



Research Article

# TONKIN FREE SCHOOL IN THE EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AND SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN VIETNAM

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## ABSTRACT

*This article aims at clarifying Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục (Tonkin Free School)'s movement based on the perspective of educational reform. Dating back one century, the Tonkin Free School movement may have a nexus with the contemporary educational reform of Vietnam. Based on the previous research results, there are two prominent applied features of this movement. First, the Tonkin Free School proposed a educational motto for Vietnam. Second, the paradigm of organization, curriculum, and teaching methods of the movement contributed to changing all aspects of education. Thus, several lessons can be drawn from this movement: A consistent educational philosophy, changing teaching methods and topics are all necessary.*

**Keywords:** educational reform; Tonkin Free School; Vietnamese history

## 1. Introduction

Tonkin Free School is a democratic movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Vietnam. This movement was strongly influenced by the paradigm of 慶應義塾大学 (Keiō Gijuku Daigaku) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in Japan. Fukuzawa Yukichi established the school and aimed at the self-made, independent, resourceful, and volunteer soul of Japanese people (Chuong, 2007, p.7). The success of this archetype and the development of Japan contributed to enlightening the new Vietnamese intelligentsia ideology. Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chau Trinh are two Vietnamese intellectuals who approached the positive values of Japan's reforms in this period. They considered Japanese people as vanguards even a savior for backward nations in Asia. In 1905, Phan Boi Chau became the leader of the *Đông Du* (Going Eastward) movement, and Phan Chau Trinh also voyaged to Japan in order to eye-witness the state-of-the-art achievements of Japanese education. They detected that various ethnic people also accessed the educational sample of Japanese people. Resultantly, Ton Free

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School was established by Luong Van Can<sup>1</sup>, Le Dai<sup>2</sup>, Hoang Tang Bi<sup>3</sup>, Vu Hoanh, Nguyen Quyen<sup>4</sup> at 10, Hang Dao Street, Hanoi, in March 1907. Despite a short-term existence, this movement encouraged a multi-faceted renovation for the national education of Vietnam. There are numerous pedagogical thoughts and methods which deeply penetrated Vietnamese ideologies so that it urged the populace in its activity and left various valuable experiences for posterity. In the context of the contemporary educational reform of Vietnam, it is necessary that the historical values of the Tonkin Free School be analyzed for a clearer direction for the educational reform of Vietnam.

## 2. Literature review

Tonkin Free School is an interesting topic that sparks numerous debates among historians and cross-disciplinary scholars in Vietnam. First, Dao Trinh Nhat is the first author who released a book directly related to this movement. Nonetheless, this book scarcely mentions the organization of Schools and the critical activities of Tonkin Free School (Thang, 2010). Next, Nguyen Anh made an argument about who was a leader of Tonkin Free School in *the Journal of Historical Review* in 1961 (Nguyen Anh, 1961). It led to demonstrating that this movement was under the supervision of Phan Boi Chau<sup>5</sup> and Phan Chau Trinh<sup>6</sup>. In South Vietnam, Nguyen Hien Le published *Tonkin Free School* and revised it in 2002. This book was to overgeneralize the historical background, fundamental activities of the Schools and their achievements. Significantly, this book referred to a vast number of new intellectuals, such as Phan Boi Chau, Huynh Thuc Khang<sup>7</sup>, Phan Chau Trinh. Resultantly, it provided us a valuable resource to clarify the characteristics and essence of the movement (Nguyen, 2002).

Chuong Thau is a lead author who elucidated the role of Tonkin Free School through *Tonkin Free School and cultural reformations in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century* (Chuong, 1982). The book was recompiled and released in 2007. Thau provided readers with a copious source of Tonkin Free School literature and more accurate information about this movement. The book

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<sup>1</sup> Luong Van Can (1854-1927), is a principle of the Tonkin Free School. He is a founder of this school and operated until the end of the year 1907. He was expelled by the French from 1913 to 1921 and passed away in Hanoi in 1927.

