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**NGO VAN PHONG**

**SOCIAL REFORM IDEOLOGY OF  
THE PHONG HOA, NGAY NAY NEWSPAPERS**

**Major : Journalism**

**Code : 9320101**

**SUMMARY OF PhD'S THESIS IN JOURNALISTS**

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## PREFACE

### 1. Reason for choosing the research topic

The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers are a weekly newspaper that was born in Hanoi in 1932 and operated until 1940 during the French colonial period. Although the first issue of the Phong H $\acute{o}$ a Ng $\grave{a}$ y Nay newspaper was published on June 16, 1932, it wasn't until September 22, 1932, when the fourteenth issue with eight large pages came out that readers truly became familiar with the publication. This was also the issue when Nguyen Tuong Tam officially took over as editor after purchasing it from Pham Huu Ninh.

With a desire to create a new society where all people will have access to progressive reforms in terms of ideology, law, economy, politics, sports, and entertainment, as well as culture and social life, apart from specific social activities, Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have publicly expressed this aspiration through articles published in its weekly magazine. In some topics related to society and art that the newspaper focuses on, the idea of social reform is a central theme encompassing everything.

However, to this day, there are still differing opinions when it comes to studying the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, in which, some argue that these ideas were utopian, melodramatic, and exploited by those who sought to "mislead the masses." On the other hand, many researchers believe that, after discarding political aspects, these social reform ideas remain fresh and highly relevant not only at the time but also have a certain value in the context of Vietnam's contemporary societal development.

The research on Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers has been done for a long time, but it mainly focuses on literary aspects of the Tu luc van doan team in various forms of poetry, short stories, and novels. Research from the perspective of journalism is quite modest, not comprehensive enough, and still leaves some gaps.

The survey of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, raises several issues that need to be clarified: 1) The objective and subjective factors in Vietnam's social and cultural context at the beginning of the 20th century form the basis for the emergence and development of the progressive ideas on social reform in the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers; 2) The progressive ideas on social reform in the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers are a product of Western intellectuals in the process of mobilizing and developing society in general and Vietnamese journalism in particular; 3) The progressive ideas on social reform in the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers are expressed through key aspects such as individual liberation, advanced thoughts on women's rights, particularly rural renewal and lifestyle changes for the people of Vietnam at the turn of the 20th century.

Due to those reasons, the author chose the topic of research for thesis on "**The Social Reform Ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers** for my PhD degree in Journalistics Studies.

### 2. Aims and Objectives of the Research

#### 2.1. Aims of the research

Based on research and analysis of the system of concepts, characteristics and influencing factors and content and forms of expression for social reform ideas in Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay

newspapers, this thesis will summarize and evaluate the contributions of the newspaper to the development of Vietnamese journalism at the beginning of the 20th century; seeking a more objective and fair perspective towards Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers in the historical progression of Vietnamese journalism.

## **2.2. Objectives of the research**

To achieve these objectives, the thesis will carry out the following tasks:

Establishing the theoretical and practical foundations related to the social reform ideas of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers.

Conducting research and analysis to clarify progressive values and positive aspects in the content and form of the social reform ideas presented by the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, as well as their historical limitations.

Identifying journalistic meanings and lessons from studying the social reform ideas of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers.

## **3. Research subjects and scope of the research**

### **3.1. Subjects of the research**

The thesis focuses on studying the progressive social reform ideas expressed in the newspapers Phong Hoa and Ngay Nay from June 16, 1932 to September 7, 1940.

### **3.2. Scope of the research**

To clarify the research content, the Thesis surveyed news and articles from Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, published in a total of 414 issues from 1932 to 1940. This is the entire period from when the newspaper was established until it ceased publication.

## **4. Theoretical background and research methods**

### **4.1. Theoretical background**

The thesis is built based on applying the perspectives of Marxism-Leninism and the thoughts/ideology of Ho Chi Minh on journalism, especially in terms of views and principles related to creative activities for journalists.

Utilizing knowledge of logical reasoning and the history of journalism, literary logic, and history, specifically: 1) In terms of the history of journalism; 2) Regarding the system of logical reasoning for types of journalistic works, and 3) Regarding literary theory and relevant interdisciplinary materials.

### **4.2. Research methods**

To carry out the topic, the thesis uses the following methods: Documentary research; Historical method; Comparative method of contemporaneousness; Comparative historical method; The method of synthesis; In-depth interview method; Primary sources; Secondary sources.

## **5. Research hypothesis**

*Firstly:* There is still an unfair evaluation of the positive contributions made by the *Phong Hóá, Ngày Nay newspapers*.

*Secondly:* It is affirmed that Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay, and their social reform ideas have made significant contributions to the development of society in Vietnam as a whole and journalism at the beginning of the 20th century specifically. Among these contributions,

progressive reform thoughts on rural society, humanity, lifestyle, and progress for women stand out most prominently.

*Thirdly:* The social reform ideas of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers not only hold historical significance for Vietnamese journalism but also possess value for the contemporary development of Vietnamese society.

## **6. New points of the thesis**

The dissertation presents new insights as the first systematic and comprehensive study of *Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay* newspapers. It contributes to a deeper understanding of early 20th-century Vietnamese journalism history.

The thesis has systematized common logical issues such as concepts, theories related to it, characteristics and factors affecting the social reform thinking of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers.

The thesis has systematically compiled, surveyed and analyzed the ideas of social reform in Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers on both content and form, as expressed through: rural reform ideology; lifestyle reform ideology; human liberation ideology; progressive women's ideology. These are advanced ideas aimed at changing contemporary society, eliminating outdated, backward, and obsolete thoughts, and striving for a modern cultural way of life that is consistent with the development of global civilization.

The Thesis has comprehensively evaluated both contributions and historical limitations of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers in the early 20th century's social reform thinking in Vietnam, thereby drawing some lessons from journalism and historical significance for contemporary society.

*From a theoretical perspective,* the dissertation contributes to journalism and media studies by systematizing key theories related to social reform ideologies expressed in *Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay*. It also provides an objective and fair assessment of their reformist perspectives.

*From a practical perspective,* given that these newspapers were established nearly a century ago, analyzing their impact requires a historical approach. From today's point of view, the dissertation shows that many issues promoted by *Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay*, such as rural development and women's rights are still relevant in modern society. This provides valuable insights for journalists, media professionals, and policymakers in Vietnam.

