Chi(阮脈之), one of the most outstanding students in Phan Bội Châu's view, remained close and loyal to Prince Cường Để and no more is known about him other than that he left Japan with the Prince.

Nguyễn Đức Công(阮德功)(Hoàng Trọng Mậu(黃仲茂) from Nghệ An was 35 years old when he came to Japan. He was excellent

at Chinese classics and a man of manners. Later he moved to China and one of his Chinese classmates named Cai helped him enter the Guangxi Military Academy in Guilin. After graduation he joined the Guomindang and then Việt Nam Quang Phục Hội. He made travels to border area by himself to recruit Vietnamese people and launched attacks on French garrisons at Lạng Sơn. He was arrested in Hong Kong on his way to Vietnam via Thailand. He was sentenced to death and executed in Hanoi.

Nguyễn Thức Đường阮式堂(Trần Hữu Lực陳友力), also from Nghệ An, is known to be a man of energy and enthusiasm. He murdered a Vietnamese minion of the French in his town before he came to Japan to join his brother Nguyễn Thức Canh. After one and half years of hard labor, he left Japan with Prince Cường Để and went to Guangxi, where he joined Hoàng Trọng Mậu at the same academy. Upon graduation he also joined Quang Phục Hội. After serving as a training officer, he was arrested too by the French on his way to Thailand and had the same fate as Hoàng Trọng Mậu at the age of thirty.

Phan Lại Lương潘賚良 came to Japan together with Hoàng Trọng Mậu and studied at Dobunshoin since May 1908. Unfortunately, the hard labor he went through gave him a lung disease, which eventually killed him soon after he came to Hong Kong. He was also from Nghệ An province.

Lê Cầu Tinh黎求精 came from Nghệ An to Japan with Phan Lại Lương and Hoàng Trọng Mậu. During his sojourn in 1909 he learned skills in manufacturing weapons. Thus he took the responsibility in making and supplying weapons to Quang Phục Hội. But he too unfortunately died of beriberi disease in Thailand at the age of 28.

Nguyễn Quỳnh Lâm阮瓊林 was only 15 years old when he came

to Japan. He was a very hard-working man and thus excelled at study. He remained in Japan for about one and half years before moving to Shanghai. He learned by himself how to make bombs. In 1909 he was arrested for possessing firearms in Hong Kong but released after a few months. Then he joined the Kuomintang Army and died in action at the age of 22. He was from Hà Tĩnh.

Đinh Doãn Tế 丁允濟 planned to organize riots inside Vietnam. On his way to Vietnam, however, he collapsed in Thailand and died of beriberi at the age of 26. He was from Hà Tĩnh as well.

Đặng Tử Mẫn 鄧子敏 came from Nam Định province. He stayed in Japan about six months before moving to the Vietnam-China border area, where he staged military actions against the French garrisons. He moved afterward to Thailand to join Phan Bội Châu.

Cao Trúc Hải 高竹海 graduated from a French medical school and practiced in Hanoi before coming to Hanoi. He was excellent at French, having translated books and magazines. He came to Japan in 1907 and mastered Japanese in a very short period of time. He refused to return to Vietnam and worked at a restaurant in Tokyo. He died of smallpox at the age of 26.

Hoàng Đình Tuân 黃定尊 (Nguyễn Kế Chi 阮繼之) was a very intelligent man from Hanoi. He spoke many languages including French, German, and English. He made many Chinese friends at school. They introduced him to the Chinese embassy, which granted a citizenship. Hence he was able to continue his study without any trouble in Japan. He graduated from a university and moved to Beijing to become a secondary school teacher. He also made his name known as a journalist in China. He never returned to Vietnam.

Lương Ngọc Quyên 梁玉眷 (Lương Lập Nham 梁立岩) graduated



from Shimbu Gakko. He was supposed to advance to the Army Academy, but he was denied. He moved to China and studied at Guangzhou Military Academy. After graduation he joined the revolutionary army and participated in Xinhai Revolution. He died in a fierce battle in 1913.