<sup>2</sup> Le Dai (1875-1951). He joined Duy Tan Hoi Reform Association and Dong Du movement and open the Tonkin Free School in 1907. He was arrested and expelled in Con Dao island from 1908 to 1925. After August Revolution, he lived in Hanoi and became a partner of Board of Literature in Association of Vietnamese culture. He passed away in Hanoi in 1951.

<sup>3</sup> Hoang Tang Bi (1883-1939), is one of the founders of the Tonkin Free School. He was in detention in Hue after 1908. He continued his career in writing and teaching. He passed away in Hanoi in 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Nguyen Quyen (1869-1941), he established the Tonkin Free School in 1907. After the school was closed down, he was in confinement at Hoa Lo prison. He was released in 1910 and passed away in Ben Tre in 1941.

<sup>5</sup> Phan Boi Chau (1867-1940), is a Vietnamese patriotist and revolutionary activist. He established *Duy Tân Hội* and took Vietnamese students to Japan for aid and educational support. He became a leader of *Đông Du* movement and was a very sensible leader of various revolutionary trends in Vietnam. He was in detention in 1925 and passed away in Hue in 1940.

<sup>6</sup> Phan Chau Trinh (1872-1926), is a Vietnamese patriotist and revolutionary activist. He organized *Duy Tân* movement and joined Tonkin Free School as a keynote speaker in 1907. He was arrested in the Anti-Tax movement in Annam in 1908 but released and enthusiastically actioned in France from 1914 to 1925. Despite a serious chronic disease, he made an endeavor to convey his speeches in Saigon and passed away there in 1926.

<sup>7</sup> Huynh Thuc Khang (1876-1947), is a Vietnamese patriotist. He was one of the leaders of *Duy Tân* movement and became a parson of Annam People's House of Representatives in 1926 and editor-in-chief of *Tiếng Dân* newspaper in 1927. After August Revolution, Khang became Minister of Home Affairs of Democratic Republic of Vietnam. He passed away in Quang Ngai in 1947.

of Thau enchants various domestic scholars' attention to approach source materials and simplify the role of Tonkin Free School in Vietnamese history. Besides, the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Ho Chi Minh City took a large-scale conference titled *100 years of Vietnamese education in post-Tonkin Free School (1907-2007)*. Its proceeding consists of 32 research articles directly related to Tonkin Free School and its historical values in successive periods: 1945-1954, 1954-1975, and posted 1975 (University of Social sciences and Humanities, 2007). Also, some articles aroused some experiences of this movement for modern educational reform. It indicates that researchers raise their awareness of the paramount importance of Tonkin Free School's thoughts and practice in national history.

Additionally, the Association of Vietnamese History held a workshop titled 100 years of Tonkin Free School in 2008. The majority of researchers supposed that Tonkin Free School impersonated *Duy Tân* (Reformation) movement in Vietnam in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Various authors, 2008). On the other hand, this movement occurred nationwide, and Hanoi is the most dynamic place for Tonkin Free School. It implemented various modern and intensive renovations based on the core curriculum, pedagogical methods, and socio-education linkage approach to restructure national education. It is an excellent progression in researching Tonkin Free School.

Recently, Vo Van Dung (2015) released an article "Ideology of educational reform in Tonkin Free School and its value" in the *Journal of Ho Chi Minh City University of Pedagogy*. The author briefly summarizes the main contents of the educational reform in the Tonkin Free School movement. It focuses on criticizing the conservative Confucius style while promoting a new learning style and comprehensive education intellectual, physical, and aesthetic. The movement intends to make a cultural revival, education, and patriotic expression. In general, the author generalized the positives values of the movement. Besides, the author points out four historical values of this movement: Educational content should satisfy social needs; Educational innovation must be accompanied by innovative thinking and methods, linking teaching literacy with teaching people, and emphasizing humanity in education (Vo, 2015).