More importantly, the findings serve as a useful reference for decision-makers shaping the country's socio-economic development. Additionally, the dissertation offers a valuable academic resource for students, graduate scholars, and researchers in Journalism, Political Science, History, and those interested in the evolution of journalism and media in Vietnam

## **7. Structure of the Thesis**

In addition to the Introduction section, General overview of the research status, Conclusion, and References, Appendix, the main contents of this Thesis consist of three chapters.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW/OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1.1. Research on the social reform ideology of the Phong Hóa, Ngày Nay newspapers based on journalism and communication approaches**

Despite the fact that research in this approach is still limited and fragmented without comprehensive synthesizing studies, most of them have affirmed that the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers, along with its progressive social reform ideas, have made certain contributions to the flow of Vietnam's press history, playing a significant role in the country's modernization process during the 1930s of the 20th century. Notable studies include: *Introduction to Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers* by Pham Thao Nguyen and Nguyen Trong Hien (published on Hoasen.edu.vn on September 19, 2012, the official website of Cao Sen University); *Phong Hoa and a long – distance aspirations* by Hoang Van Quang Author (National University Hanoi Bulletin No. 255); *From producing Phong Hoa Newspapers to the literatue style of Tu luc van doan team* by author Khuc Ha Linh (Chungta.com, October 20, 2015); *Northern Press at the time of French Indochina: such as, Ly Toet, Xa Xe and the Tu luc van doan team* by Nguyen Ngoc Chinh (published on April 6, 2016, <https://nghethuatxua.com/>); *Who is the 'father' of Ly Toet, Xa Xe, Bang Be?* of author Le Van Nghe (The People's Army Newspaper Online, August 23, 2017); *The Lemur Dress and the context of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay* by author Pham Thao Nguyen (Published by Hong Đuc Publishing House in 2019); *Population Issues/People Lives: A program* by author Nguyen Manh Tien (Song Huong Magazine Issue 359, March 20, 2019); *Modern Phong Hoa* of the group of authors published by the Writers Association in 2020... In essence, these researches serve as crucial slices and puzzle pieces forming a complete picture for evaluating the progressive social reform thoughts of the Phong Hóa, Ngày Nay newspapers.

### **1.2. Research on the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers based on literature approaches**

Most research related to the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers have been approached through literary studies by Tu luc van doan team in the field of literature with contributions in genres such as novels, new poetry, or short stories. Therefore, these researches are quite diverse and comprehensive. They all directly or indirectly acknowledge a spirit of innovation and modernization among authors from various perspectives. However, the Tu luc van doan team only comprises key members of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers but not everyone. This means that to form ideas for social reform and progress, there is also involvement from many other individuals and writers outside this group. Research along this approach, such as: *"The Concept of Humanity in the Novels of the Tu luc van doan team"* by author Le Du Tu, published by the Social Sciences Publishing House in 1997; *"The similarities between Journalism and Literature"* by author Vuong Tri Nhan (No. 1 Journal of Literature in 1995); *The Anthology of the Tu luc van doan team* published by the Writers' Association in 1999; *Tu luc van doan team in the development of national literature* by author Pham The Ngu (Published by Culture Information Publishers in 2000) *Rural Reform - A theme bearing enlightening significance in the novel of Tụ lực văn đoàn Team* by author Ngo Van Gia (Vanvn.vn, September 11, 2012); *Independence in literature and the mission of freedom* for two authors Phung Ngoc Kien and Doan Anh Duong (published by the Writers'

Association in 2023...). At the same time, recognition and evaluation also include critical approaches such as "From the Duy Tân Movement to the Tu luc van doan team" by author Nguyen Van Xuan (Journal of Literature, June 15, 1968, No. 107+108) and "The Tu luc van doan team , a 'special interest group' in artistic life" by author Lai Nguyen An, published in the Journal of Literature Research, Vol. 12, December 2013, Page. 112-121.

### **1.3. Other studies related to the thesis title**

In addition to the two research approaches mentioned above, there is another approach that involves interdisciplinary studies such as "*Vietnamese Intellectuals and Western Civilization during French Colonialism*" by author Tran Viet Nghia, published in 2012 by National Political Publishing House; "*Women's Rights in Vietnam at the beginning of the 20th Century*" by author Dang Thi Van Chi, published by World Publishing House in 2001; "*Modernity and Cultural Changes in Contemporary Vietnam*" by authors Do Quang Hung and Tran Viet Nghia, published by Social Sciences Publishing House in 2019; "Conference Documents on *Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, and Tự lực văn đoàn Team.*", published by Life Now Publishing house in 2014. Furthermore, there are also dissertations and theses with related content like the thesis "*Graphic Art of the Phong Hóa*" by author Tran Thi Thy Tra, defended in 2023 at the National Institute of Culture and Arts of Vietnam.

### **1.4. Issues raised from the overview of the research situation**

*From a theoretical standpoint:* (1) Identifying the system of related concepts; (2) Clearly defining the characteristics of the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers; (3) Highlighting both objective and subjective factors that significantly influence those social reform ideas.

*In terms of practicality:* (1) Conduct a survey and compile the ideas for social reform in the content of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers; (2) Conduct a survey and compile the ideas for social reform in the format of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers (3) Evaluate both the positive aspects as well as limitations and significance along with lessons learned from researching the ideas for social reform presented in the Phong Hóa, Ngày Nay newspapers.

## **Chapter 1**

### **GENERAL REASONING OF THE SOCIAL REFORM IDEOLOGY OF THE PHONG HOA, NGAY NAY NEWSPAPERS**

#### **1.1. System of concepts related to the thesis**

##### ***1.1.1. Reform***

Reform is a program or plan initiated by one or a group of subjects in society or government to achieve systemic changes aimed at improving development without altering the fundamental nature of state governance.

##### ***1.1.2. Social Refrom***

Social reform is a process of innovation and improvement in specific activities across various fields of social life such as economy, culture, politics, law, education, and healthcare... to ensure better fulfillment of people's needs and rights, as well as the overall development of the country.

##### ***1.1.3. The Ideology***

One can understand that ideology is a refraction and reflection of current social reality in human consciousness and the expression of individuals' perspectives toward that reality.

#### ***1.1.4. The social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers***

The thought of social reform of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is implemented through articles, writings, and projects in the Phong H $\acute{o}$ a, Ng $\grave{a}$ y Nay newspapers from 1932 to 1940 with the aim of promoting social change on various fronts including rural reform, lifestyle for people, progressive ideas about individual emancipation and women's liberation as the main ideologies.

### **1.2 Some theories related to social reform thoughts of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay Newspapers**

#### ***1.2.1. The theory of Public Sphere***

The German philosopher and sociologist J $\ddot{u}$ rgen Habermas has published his theory on "the public sphere" or "public space" in his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, first published in German in 1962 and translated to English in 1989. According to him, "the public sphere" emerged during the eighteenth century as societies based on private property expanded their political models from England to other countries. This historical period in Vietnam indeed had its own "public sphere" according to Habermas's theory, with the development of printing technology, the emergence of new intellectual classes, open debates, social opinion guidance, the significant role of journalists and newspapers in seeking out a new space that was closer to workers, peasants, and rural areas.