Lương Nghị Khanh 梁毅卿 continued his study up to a college. However, he could not finish the college and had to return home due to tuberculosis. He was arrested in Hong Kong on his way back home and sentenced to Côn Đảo Prison. He died in prison.

Đàm Kỳ Sinh 譚其生 (Đàm Quốc Khí 譚國氣) worked very hard at a small construction company and saved more than he could. He purchased two revolvers and carried them into Hanoi. He attempted to assassinate a French officer but failed. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. He committed suicide in prison.

Võ Quang 武廣 慣 (Lâm Quang Chung 林廣仲) was from Quảng Ngãi. He moved to China after spending six months in Japan. He graduated from Beijing Military Academy. He traveled down to the border area to build his own battle strategy. Unfortunately he was diagnosed to have an incurable disease in his brain. Having thought that he had no chance to execute his strategy in battles, he committed suicide.

Phạm Chấn Yên 范振淹 had worked in Hanoi as a French interpreter before coming to Japan. He moved to Hong Kong to join the resistance movement but died of a disease unknown.

Phạm Đương Nhân 范當仁 moved to Thailand and joined Quang Phục Hội. He was dispatched into Vietnam with a mission to assassinate French VIPs but the mission was aborted. He moved to China in 1914 and enrolled at Baoding Military Academy. He graduated with honor in 1916 but soon died of disease.

Nguyễn Thức Canh阮式庚(Trần Hữu Công陳友功) continued his study to earn a degree in education from Tokyo College of Pedagogy(東京高等師範學校). He was supported throughout his study by the Chinese government scholarship as he in time acquired Chinese citizenship. He moved to China before making a journey to Germany to study further. He returned to China in 1931 with a doctoral degree and joined Prince Cường Đê's Việt Nam Phục Quốc Đông Minh Hội,(白石昌也 2012: 215). He is believed to be Trần Trọng Khắc who is quoted above(Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 65).

Luu Yên Đan劉燕丹(Lý Trùng Bách李仲栢) also acquired Chinese citizenship which put him on Chinese government scholarship and helped him pursue further education. It appears that he separated himself from the Vietnamese group and survived the crackdown. He went to a high school in Nagoya and eventually graduated from Tokyo University with a degree in engineering. Then he moved to China to work as an engineer.

In addition, a person by the name of Đặng Sử Mạc is said to have attended Shimbu Gakko, albeit he is never mentioned in Phan Bội Châu's writings. According to the story which has yet to be corroborated, he graduated atop and the Emperor personally awarded a watch with engraving on the back. His poverty forced him to pawn the watch several times. Although many Japanese people offered to buy the watch with a good sum of money, he refused to sell it(Hoàng Văn Đạo 1965: 198 note 1, quoted in Trần Mỹ-Vân 2005: 66). Nothing more about him other than this anecdote is available. Below are the names of other students who can be identified to have studied in Tokyo. Phan Bá Ngọc潘伯玉, Hà Ngọc Thành何玉成, Hồ Học Lãm胡學覽, Hoàng Quang Thành黃光誠, Đặng Bình Thành鄧秉誠.

The last two are the ones who were sent by Phan Bội Châu to Saigon to bring the donated fund back safely to Tokyo. They were arrested at the port and sentenced to prison(内海三八郎 1999: 126).

The author attempted to unearth the school records of Toadobunshoin so as to retrieve the names and other information of the Vietnamese students. Toadobunshoin grew to university status in 1939 and became Aichi University愛知大學 in 1946. All school records and documents of Toadobunshoin are stored at the archive of Aichi University, except those of the Vietnamese students. The documents related to the extra class of Vietnamese students are missing and their whereabouts are unknown to the university. They possibly could have been taken by Japanese authorities after the deportation. It is very likely that Công Hiến Hội had kept a list of students. Still, such a document that could provide valuable information on the Vietnamese students has yet to be discovered.