Generally, all academic research put stress on the historical characteristics of the Tonkin Free School movement, but most of them had a paucity of scholarly attention to up-to-date recommendations for modern Vietnamese education. Hence it is crucial that the historical values of Tonkin Free School be systematized and overhauled to make recommendations for contemporary educational reforms in Vietnam. The paper aims to typify two issues of this movement in its educational philosophy, organization, curriculum, and pedagogical methods. After that, the paper provides suggestions for the current educational reform of Vietnam.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1. Tonkin Free School's educational philosophy**

Considering educational philosophy, international educators have studied this extensively. T.W.Moore stated that teaching and learning are the lowest levels of educational practice. Also, he supposed that higher-order activities would not be infeasible once educational activities were not carried on and conversed about (Moore, 1982, p.4). This

viewpoint elucidates that theory and practice have a strong correlation. Reality plays a vital role in creating educational philosophy. In addition, the historical background is likely to be appropriate to educational reform proposals, and also, practical experience can shape an accurate philosophy of education. The educational philosophy of Tonkin Free School is state-of-the-art and pragmatic but supports nationalism. Chuong Thau cited this opinion in his work:

A new education focuses on patriotism, nationalizing, scientification, universalization and aims at opening people's wisdom, reviving people's soul and taking care of civic affairs to do a supreme objective to revive and modernize the country and reclaim national sovereignty. Generally, learning is conducive to learners, nations, and society. There are three core issues: hygiene, which means learning for physical well-being, non-disease; learning about reality, it means learning how to produce foods, clothing, and career management; and learning to become a citizen. These issues are very beneficial. (Chuong, 2007, pp.71-72).

This is the first time the educational philosophy has been noticeably articulated to direct the activities of the Tonkin Free School movement. In the past, Vietnamese people learned to be staunch with the Emperor, yet the objective of education in the Tonkin Free School emphasized on realistic targets, and it prioritized pragmatic results in producing necessities to satisfy society's demand.

First of all, the Tonkin Free School's educational philosophy gives prominence to core national values in education. Leaders expostulated that becoming a mandarin is obsolete and enthusiastically stimulated learners to liberate national wisdom and knowledge. Remarkably, the school leaders remonstrated that the Sino-Nom language was no longer appropriate to students and encouraged students to learn the new Vietnamese language. They also excluded backward conventions, and *Thiên Mệnh* (supreme power of Kings) thought in society. Also, the Tonkin Free School introduced modern sciences to learners. Astronomy, Geography, Physics, and Chemistry are accessible for learners to study and discuss in their class dynamically. It is a first chance for Vietnamese students to study scientific accomplishments which are applicable to reality. For example, leaders of Tonkin Free School motivated the activities of *Hội buôn* (Business Associations) to purpose the country's economic well-being. This action exemplifies professional orientation for students and their application after graduation from the Tonkin Free School. Specifically, Do Quang Co opened *Đông Lợi Tế* on Ma May street to trade domestic goods while Vu Hoanh ran an oriental medicine store near Hang Co railway station. Hoang Tang Bi and Nguyen Quyen established *Đông Thanh Xương* Company on Hang Gai street for groceries and tea products. Nguyen Quyen run *Hồng Tân Hưng* on Hang Bo street to sell painting tools (Nguyen, 2002, p.146). Thus, the Tonkin Free School even went beyond its extent of educational reform and enthusiastically encouraged practical skills in business to apply theories into reality after class. According to Dang Thai Mai, this movement declined backward and prejudiced thoughts of old intellectuals while simultaneously equipped students with new knowledge regarding natural sciences, literature, politics, civic virtue, and patriotism (Dang, 1974, p.73).