#### ***1.2.2. The theory of modernization***

The concept of modernity has been central to human thought and action for many centuries. However, the theory of modernization did not emerge until relatively late and was widely used only in the 20th century. In the early part of the 20th century, in Vietnam, there were more and more educated Vietnamese who had direct exposure and experience with "modernity" in Europe. Among them were journalists of Phong H $\acute{o}$ a, Ng $\grave{a}$ y Nay Newspapers, led by Nguyen Tuong Tam. Their voices enriched the understanding of the core elements of modernity, such as individualism in personal life, literature, political character, and reform and innovation in science and technology. This is also the essence of the theory of modernity.

#### ***1.2.3. Some theories on social democracy***

It can be said that most approaches to social democratic theory refer to three main topics: practical democratic activities, the meaning of democracy, and the value of democracy. However, they differ depending on which topic is considered the priority. For philosopher Aristotle (384 - 322 BC), he generalized his viewpoint about the meaning of democracy through surveys of democratic practices. Locke (1632 - 1704) believed that only a specific form of democracy could be legal, specifically implementing majority rule in representative government. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 - 1778, a philosopher from the Enlightenment movement) illustrated how different philosophers adopting similar methodological approaches could lead to alternative or even opposing views on democracy.



Rousseau acknowledged that this ideal was rarely fully implemented. Therefore, he used the term "democracy" to describe a situation that barely resembled perfect self-governance.

### **1.3. Characteristics of the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers**

#### ***1.3.1. The research has clearly demonstrated the goal of reform and modernization of the country***

The journalists of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have clearly defined their goals in terms of social reform as providing information, reflecting objectively on the current situation along with various means of dissemination and education to improve public awareness. This helps people understand their roles, responsibilities, and duties towards the fate of the nation. Therefore, the goal of reforming and modernizing the country has been pursued and implemented by members of the newspaper throughout its eight-year existence.

#### ***1.3.2. The research has shown directionality for readers***

*Firstly:* Through the information system published in *Phong Hoa and Ngay Nay* newspapers, journalists aim to provide assistance for the public to understand what is happening in society today, know about all daily events occurring around the world to create a comprehensive picture of the objective world that humans live in. This is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society with many harsh regulations, and remnants of feudalism that have greatly hindered human development.

*Secondly:* By helping the readers clearly identify their situation and circumstances within specific social conditions, we must determine what needs to be done, how changes should occur, and what goals need to be achieved, both immediately and long term.

*Thirdly:* Making a strong impact on readers' perception through reflections and conclusions drawn from real-life experiences.

*Fourthly:* Focusing on disseminating values, standards, methods, and specific ways of operation to achieve set goals and obtain the best results under specific conditions. Within the scope of this thesis, the author has compiled them into four groups: (1) Rural innovation and reform activities; (2) Lifestyle reform activities for people; (3) Individual rights reform activities; (4) Reforms and progress related to women's issues.

#### ***1.3.3. The research has clearly demonstrated the spirit of education and reform guidance for readers.***

The ideas of social reform in the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have contributed to shaping economic thinking, educational concepts, political awareness, labor consciousness, moral values, legal consciousness, and patriotic spirit, which were innovative, progressive, and fought against outdated, backward, and obsolete thoughts for the people. This has also helped create public trust in the newspaper.

### **1.4. The factors affecting the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay Newspapers**

#### ***1.4.1. Objective factors***

##### ***1.4.1.1. Socio-Economic Factors***

During the period from 1929 to 1933, the global economy was plunged into a worldwide crisis that also affected France and Vietnam, particularly the agricultural sector in Vietnam which was hit hardest during this time.

The colonial society in Indochina, including Vietnam, continues to deepen social stratification and ethnic conflicts due to the impact of global economic crises. Peasants and workers, two large classes, are most severely affected by the ruthless policies and exploitation of the French colonial government.

This social context serves as the foundation and origin for the development of new ideas and progressive reform thoughts entering Vietnam through various channels, such as Western-educated intellectuals. They return from studying in Western countries or are influenced by Western advanced thinking with specific activities, including journalism.

#### *1.4.1.2. The political Context*

At the beginning of the twentieth century, despite being suppressed, nationalist movements continued to emerge regularly. The influence and impact on the thinking and awareness of the society in Vietnam at that time were very large and occurred rapidly. The formation and development of the bourgeoisie class and urban lifestyle, where the bourgeoisie was the group receiving Western civilization in Vietnam, this reception was voluntary rather than imposed.

Alongside the old classes like peasants and landlords, new classes emerged such as workers and the petty bourgeoisie (including intellectuals). In addition to the old intelligentsia (Confucian scholars), there also appeared a new generation of intellectuals educated in Western education, which entered Vietnam in the early years of the twentieth century. French colonialism had established a relatively complete educational system from primary to high school, college, and university to replace the old Confucian education system.

With its progressive stance and forward-thinking ideology, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have always used "*laughter as a weapon, satire as a method*" to clearly outline and encourage people to break away from outdated customs and traditions, follow the path of Western enlightenment in both spirit and matter.

#### *1.4.1.3. Cultural factors*

*Firstly:* The Influence of thought of the Western Capitalist Democratic Thought

The capitalist democratic thought of the 18th century developed strongly worldwide, with notable representatives such as Montesquieu (1689-1755), Voltaire (1694-1778), and particularly Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). This thought has influenced and brought about changes in some Eastern countries like China, Japan, and Vietnam.

*Secondly:* Impacts of Western culture in Vietnam

This influence began from material civilizations, initially causing reactions within Vietnamese society. The fusion with Western culture is the most significant "mutation" in our national cultural history. It represents a profound change in society, both materially and spiritually, from individuals to communities. This means it breaks traditional patterns and builds new models that align with new ideas.

These are favorable environments for progressive social reform thoughts represented by newspapers of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay, which were born and grew under the influence of Western intellectuals or those who have been significantly influenced by Western culture.

#### *1.4.1.4. The journalism context*

From 1930 to mid-1936, our country's press experienced significant growth, particularly in terms of quantity: During this period, there were approximately 380 newspapers, nearly four times the number during the period from 1924 to 1929.

The Phong Hoa newspaper was founded in 1932, with its first 13 issues managed by Pham Huu Ninh. On September 22, 1932, the 14th issue of Phong Hoa officially debuted readers with new content and formats, formally under the editor-in-chief of Nguyen Truyen Tam.

Following that, the Ngay Nay newspaper (January 30, 1935) came into existence, replacing the previously banned Phong Hoa newspaper. Immediately after the suspension of the weekly Phong Hoa newspaper, all members switched to working for Ngay Nay newspaper. They inherited and developed Ngay Nay newspaper, making it more vibrant and distinguished than ever before.