## VIII. Conclusion

Granted that the prime objective of the Đông Du Movement was education, its achievement is far from being something that can be touted. Only three students graduated from Shimbu Gakko, a military school of secondary level, while the rest barely attended preparatory schools. An absolute majority went to a separate class arranged by Toadobunshoin exclusively for Vietnamese students. And they studied only for one year at the longest. It means that most of them had no chance for formal education at higher level but studied only Japanese

language for a while. Some of them came to Japan only to find out that they had to return to Vietnam. Had they been allowed to stay longer, the outcome would no doubt have been different. The exodus exacted by the French also took away the precious opportunities from the Vietnamese to partake in the burgeoning solidarity of East Asia. Even though a limited number of students joined the East Asian Alliance, they must have learned a great deal. In addition, they began to build their own networks with their Chinese friends devoted to the same kind of cause. All was dashed.

Yet the Movement was not without problems. Available records converge to indicate that they were very young mostly at their teens, ages too young to absorb advanced thoughts and knowledge. Rather, many of them had to return home even before finishing their Japanese language classes. Even if they had not been forced to leave Japan, it must have taken many more years for them to finish their expected education and join anti-French struggle. By the same token, the outcome could have been quite different even with the same short period of time if the students had been older than they were. It is possible that Phan Bội Châu had a truly long-term vision. But the fact that there was neither screening procedure nor terms of qualification such as age limit defies such an interpretation. More likely is that the Đông Du Movement was conceived hurriedly without any detailed plans. Anyone could come to join the movement as long as they could make their way out of Vietnam. The outcome was that many of them, particularly from southern provinces, came to Japan merely seeking opportunities for overseas education without much dedication to the cause of the movement. They were too young

to understand the nationalist mandate upon them, so that only a few opted to remain in Japan when they were ordered to leave.

That the Đông Du Movement was not well prepared in advance is also evident in that Phan Bội Châu was totally unaware of the conditions for school admissions in Japan. It was not until the arrival of the students that Phan Bội Châu had to deal with admission problems. All he could do was to repeatedly ask favor from the Japanese people of repute. But for their extraordinary commitment and assistance, especially the generous decision made by the people of Toadobunkai, an absolute majority of the students could have ended up with no education at all. Perhaps more pressing concern than education itself was how to finance the whole venture. Phan Bội Châu was in constant struggle with the budget throughout the period till the very moment of leaving Japan. Counting heavily on the intermittent and precarious donations which were barely sufficient to pay for basic needs, the welfare of the students was not close to being adequate. At last the students began to be divided over who was riding free at whose expense. Quarrels continued and came to a head when a student took his own life. When they were ordered by the Japanese authorities to leave the country, Phan Bội Châu turned again to his Japanese supporters asking not only for their political influence nullifying the order to no avail but also for tickets back to Vietnam. The lack of budget pushed him even at the very last stage of the movement to make a sumptuous visit to a Japanese Samaritan of no acquaintance who had by accident been supporting one of his students and asked for donations.

Perhaps the financial burden was embedded in the very concept

of the Đông Du Movement. To Phan Bội Châu the Movement had one goal subsuming two objectives, that is, to achieve independence by educating promising youth and at the same time by armed resistance. He did not indeed ever discard his initial plan that pushed him to Japan(川本邦衛 1973; Duiker 1976: 47-50). Hence, the tight budget had to be split for purchasing weapons. One of his students asked him a question right to the point: “What we are doing is education in one part and violence in another part. Do you think it is all right?” Phan Bội Châu could not answer(Phan Bội Châu 2000: 133).

Phan Bội Châu was a man of ambition and optimism. He brought as many students as he could into Japan without due consideration upon the budget. He kept improvising and somehow managed to keep the venture afloat. But his courage and capabilities had eventually failed to keep up with his overly optimistic judgments. By mid-1907 it had increasingly become evident that Japan was not a friendly neighbor of the same culture and the same race but simply another imperial power ready to take advantage of her neighboring countries. Phan Bội Châu professed the same viewpoint in an article and other letters. In fact, such a diagnosis turned true when Japan signed the Japan-French Treaty in September 1907. It was circulated that the French with the Treaty in hand sought to stop Japan’s involvement in her colonies, including the deportation of all Vietnamese people residing in Japan. Nevertheless, Phan Bội Châu was completely unprepared for what was to come. Instead, Vietnamese students continued to come up until the very moment students began to depart the country.