However, the Tonkin Free School still paid heed to the role of social sciences in the core curriculum. Its leaders supposed that national education depends on customs, conventions, history, and politics, and helps distinguishing it from another country. The

quality of national education can standardize all education objectives (Chuong, 2007, p.71). This idea typified a new notion of Vietnamese intellectuals concerning the role of nationalism in education. According to John and Christopher, the issue of nationalism usually only surfaces when there are disputes about the essence of the national historical and literature (Winch & Gingell, 2008, p.142). In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term “nationalism” was prevalent, and it became an objective to liberate the country from the French. Leaders of the Tonkin Free School were deeply cognizant of nationalism, so the prioritized issue was nationalism and patriotism.

Besides, the movement emphasizes the role of universal education and training for all Vietnamese people. National civilization is based on the people in place of some people. That is not enough. To make the entire country civilized, it is necessary to re-construct universal education. Universal education means all citizens to be well-educated (Chuong, 2007, p.72). It is indicated that the Tonkin Free School aims at national education, both West-East absorption and universal training, and this thought is a starting point of the contemporary educational ideology of Vietnam. The Tonkin Free School facilitated an equal access to universal education regardless of gender, social class, and disability. It is a landmark of Vietnamese education because all Vietnamese people were not offered equal training. In the past, social inequality triggered a disability of educational approach for the impoverished in the context of mandarin education. Meanwhile, the French school aims at training local people only to serve the colonial regime and white-skinned people. As a result, Tonkin Free School contributed to readily offering a non-discrimination education for all people. In *Quốc dân độc bản*, its author articulated this opinion.

National civilization depends on the voice of citizens instead of some people's opinions. To open people's wisdom, it is crucial that universal education be applied. It made an equal opportunity for all Vietnamese people in education. In Western education, education is a respected field; everybody has to go to school. Universal education offers learners to know multi-faceted knowledge instead of a single field. Nobody does go to school, and they inevitably become wisdom. (École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1997, p.73)

Tonkin Free School is a rationale educational reform implying that liberating society from feudal colonialism is a pressing issue of Vietnamese education. This is the significant improvement of national education and the first step for modern education. This educational philosophy has a substantial nexus to a profound philosophy of Vietnamese humanism, which is oriented towards the masses instead of the upper classes. Patriotism associated with new democratic ideas has formed a unique political philosophy for Vietnam in the early 20th century. Educationally, the movement is acclimatization between old and neoclassical education while conserving national cultural values.

### **3.2. *Tonkin Free School's organization, curriculum, and pedagogical methods***

Christopher and John underscored that the objectives of any educational apparatus are institutions, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (Winch & Gingell, 2008, p.9). They supposed that various groups in society could determine educational philosophy. In the case of Tonkin Free School, educators made an attempt to renovate pedagogical methods for teaching and monitoring the class. Especially, student-centered classes became a very

effective technique for both teachers and students in every class of the Tonkin Free School. In the learning environment, the role of the teacher is shifted to the teacher, and its goal is to stimulate the autonomy and independence of students' thoughts and knowledge. In the past, Vietnam education appreciated the role of teachers, and teachers critically played a role in educating students to become mandarin while denying all initiatives and personal comments of students in a class. This method was no longer appropriate and posed a severe threat to the quality of national education.

Leaders of the Tonkin Free School recanted the old method. They supposed that a teacher is a person who took the responsibility of orienting the students' awareness and spurring them to tackle a controversial issue. Therefore, students have an opportunity to spread their creativity and enthusiasm in a class. This technique may become the most effective method for receiving knowledge and contributing their opinions to reassess the reality of knowledge meticulously. Compared to the learn-by-heart style, Tonkin Free School marked a great stride in Vietnamese education due to the fact that students could learn practical knowledge and find the best solutions for scientific issues. The paradigm of student-centered class in Tonkin Free School was novel in Vietnam at that time.