#### *1.4.1.5. Readers of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay Newspapers*

With the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, the target readers that the newspaper editorial office aims for are clearly defined: They are individuals with sufficient cultural and knowledge background to understand information; they are people who care about current affairs and social issues related to their lives; they love literature and art.

The readership of their newspaper does not just limit itself to a specific region in Northern Vietnam but also reaches readers across Central and Southern regions, gaining their trust and affection. This often leads to situations where the newspapers are sold out before being published.

It is clear that Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is not distant or lofty in its content delivery. It is closer to the everyday life of ordinary citizens and truly brings readers with new life pulses and information.

#### **1.4.2. Subjective factors**

##### *1.4.2.1. The establishment and Development process of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers*

#### **Period of 1932-1936**

After purchasing the Phong Hoa newspaper, Nguyen Tuong Tam, in his role as Director, along with a group of like-minded individuals including Khai Hung-Truong Khanh Giu (who was then the main writer holding several important positions in the Phong Hoa newspaper from its first issue to number 13 before that), Nguyen Tuong Long (Hoang Dao), Ho Trong Hieu (Tu Mo), and Nguyen Tuong Lan (Thach Lam) formed a new team. On September 22nd, 1932, the Phong Hoa newspaper published its fourteenth issue, expanding the paper's size from 24.5 x 32.3 cm to 45.5 x 61.0 cm starting from issue 11 through issue 20. It then switched to an average paper size of 31 x 44 cm from issue 20 onwards, being released every Thursday and marking the beginning of a new era for the official publication.

The establishment and development of Phong Hoa newspaper have added a fresh and prominent color to the contemporary media landscape. Since its establishment and growth (from 1932 to 1936), the newspaper has left significant imprints on readers' hearts and sparked frenzies within our nation's spiritual life at that time.

#### **The period from 1937 to 1940**

The Ngày Nay Newspaper from January 31, 1935. The early issues of the Ngày Nay newspaper focused on cultural matters, experimental fine art photography, and factual reportage, and were quite moderate in tone. Despite not making a profit or even suffering losses, the paper continued to operate. When the Phong Hoa Newspaper was discontinued (June 5, 1936), all staff members of Phong Hoa Newspapers and their associates immediately transferred to work for Ngày Nay, transforming it into a new Phong Hoa team, a second Phong Hoá that was more renowned and modern.

During this phase, besides the main reporters from the time of Phong Hoa newspaper, the newspaper also received contributions from many other artists such as Tran Thanh Tinh (Thanh Tinh), Doan Phu Tu, Nguyen Khac Hieu (Tan Da), Nguyen Hong, Cu Huy Can (Huu Can), Luu Trong Lu and famous painters at the time: Nguyen Gia Tri, To Ngoc Van, especially painter Nguyen Cat Tuong (Lemur Cat Truong). These elements were indispensable in creating Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers - a unique phenomenon that made significant contributions to Vietnamese journalism during the period of 1930-1945.

#### *1.4.2.2. Editorial Board and collaborative reporters and experts*

In his handwritten manuscript "A Life in Journalism," Nguyen Tuong Tam has recorded the specific tasks of each member as follows: (1) Nguyen Tuong Tam (with pen names: Đông Sơn, Nhất Linh, Tam Linh, Bảo Sơn, Lãng Du, Tân Việt)), is the Editor-in-Chief and main writer for the newspaper; (2) Nguyen Tuong Long (also known by pen names: Tu Ly, Tuong Van, Dao Danh Phuc Van, Hoang Dao), is responsible; for covering the sections: from High to Low - People and Events, Before the Horse's Hoof, Look and Find; (3) Nguyen Tuong Lan (Viet Sinh, Thien Si, Thach Lam) takes charge of the section *Following the Stream*; (4) Tran Khanh Du (Kh, Nhi Linh, Nhat Dao Cao Han Dai Dau, Ban Than va Khai Hung), manages content for the section *Cleaning Beans*; (5) Nguyen Dinh Le (also known as The Lu, Le Ta), is responsible for the *Poetry and Short News sections*; (6) Ho Trong Hieu (known as Tu Mo), looks after the *Water Flow Reversal section*.

#### *1.4.2.3. Individuals who influence the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay newspapers*

*Firstly:* Nguyen Tuong Tam-Nhat Linh; *Secondly:* Tran Khanh Du- Khai Hung; *Thirdly:* Nguyen Tuong Long - Hoang Dao; *Fourthly:* Ho Trong Hieu - Tu Mo; *Fifthly:* Nguyen Tuong Lan - Thach Lam; *Sixthly:* Nguyen The Le - The Lu  
*Seventhly:* Ngo Xuan Dieu - Xuan Dieu

## **Charter 2**

### **SURVEY RESULTS OF THE SOCIAL REFORM IDEOLOGY OF PHONG HOA, NGÀY NAY NEWSPAPER IN TERMS OF CONTENT AND FORM OF EXPRESSION**

#### **2.1. Progressive social reform ideologies of the Phong Hoa, Ngày Nay in terms of content**

##### ***2.1.1. Rural Reform ideology***

According to the survey results, there were 190 issues of Phong Hóa Newspaper and 22 issues of Ngày Nay Newspaper with the type of news on rural reform in the Phong Hoa Newspaper, with a dense appearance of around 380 articles, averaging about 2 articles per issue. However, the frequency of this type of article significantly decreased in Everyday

News with only 224 articles, resulting in an average of less than one article per issue or even no articles at all. In terms of the article category (including reflective pieces, commentaries, news stories, investigative reports, interviews, etc.), the level of occurrence was quite similar between Phong Hoa and Ngay Nay newspapers. Specifically, there were 199 articles in Phong Hoa newspaper and 157 articles in Ngay Nay newspaper, meaning that approximately every 1.04 issues of Phong H $\acute{o}$ a had one article, while almost every 1.5 issues of Ngay Nay had one article.

#### 2.1.1.1. *Reflects the reality of Vietnam's rural area*

It is evident that through objective and truthful writing style, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, have managed to reveal part of the reality in the northern delta region at that time: one of oppression, backwardness, poverty, filthiness, and constant fear of the cruelty of nature. This dark image has had a significant impact on the reporters of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers and it was one of the reasons behind the formation of their idea of "rural reform."

#### 2.1.1.2 *Farmers' fate*

That is life's pages, although most of them are innocent and pitiful, there are also many people who are on the path to dehumanization and decay. The innate goodness that human beings possess has been thrown into this rotten society, it seems difficult to keep intact.