If the Đông Du Movement is understood as a movement to bring up dedicated revolutionary warriors, then the Đông Du Movement can redeem itself. A good number of them went to military schools and joined the resistance forces. However, as far as we understand that its objective was education, it was not fulfilled. It ended so abruptly that only a handful number of students finished their schools and left with diplomas. The rest were not allowed to finish their education, many of them having scarcely started.

**Key words:** Đông Du Movement, Phan Bội Châu, Vietnamese Students

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<국문요약>

## 동경의 베트남 학생들, 1906-1909

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1905년에 시작된 베트남 동유운동의 목적은 베트남의 젊은이들을 일본에서 공부시켜 독립과 근대화를 이끌 인재를 양성하는 것이었다. 그러나 1908년 일본 정부의 강제 출국 조치로 인해 동유운동이 중단됨으로써 목표했던 바를 이루는 데 실패한 것으로 평가되고 있다. 하지만 다른 시각에서 본다면 200여 명의 베트남 학생들이 수년간 유학을 한 결과가 어떠한 형태로든 베트남 근대사에 족적을 남겼을 것이라고 추측하는 것도 가능하다. 그간의 연구는 동유운동을 주도했던 판보이쩌우(Phan Bội Châu)에 집중함으로써 학생들의 면면에 대해서는 크게 알려진 바가 없다. 이 연구는 당시 일본으로 유학했던 학생들에게 초점을 두어 그들이 누구인지 무엇을 공부했는지, 또한 당시 사회주의 사상 전파의 중심이었으며 아시아 각국의 혁명가들이 집결해있던 동경에서 학생들은 어떤 영향을 받고 어떻게 연계되었는지에 대해서 살펴보았다.

학생들 대부분은 동아동문서원이라는 중국인 유학생 예비학교의 특별반에서 일본어와 기초적인 초등교육 과목을 이수하는 데 그쳤고 단 세 명의 학생만이 군사예비학교인 진무학교를 졸업할 수 있었다. 즉 고등교육을 받은 학생은 전무했던 것이다. 강제 출국되기까지 그 기간이 짧았던 것이 가장 큰 원인임에 분명하지만 한편으로는 동

유운동 자체가 철저히 준비되고 계획되지 않았던 점도 실패의 주요 원인으로 꼽을 수 있다. 특히 학생 선발에 대한 규정 없이 기본적으로 누구든지 수용함으로써 학생들의 절대다수가 10대 초중반이 되는 결과를 낳았다. 이는 독립과 혁명을 위한 인재 양성이라는 취지와 관계없이 다수의 학부모들이 동유운동을 단순히 자녀교육의 수단으로 이용했기 때문이다. 또한 이들을 입학시킬 학교 섭외조차 되지 않았고, 그 결과 전적으로 일본 내 조력자들의 호의에 의지해 동아동문서원에 설치된 베트남 학생들만을 위한 특별반에 만족해야 했다. 따라서 대부분의 베트남 학생들은 일본에서 공부했지만 실제로는 고립된 상태에서 외부세계를 경험할 수 없었고, 그렇다 하더라도 당시의 혁명적 사상을 이해하거나 수용하기에는 부족한 나이였다. 요컨대 동유운동의 실패는 그 기간이 짧았기 때문만이 아니라 그 짧은 기간 내에서도 교육의 질적 수준이 낮았다는 데에서도 그 원인을 찾을 수 있다.

일본에 유학했던 베트남 학생들의 전체 명단은 현재 실종된 것으로 보이며 다만 산발적인 정보를 종합하여 약 20여 명에 관한 성명과 간단한 정보를 파악할 수 있었다. 이 정보와 더불어 추후 더 많은 기록이 발굴된다면 베트남 현대사에서 그들의 이름이 등장하는지 다시 한 번 확인하고 재평가할 수 있을 것이다.

**주제어:** 동유운동, 판보이썬우, 베트남 유학생