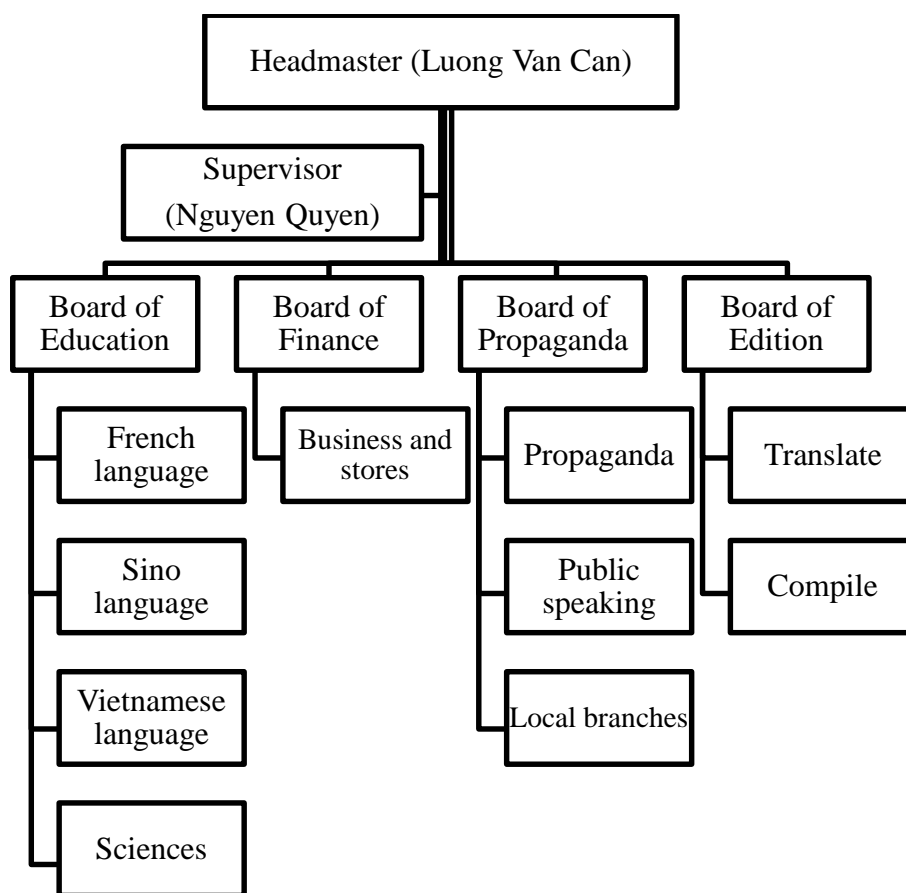
Allowing students to discuss all issues in the absence of awkward feelings. Teachers add some Maths and Latin languages exercise for learning and exams for students to apply all knowledge to deal with a practical situation. (Chuong, 2007, p.123)

Primarily, public speaking plays a vital role in all classes. In Tonkin Free School, there are two types of educators. Some teachers originated from the old education, and the other teachers were strongly influenced by Western education. Thereby old intellectuals were usually in charge of educating a lesson based on their feelings to convey personal viewpoints linked to the current situation of Vietnam. The class became an open discussion forum for all participants. Public speaking thus became a very well-operational technique of teaching of the Tonkin Free School. Free speech assisted teachers and students to confer all aspects included news and science. Nguyen Hien Le described that sample in his book:

The scene is very joyful and dynamic. Under a banyan tree, various people included in the elder, children, young generation paid their attention to the speaker as though they had caught all words and hoped for a better future of Vietnam. The intimacy of intellectuals and commoners is intense: leaders take responsibility and set an example for students. Likewise, students rely on leaders. (Nguyen, 2002, p.90)

More importantly, the lessons of speakers captivated a large number of spectators. It congregated various social classes included in women, children, elders, and students. This is a rewarding opportunity for all listeners and speakers to share their opinions on their nation's particular issue mutually, and they felt self-assured to express their perspectives and reciprocally update new knowledge.

Besides, Tonkin Free School is a well-organized group. The below figure unveils the system of this school in its period.