Farmers suddenly become strangers to themselves and estranged from their communities and humanity. On the path of sin, their characters become distorted, and abnormal, and their souls are corrupted in a heart-wrenching way. If in the city, people fall into the trap of gambling, fraud, and drug trafficking... then those poor, downtrodden individuals in rural areas also succumb to various forms of moral degeneration.

In such an actual situation in rural society, reform, innovation, and modernization must be implemented urgently.

#### 2.1.1.3. *Infrastructure development of Vietnam's rural area*

The founding statement of the Anh Sang Association of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers at the end of the 1930s created a cultural and social movement in our country, calling for the establishment of an organization to combat "Nha Hang toi", with a program to build bright homes and advocate for "Society - Humanity - Reform". The "Anh Sang Association" movement among journalists from Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers has built a wide-ranging and deep activity that is supported by many classes.

The reformist thinking in rural areas was also reflected in the "education" spirit of farmers. Specifically: *firstly*, eliminating dark and unsanitary houses; *secondly*, supporting plans to construct clean and beautiful homes (using various sources of capital including government subsidies and donations from benefactors) and guiding farmers on how to create roads, dig wells, and provide ventilation for wastewater drains; *thirdly*, promoting encouragement for everyone, especially women, in family work to learn about maintaining tidiness and sanitation; *fourthly*, helping poor families who currently live in old, dilapidated, and dark homes by providing them with brighter, higher quality housing through various means.

#### *2.1.1.4. Comprehensive change in rural society*

The newspaper expressed a more ambitious vision than just building "bright villages" for comprehensive rural reform in Vietnam, instead of merely focusing on constructing cheap houses as stated in their regulations.

Clearly, the ideas of Nhất Linh and the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers were moving towards societal reform that began with the activities of the Association of Light. This ambition is no different from a political party or organization implementing social reform. This explains why later some members of the editorial board ventured into political parties.

### **2.1.2. Innovative ideas on lifestyle for people by Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers**

#### *2.1.2.1. Criticizing social evils*

This issue is not a new topic and has appeared in the *Đang Co Tung* newspaper, *Indochina* magazine, *Trung Bac Tân Văn*, notable authors such as Nguyen Van Vinh, Ngo Tat To.

Like those from past and present times, the writers of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers write about society with a focus on uncovering severe social issues such as corruption, high tax evasion, oppressive regimes, embezzlement, and even child trafficking...

#### *2.1.2.2. Opposing ostentatious eating and drinking in social life*

For centuries, Grand banquets have long been considered a "tradition" in people's lives; without them, things would not go smoothly. Violating village customs - you must be punished with a beating, then promoted to success. To marry or bury someone, it is necessary to hold grand ceremonies. The more elaborate these events, the better. Each article becomes a battle against social evils and outdated traditions, expressing the desire for a better life for ordinary citizens. However, these desires only come from the personal feelings of individual journalists who belong to the bourgeois press, so their impact on society may be wide but not strong enough to change the colonial regime and local officials.

#### *2.1.2.3. Fighting Against Superstition and Belief in Spirits*

People who believe in superstitions can harm themselves and society, so everyone wants to eliminate superstitions from social life. However, dealing with this issue requires great care and delicacy, even so, Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers also face challenges when addressing it.

Through their satirical and humorous writing style, they have warned of the harmful consequences stemming from the widespread belief in superstitions among a significant portion of the Vietnamese population, even to this day. Writing about the hardship and backwardness of people's lives in the 1930s is not limited to newspapers like Phong Hoa and Ngay Nay; writers such as Nhat Linh, Khai Hung, Viet Sinh, and The Lu also made a significant impact. In their writings, they depicted various aspects of social life, and spiritual life, criticized superstitions, but also praised customs. All issues related to customs were fully described by the group of authors with specific attitudes.

The newspaper articles have fulfilled the desire to learn about lifestyles and customs in the lives of various social classes, while also helping readers discern which customs and

lifestyles still hold cultural value and which ones have become outdated and need to be eliminated from daily life.

#### *2.1.2.4. Supporting good customs and traditions of rural Vietnam and eliminating Confucianism.*

In Vietnam, every year there are thousands of festivals large and small throughout the country, especially in the early part of the year when these festivals seem to be held everywhere. Festivals are cultural social activities for a community or region, sometimes even for the entire nation. Therefore, traditional customs and rituals passed down from our ancestors have become hot topics, fertile ground for authors like Tuong Bach, The Lu, and Viet Sinh to create their journalistic articles. This is also one way to implement the reform agenda of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers. There are many journalistic works about Vietnamese festival traditions, such as "On Lim Hill" by Tuong Bach, "Hoi he dinh dam of Nhat Chi Mai" Lang Son province in festival days by Tuong Bach, "Today and festival" by Viet Sinh, "Ha Loi Village Festival" by Tuong Bach, etc.

#### ***2.1.3. The progressive ideas on individual liberation by Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers***

According to survey data, there were a total of 127 articles related to human liberation thought. In Phong Hoa newspaper, there were 48 articles (accounting for 37.8%), and in Ngay Nay newspaper, there were 79 articles (making up 62.2%).

##### *2.1.3.1. Promoting human freedom and equality*

As a common topic, this issue has been discussed in many contemporary newspapers like *Luc tinh tan van*, *Nam phong tap chi*, *Nu gioi chung*, *Phu nu tan van*, *Đông Tây tuan bao...* However, it is only in Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay that people have paid more attention to making individuals the content of debates or the main subject to explore social issues. Firstly, most of the content emphasizes the role of novelty, believes in progress, and values individual issues. They expose outdated thoughts of Confucianism that no longer fit, and openly criticize feudal rituals. The works of this newspaper have focused on piercing attacks against old customs, trampling upon the personal happiness of human beings. The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers affirm freedom for love and marriage of each individual, which means they fight to break free from and destroy the "three submissions" concept of Confucianism, a notion that has long held back and hindered many generations, especially women in Vietnam.

What is particularly notable about those who work at the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is their belief that modern families themselves suppress individual freedoms, especially women. There exist representatives of the feudal class within these families with an obsolete thought system unsuitable for the new era.

Clearly, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers present a fresh perspective on individuals, personal happiness, love, freedom, and equality - principles that align with what is reasonable, natural, and timely for humanity. With various character depictions and diverse themes, the newspaper opens up a progressive viewpoint, causing shockwaves in the current societal consciousness. It directly attacks the family rituals of the feudal

aristocracy and the decaying society, making it clear that there's no place left for humans in such systems, thus affirming its progressive ideological message.

#### *2.1.3.2. Eliminating prejudiced and backward people*

If before, within the newly established family structure, freedom was restrained, now it is different at a higher level. The authors have brought readers into the suffocating atmosphere of feudal families with struggles for petty interests, sinister plots, humiliation, and ostentatious behavior under the facade of privilege. These individuals reject the slave lifestyle; they desire social reform and seek to eliminate superstitious beliefs. They fight for the right to be loved. The primary goal of their struggle is to overthrow traditional concepts of the ancient patriarchal family, shatter chains, and break free from Confucian ethics. It originates from the conflict between old and new, emphasizing individual independence and fresh, liberated ideas represented by young men and women steeped in Western culture.