**Figure 1.** The organization of the Tonkin Free School

Figure 1 indicates that Tonkin Free School has a well-ordered system. Specifically, the Board of Education takes the liability of enrollment and teaching. There are two levels of the educational hierarchy: primary and secondary school. The tuition fee is complimentary, and the learning facilities are well-equipped. The subjects consist of the Vietnamese language, French language, Sciences (History, Geography, Philosophy, Hygiene, and Maths). Next, the Board of Finance functions the school’s expense and revenue; the Board of Propaganda is responsible for public speaking and creating propaganda. Simultaneously, Tonkin Free School took place various extra-curriculum for students to diffuse patriotism and old-education criticism. They published *Đặng Cổ Tùng Báo* and *Đại Việt Tân Báo*, Nguyen Van Vinh<sup>8</sup> and Dao Nguyen Pho<sup>9</sup> are respectively editors-in-chief. Significantly, Tonkin Free School released several textbooks for students: *Quốc dân độc bản* (National version), *Cải lương môn học quốc sử giáo khoa thư* (Improved textbook on the history of Mongolian studies), *Nam Quốc giai sự truyện* (The story of Southern Kingdom), *Nam Quốc vĩ*

<sup>8</sup> Nguyen Van Vinh (1882-1936), is a new Vietnamese intellectual, journalist, and interpreter. He is editor-in-chief for *Dang Co Tung Bao* which is the first Vietnamese-language newspaper in Tonkin. He died of malaria in Laos in May 1936.

<sup>9</sup> Dao Nguyen Pho (1861-1908), a new Vietnamese intellectual and a leader of Tonkin Free Schook movement. He operated the Tonkin Free School with Luong Van Can and Nguyen Quyen. He suicided in 1908 to subfugate the red notice of the French.

*nhân* (The great men of Southern Kingdom), *Tân đĩnh luân lý giáo khoa thư* (New Textbook of Ethics), *Nam Quốc lịch sử* (History of Southern Kingdom), *Nam Quốc địa dư* (*Geography of Southern Kingdom*). Learning materials introduced students to approach multi-faceted knowledge of sciences and helped them enhance Latinized language in schools. Besides, the Board of Edition takes responsibility for translation and compilation. Financial support was withdrawn from fundings of benefactors (*lạc trợ hội viên*) and better-off parents (*thường trợ hội viên*). The teacher's perk was paid from this source. Also, Tonkin Free School's sphere of action affected a large domain of Tonkin included Ha Dong, Son Tay, Hung Yen, Bac Ninh, Hai Duong, and Nam Dinh. It is implied that leaders of this movement were ambitious to construct new schools for local students in some local provinces of Tonkin.

### 3.3. Recommendations

It is undeniable that the experience of Tonkin Free School suggests some positive values for the current educational reform in Vietnam. It is indiscernible that Vietnam is confronting numerous adversities in the educational reform, resulting in several disadvantages in the educational system and perplexed feelings of leaders, parents, and students. For example, parents criticized the new contents of textbooks for students in primary school. The fraud of examiners and examinees and the downgrade of teachers' virtue are becoming pressing issues of Vietnamese education. Despite undergoing three educational reforms, Vietnam has not possessed an effective educational system while experiencing numerous flaws in pedagogical methods and the poor quality of teaching and learning. As a result, there are some recommendations suggested below:

First of all, it is crucial that Vietnam constructs a constant educational philosophy succinctly. This expected the motto-orientationally functions of the development of national education. John Dewey recognizes the role of educational philosophy. He supposed that the educational point of view enables a person to envision philosophical problems that arise and promote, where they are at home, and where acceptance or decline makes a difference in practice (Dewey, 2012, p.286). Because education is orientational, educators can build an impregnable education philosophy that underlines the critical role of orientation to students. It is in their study career and significantly helps them boost their positive attitudes in other aspects of their lives. Due to its paramount importance, the philosophy of education will be a core factor once national education tends to reform. In Tonkin Free School, leaders of the movement soon issued an all-inclusive educational philosophy. It emphasizes the role of patriotism, practical knowledge, and becoming a decent citizen. Compared to the contemporary history of Vietnam, educators have not formed a complete educational philosophy, and personally, it is a shortcoming that led to the disadvantage of Vietnam education nowadays. Theoretically, educational philosophy profoundly impacts policies, projects, strategies of education. Also, it contributed to ratifying objectives, professional contents, methods, and assessments to standardize teaching and learning quality. Besides, the educational philosophy is an indispensable factor in orienting and improving the effects of the educational system. Based on the Tonkin Free School's experience, Vietnam's



educational philosophy should originate from traditional values of Vietnamese history and culture while penetrating modern values of educational achievements in the world. It is suggested that Nationalism and Patriotism should be core values of new Vietnam education to preserve positive traits of Vietnamese people in the context of globalization. Next, the educational philosophy of Vietnam should focus on a liberal education that liberates the creative and critical thinkings of learners and teachers. Educators must catch new trends of modern education and apply new pedagogical methods in teaching students as well as organizing the campus, and then students must be trained in a well-rounded education. It is equality and non-discrimination in educational opportunities for all students.

Additionally, the innovative thinkings of leaders play a vital role in any educational reform. Leaders of Tonkin Free School were very sensible to be acutely cognizant of educational achievements in the world. Phan Chau Trinh is a person who inherited the positive values of the French, while Phan Boi Chau spurred Vietnamese people to reward Japanese education. They also gave encouragement to new intellectuals to open classrooms for students and educate them by innovative teaching methods. Resultantly, the Tonkin Free School typifies avant-garde thought reforms in education. First, educators and teachers must make a rational alteration in pedagogical methods. In fact, various schools and universities have started the sample of the student-centered classroom nowadays, yet it is not sufficient for a comprehensive reform for Vietnam's educational system.

Students are still inactive and accustomed to learning by heart and one-sided reception. Thus, the assessment of students' ability is inaccurate. This method discourages the creative thinkings and active soul of students in classrooms despite teachers' efforts in renovating pedagogical methods. According to Lea, Stephenson, and Troy (2003), student-centered functions rose liability on the part of students and maintain an increased sense of autonomy in the learner yet keeping an interdependence and mutual respect between educators and students (J.Troy, 2003, p.323). These dimensions proved that the learner-centered paradigm effectively reorganizes a classroom to optimize lessons' effectiveness. Hence teachers should synchronically and consistently apply this sample in reorganizing the classroom. Educators play an orientational role in arousing the creative thinkings of students through open-minded questions, and the role of students and teachers is thus equivalent. It is suggested that students enthusiastically convey their personal thoughts and feelings to teachers, and teachers should orient their direction and replenish academic information for students' unknown knowledge space. Even teachers can only let students approach research methods, and students are likely to self-correct research problems. Based on the experiences of Tonkin Free School, it is crucial that teachers can make a classroom become an open scholarly forum for students' free speech. It is the optimal solution to realize theoretical lessons and apply theories in tackling practical matters.

Furthermore, liberal education should be a constant objective for Vietnamese education. Leaders of Tonkin Free School appreciated the liberal thoughts and opinions of students while conveying to them their experience about theoretical knowledge. According

to R.F. Deardan, autonomy should be able to establish judgments on what we think and reflect judgmentally on such findings and should be capable of integrating one's belief and conduct around one's first-order and critical judgments (Winch & Gingell, 2008, p. 136). Thus, it is indispensable that Vietnam education should pay more attention to building a widespread liberal education. As for educators and educational managers, they must be functional enough to be fully aware of the increasing changes of the educational world. In Tonkin Free School, educators were very determined to get access to new education methods beyond their limited awareness. They were well liberated by the strong influence of a modern global education.