Any reader who reads Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers will find, regardless of the form or genre, whether it's reflective essays, news stories, investigative reports, literary works such as poetry, short stories, novels, or even advertisements, a sense of reform, a yearning for emancipation, and a need for self-assertion.

#### *2.1.3.3. Elevate Modern Humans*

Phong Hoa newspaper is a new breeze, a breath of modernity and reform, it completely opposes outdated traditions from its very first issues. As for Ngay Nay newspaper, it represents the present and the most progressive, the model people have a new way of life, expressed in thoughts and actions, free from constraints. They are bold adventurers, changing circumstances or expressing themselves naturally. They decide their fate, enjoy love freely, and know how to beautify themselves from makeup, lipstick, and powder to clothes, eyebrows, eyelashes, transportation, sports, physical exercise, even sleep positions, or sexual behavior.

The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers has been enthusiastically promoting individuals who embrace progressive lifestyles, a sense of freedom, and aesthetically pleasing physical appearances, while also exhibiting respect for human values, particularly the youth generation of this new era. These young people have significantly evolved from their predecessors. "*What is the role of the youth in our contemporary society? What tasks do they bear, and what aspirations do they harbor?*". A human is one who has an awareness of life and changes his views in a progressive and free manner. According to Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, before anything else, humans must think about their personal interests and duties. Only then can they enjoy happiness. Regarding personal duties, this means that humans should know how to love and help each other but also have self-reliance, trust, and love for life. They should live happily.

According to the author's research findings, up to 60% of ads relate to medical content, treating illnesses. Most of these diseases were very common among the people of An Nam at that time but not all were openly acknowledged or treated. For example, on page 10 of the Ngay Nay newspaper No. 2, out of ten ads, in which six are related to treatment (accounting for 60%).

#### *2.1.4. The progressive thoughts on women by Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers*



According to survey data, among 232 articles related to women's issues published across 414 editions of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, alongside topics concerning fashion beauty for women constitute the largest number of articles at 97 pieces (41.8%), the second most common theme is women's rights with 52 articles (comprising 22.4% of the total). Following this, education-related issues come next with 42 articles (accounting for 18.1% of the total), while social and sporting activities account for 41 articles (representing 17.7% of the total).

#### *2.1.4.1. Women empowerment ideas*

The authors assert that women should have the right to live with whom they choose and be loved. This theme is depicted in various works

Moreover, the authors of these publications also recognize a crucial factor underlying this change: while individual women can undergo self-transformation, what is truly fundamental lies in the awareness of husbands. At its core, this realization is highly scientific, and humanistic, and its value persists even until today and into the future.

#### *2.1.4.2. Women should be educated*

So what should women learn? They must start learning from a young age: how to write and speak Vietnamese, as well as foreign languages. They need to learn arithmetic operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. They also have to learn cooking, makeup, etiquette, and proper communication skills. Moreover, they should be knowledgeable about sports and entertainment, such as dancing, swimming, tennis, and even driving. At the same time, they must learn self-defense techniques and ways to resist the evil schemes and temptations of modern society. Furthermore, they need to know how to shop, manage finances, cook meals, and raise children with breastfeeding.

According to the survey data, out of a total of 42 articles related to women's education issues, there were 8 on Thanh Nien and the rest, 34, in Ngay Nay newspaper. This shows that Ngay Nay is clearly a newer, more prominent, and vibrant version compared to Thanh Nien. If the works related to women's education on Phong Hoa newspaper only reached general theoretical knowledge, then by the time of Ngay Nay, authors have delved deeper into specific educational content.

#### *2.1.4.3. Women should participate in sports activities*

According to the survey data (Table 2.5), there is not a large number of articles about social and sports activities, but they show an increasing trend. In Phong Hoa newspaper, there are 14 articles, accounting for 34.14%, particularly in the period of the newspaper Ngay Nay, there are 27 articles, accounting for 65.86%. This can also be understood when the period of Ngay Nay is the period when the social context of Vietnam is undergoing rapid changes as presented in the previous section.

#### *2.1.4.4. Women should be involved in social activities*

The proposal that women should be allowed to participate in social activities is a very progressive idea of the newspaper Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay. For them, besides other rights, participating in groups, organizations, economic, political, and social institutions, charities are a necessary and urgent activity for women at that time. A series of works have clearly expressed this idea: "Ms Nga presentation" (Thach Lam, Phong Hó, No. 116,

September 21, 1934, page 9); "Charity Day Helping Disaster Victims from Nghe Tĩnh Province" (Phong Vien, Ngay Nay, No. 03, February 20, 1935, page 9); "Women in Parliament" (Ngay Nay, No. 19, August 2, 1936, pages 19-20); "News about Women Participating in Politics Around the World" (Ngay Nay, No. 19, August 2, 1936, page 20); "My Impression of Women attending in meetings of retirement association" (Co Duyen, Ngay Nay, No. 28, October 4, 1936, page 8); "Women's Associations in America" (Ngay Nay, No. 66, July 4, 1937, page 11); ...

#### *2.1.4.5. Women have the right to do all for their beauty*

The idea of empowering women through social reform and elevating their roles is a dominant theme pursued by newspapers like Phong Hoa and Ngay Nay. They advocate for freedom in makeup application and personal grooming for women, which holds significant prominence both in terms of time allocation and space coverage within these publications.

According to surveys, there were 97 articles on this topic, with 59 published in Phong Hoa (accounting for 60.82%) and 38 in Ngay Nay (comprising 39.18%).

##### *Firstly: The beauty of clothing*

Although this mindset primarily focuses on modern women in urban areas, paying attention to aesthetic elements, geographical factors, natural elements, and even more broadly speaking, "the national aspect" of attire is enough reason to consider this reform of women's clothing as a "daily revolution" for young Western intellectuals in the colonial context at that time. Whether they wanted it or not, the contributions made by Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers during the 1930s in the process of reforming clothing for the Vietnamese people in general and specifically for women through the ao dai have left a legacy for the Vietnamese fashion industry later on, while also contributing to changing the consciousness system of the Vietnamese people to some extent.

##### *Secondly: Freedom of makeup and beauty*

In addition to positive waves about fashionable clothing from painter Nguyen Cat Tuong, the way to make up, style hair, apply lipstick, blush, eye shadow, mascara, and nail polish... for women also brings very positive effects. The freedom of making up with white pants, fragrant clothes, scarves, adding jewelry like necklaces, earrings, bracelets, bags, sunglasses, and even doing nails... all showcased in articles by authors.