Thus, in the context of globalization, Vietnamese educators must be vanguards in opening their insights and accessing contemporary educational achievements of developed countries in the world. They must actively construct liberal education policy and curriculum to apply for the educational system nationwide. Henceforth educators are able to assist teachers and lecturers to apply liberal education in schools and universities practically. Education should stress on freedom for people who deeply understand themselves and their society. Liberal education is to give students orientations in place of the full content of research, so students must be trained in critical and creative thinkings, and it is likely to train liberated educators and a new generation for Vietnamese education. In this case, both students and teachers are able to become liberated people and reciprocally enhance the quality of education. This viewpoint intends to buttress the previous suggestions to tighten the relationship between teachers and students in a classroom. Besides, Vietnam education must update diverse knowledge sources in developed countries and provide local knowledge for global knowledge. This is the goal of a developed education. To achieve this objective, its foundation must be based on the spirit of liberation and liberation methods.

#### **4. Conclusion**

It is indicated that the Tonkin Free School movement is one of the significant reforms in the Vietnamese history, and this movement is a bridge between the old and new education of Vietnam. First, Tonkin Free School suggested a new educational philosophy that the feudal regime failed to build and empirically apply. The Tonkin Free School's educational philosophy emphasizes on the role of nationalism and patriotism but approached practical knowledge to ostracize dogmatic awareness and improper methods in the new context of the country. Moreover, the movement aims at stimulating universal education, which created an equal education in Vietnamese society regardless of different social classes, gender, and origin. Thereby, it is one of the influential factors for leaders of Tonkin Free School to win popularity in its regional purview. Second, this movement was well-organized to effectively manage academic activities, human resources, and educational equality throughout its period of establishment. Curriculum contains a broad scope of subjects, including social sciences, natural sciences, and physical education, while initially practically respecting business and economic issues. Additionally, modern pedagogical methods that give students an incentive for their freedom of speech contributed to conveying modern and pragmatic thoughts of the

world to every citizen of Vietnam. Leaders of the movement still retain the positive values of the old education yet encourage new methods of education based on the foundation of the national soul. Despite a very short-term operation, Tonkin Free School proved that reforms and renovation are the critical trends for Vietnam to revive their nation and catch achievements of developed countries in the world. As a result, the historical experience of Tonkin Free School proposes an essential suggestion for Vietnam to reform its national education deeply. Otherwise, Vietnam may be left behind.

❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Author have no conflict of interest to declare.

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**ĐÔNG KINH NGHĨA THỰC ĐẦU THẾ KỈ XX VÀ MỘT SỐ GỢI MỞ  
CHO CẢI CÁCH GIÁO DỤC HIỆN ĐẠI Ở VIỆT NAM****Hà Triệu Huy***Trường Đại học Khoa học xã hội và Nhân văn, Đại học Quốc gia Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, Việt Nam**Tác giả liên hệ: Hà Triệu Huy – Email: hatrieuhuy97@gmail.com**Ngày nhận bài: 28-8-2021; ngày nhận bài sửa: 08-10-2021; ngày duyệt đăng: 22-10-2021***TÓM TẮT**

*Bài viết này nhằm làm rõ phong trào Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục trên quan điểm cải cách giáo dục. Mặc dù, xuất hiện từ đầu thế kỉ XX, nhưng phong trào Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục vẫn có những nét tương đồng với cải cách giáo dục Việt Nam hiện nay. Dựa trên các kết quả nghiên cứu trước đây, bài viết chỉ ra hai đặc điểm ứng dụng nổi bật của phong trào này: Thứ nhất, Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục đã đề xuất một phương châm giáo dục cho Việt Nam; thứ hai, mô hình tổ chức, các môn học và phương pháp dạy học của phong trào đã góp phần thay đổi mọi khía cạnh của nền giáo dục cũ. Có thể nói, phong trào Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục đã để lại kinh nghiệm trong việc tạo ra một triết lí giáo dục nhất quán, đối với việc thay đổi phương pháp và chủ đề giảng dạy hiện nay.*

**Từ khóa:** cải cách giáo dục; Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục; lịch sử Việt Nam