## **2.2. Social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers in terms of form**

### ***2.2.1. Frequency of appearance***

A survey of 414 issues of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers found that the frequency of articles related to specific social reform ideas was as follows:

*Firstly*, in the category of news, there was the highest number of stories about rural reform with approximately 604 stories, accounting for 36.4% of all stories on social reform ideas. On average, each issue had between 1 and 2 such stories. *Secondly*, there were around 426 stories about women's progress (accounting for 25.5% of all stories, with an average of one story per issue). *Thirdly*, there were 411 stories about new lifestyle thinking for people (accounting for 24.8% of all stories, with an average of one story per issue). *Finally*, there were 219 stories about individual human liberation issues (accounting for 13.3% of all stories, with an average of two stories for every two issues).

*Secondly*, in terms of article types, the category with the most articles is about rural reform with 356 pieces (accounting for 34.7% of the total), followed by works expressing ideas on lifestyle reform for people with 312 pieces (representing 30.4% and averaging 0.75 per number), then articles promoting women's progress with 232 pieces (comprising 22.5% and averaging approximately 0.5 per number or around two numbers per piece), and finally, writings advocating individual human liberation with 127 pieces (constituting 12.4% and averaging roughly three pieces per number).

*Thirdly*, in terms of literary content in newspapers, this form is quite unique and has a significant impact with around 1,256 pieces showcasing social reform ideologies. Excluding some poetic works, the rest primarily consists of short stories, novels, and novellas that are continuously published across all issues of the newspaper, even some editions featuring up to three serializations.

*Fourthly*, in terms of caricature art, most caricatures depicted rural reform ideas with a total of 1,331 pieces (accounting for 34.3% or approximately 3.5 per publication). In second place were caricatures representing progressive ideas about women with 1,274 pieces (accounting for 32.8% or around 3 per publication). Coming in third were caricatures focusing on social reform lifestyle ideas for people with 978 pieces (accounting for 25.2% or more than 2 per publication).

*Fifthly* in terms of advertising, according to the survey, out of 414 publications, there were approximately 15,658 advertisements related to social reform ideas. Of these, rural reform ideas accounted for 646 ads (representing 4.1% or approximately 1.5 per publication), while lifestyle reform ideas accounted for around 8,254 ads (representing 52.7% or nearly 20 per publication). Progressive ideas about women resulted in 6,758 ads (accounting for 43.2% or over 16 per publication). However, no advertisements were found that addressed the issue of individual liberation (according to the classification by PhD Students).

### ***2.2.2. Satirical and biting language***

The language reflects the reformist social thoughts of those who work for Reform, Today newspaper with a satirical and mocking tone but rich in fighting spirit, which is also a prominent characteristic of the newspaper.

The satirical art of those working at Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers stands out most notably in the setting up of events and storytelling style. Alongside this, there is talent in arranging and leading plotlines so that the stories become captivating, making the satirical twists and humorous situations stand out suddenly and unexpectedly at the end of the work.

### ***2.2.3. Distinctive Caricature System***

According to a survey, out of thousands of drawings published in the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, a significant proportion of them relate to social reform ideas. There were 1,331 cartoons about rural reform, accounting for 34.3% of the total; 978 pages about lifestyle reform, constituting 25.2%; 299 cartoons about individual emancipation, representing 7.7%; and 1,274 cartoons about women's reform, making up 32.8%.

The survey results show that nearly 70% of the top pages in Phong Hoa feature cartoons, with almost 80% occupying the entire page. Even Ngay Ngay also uses illustrations as cover pages but the satirical element has noticeably decreased, leaning more towards artistic expressions. These caricature artworks reflect the social reform ideology in Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, although they have a simple structure, they easily and effectively impact the public. They employ non-standard techniques to focus on the absurdity, vulgarity, or condemnable aspects of characters or events.

#### **2.2.4. Through satirical characters**

The distinctive feature of the satire of the three characters Ly Toet, Xa Xe, and Bang Banh lies in the fact that the artists of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have built up a peculiar eccentricity, absurdity, and abnormality from both appearance and personality. Each character has its own style but all serve to highlight the rottenness of contemporary society and the shortcomings of people's lives. From criticizing Confucianism, ignorance, laziness, and backwardness of farmers, lack of political knowledge and legal awareness, to personal rights issues, women's issues... All are humorized, ridiculed, and satirized through activities, behaviors, gestures, and communication of the characters. Ly Toet, Xa Xe, and Bang Banh are collectively known as the "Triplets" who cannot be separated from each other and play a significant role in conveying progressive social reform ideas and efforts to modernize the country which journalists of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers strive for.

#### **2.2.5. Advertising system**

According to the survey results, ads related to lifestyle reform occupy the top position with a percentage of 52.7%. In essence, these are ads about medicines for various social diseases affecting people from women to men, from the elderly to children, and particularly those concerning women's and men's health issues. There are also ads for clothing, shoes, glasses... Following that, ads related to women take up 43.2%, such as ads on ao dai (a traditional Vietnamese dress), beauty products, makeup, perfume, fabrics, hairstyles, sports, medications for women... Next is advertising related to rural reform at 4.1%, including ads on attire, literacy education, medicine, house construction, painting, etc. Finally, there are very few or no ads related to individual liberation, according to our research and classification. However, most of them are legal advice-related ads but not significant.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **ASSESSMENTS, SIGNIFICANCES AND JOURNALISM LESSONS LEARNED FROM STUDYING THE SOCIAL REFORM IDEOLOGY OF THE PHONG HOA, NGAY NAY NEWSPAPER**

#### **3.1. Assessments on the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspaper**

##### **3.1.1. Positive perspective**

*3.1.1.1. Contribute to breaking down the barriers between old and new thoughts in Vietnamese society in the early 20th century*

*3.1.1.2. Contributing positively to the liberation of individual human beings in early 20th century Vietnam society*

*3.1.1.3. Identifying the focus of reform thinking is rural reform in Vietnam*

### **3.1.2. Limitations**

#### *3.1.2.1. Illusion*

Clearly, the ideas of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers show many progressive aspects, and good intentions but lack practicality, are illusionary, and not suitable at a time when the country is still under semi-colonial rule. Moreover, these projects and plans were quite compatible with the subjective policies of the colonial government, so they were not prohibited by the French, and some were even supported. Unfortunately, those who hold these ideas do not understand that what the Vietnamese people need now is not just food and clothing, or housing, but above all independence and freedom. A nation without independence, and people without freedom, any reform, any change only has symbolic meaning, it is illusory.

#### *3.1.2.2. Restrictions on political vision and fluctuating stance*

One of the limitations is that they have not identified the enemies of our nation at that time as imperialism and colonialism. Therefore, despite satirizing and criticizing the feudal bureaucrats in the Nguyen Dynasty court fulfilling people's aspirations and desires, it also reveals a limitation of this newspaper itself. According to TS. Hoang Van Quang, "This narrow and mistaken perspective can be found in many contemporary newspapers, not just Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers" [167].

Another obvious limitation of the subject matter of the reformist social ideas from Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is that in the early period, the newspaper paid more attention, mentioned, and reflects on rural society, farmers' lives, and poor laborers. However, later on, these subjects become less prominent, with the newspaper dedicating more space to writing about Western intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie. This implies that the newspaper is increasingly distancing itself from the working class, no longer fulfilling its initial promise, but rather getting closer to the upper strata in social life. Clearly, there has been a change in the political viewpoint of those who lead the newspaper.

#### *3.1.2.3. Independent and autonomous*

According to researcher Lai Nguyen An, a noticeable weakness of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is that it pushes up clouds of different schools of thought or works by authors who share their views but also readily attack, criticize, even suppress any ideas that do not align with them.

The sense of group interest is also demonstrated in how these writers from Modernism and Today know how to emphasize public opinion. They use measures to create echoes for members, build credibility for their literary careers through famous characters such as Tan Đa (Nguyen Khac Hieu) and Pham Quynh to ridicule, satirize in order to approach fame quickly.

#### *3.1.2.4. Bringing a vulgar, vulgar view of farmers*

This is a derogatory, contemptuous view towards the poor, degradation, sin... It all seems to be exposed before the readers' eyes without any addition or subtraction. However, what is more important is the cause that leads to those ugly, mediocre,

unhygienic things - something that the readers may not clearly see or feel from the articles in Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers.

Halting at issues affecting individuals while neglecting the essence of societal reality. Choosing to solve problems in a rigid, vague, utopian manner, lacking social foundations and adhering to bourgeois reformist stance only serves to fill the empty souls of urban youth at that time.

### **3.2. The practical significance of research results on social reform ideas in the Phong H<sub>o</sub>a, Ngày Nay newspapers**

#### ***3.2.1. Suggestions from Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers on the roles and responsibilities of today's journalists***

In essence, this is also the content of the progressive reform ideas that journalists at Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers aimed for and pursued 93 years ago. Moreover, these progressive thoughts stem from individuals in journalism who share a common goal, a noble ideal to achieve one purpose: to advance the country, escape poverty and backwardness. These research results have practical significance in enhancing the sense of responsibility among journalists today in their work on the development and continuity of the Vietnamese people.

#### ***3.2.2. Journalists must work in accordance with their organization's mission and purpose.***

"To understand the newspaper Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers in general, as well as the reformist ideas of journalists at these newspapers specifically, we can see that the selection of the name for the paper, its format of publication, and especially the establishment of their editorial principles were carried out with a great deal of seriousness and professionalism."

#### ***3.2.3. Journalism must always prioritize honesty and objectivity***

The next meaning from studying the reform ideas of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is that authenticity must always be guaranteed in journalism. They published specific events with specific locations, people, characters, and specific incidents on their newspaper pages. For farmers and rural areas, these were the most important issues at that time: housing, improving education, clothing, rice, grain, water...Undoubtedly, this content was understood by journalists more than anyone else along with the people, which made the newspaper always accepted by readers. The paper sold out wherever it went, even though the selling price wasn't necessarily cheap (at 7 cents).

#### ***3.2.4. The spirit of journalism is to serve the people***

As for its spirit, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers stands at a higher level than other contemporary newspapers. Journalistic activities must meet the right to information and also reflect timely public opinion and aspirations. The characteristics of being mass-oriented and people-centered are the content traits of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers. The authors of this newspaper almost act as spokespersons for the nationalist and democratic aspirations of the masses, especially those of the poor rural population, who empathize with the suffering of the people, with the spirit "*Love the other people as love yourself.*" In today's context, more than anyone else, journalists themselves are the bridge

that connects the people with government agencies, reflecting the wishes of the people in time to the management levels, thereby contributing to creating unity, solidarity, and the collective strength of the entire nation.

### ***3.2.5. Emphasize the combativeness of journalism***

The authors of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have been ready to confront powerful figures who held positions of authority without fearing repercussions like Pham Quynh, Nguyen Van Vinh, Nguyen Khac Hieu, Ngyen van To, Hoang Ngoc Phach, Nguyen Manh Bong, Nguyen Tien Lang, Nguyen Manh Tuong, ... and Hoang Trong Phu is a high-ranking official from the Nguyen Dynasty at the beginning of the 20th century. The spirit demonstrated in such circumstances within a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society where the masses were oppressed by harsh laws, with a difficult life, serves as an extremely valuable lesson for today's journalists.

### ***3.2.6. The press must adapt to new circumstances***

*The Phong Hó*a, *Ngay Nay Newspapers* were born and are operating in the context of Vietnam's society which has many economic, political, and social changes, as well as changes in the media landscape. Therefore, the problem for Nguyen Tuong Tam and his colleagues is how to ensure that the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, does not close down, exists and that they can survive by earning from it. This is indeed a difficult task, but the newspaper has solved it and achieved good results. Evidence is the growing number of contributors, selling out wherever the newspapers go, the establishment of the Tự lực văn đoàn Team, the establishment of the NowLife Publishing House, organizing Award of the Tự lực văn đoàn group particularly the Anh Sang Association with very practical actions.

In the 1930s of the last century, those who worked at Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers were able to adapt and adapted very well to the social conditions at that time to develop their news agency, creating a new breeze in contemporary journalism. Studying the ideas of social reform that the newspaper pursues to see certain meanings and valuable lessons. These values and meanings could be completely referenced to build determination and ideals for modern journalists.

## **3.3. Journalism lessons learned from conducting the research on the social reform ideology of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers**

### ***3.3.1. Regarding professional journalism style***

Firstly, professionalism is demonstrated through regularity. *The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers* are weekly newspapers, each week a new issue is released. For example, from number 01 to number 19 of "Phong Hoa newspaper", it is published every Thursday; from number 20 to number 190, it is published every Saturday. As for "Ngay Nay newspaper", numbers 01 to 05 are published three times per month on the 1st, 10th, and 20th days; numbers 06 to 13 are published every Tuesday; numbers 14 to 128 are published every Sunday; while numbers 129 to 224 are published every Friday. This strict adherence to schedule, except for a brief interruption due to the suspension of "Phong Hó" for three months (from May 24, 1935, to January 1935), ensures that there is always one issue

published each week. It's worth noting that this newspaper operates as a private entity, self-accounting economically, and relies solely on revenues generated by its publications.

Contribute to the capital. With each shareholder contributing 500 dongs, *The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers* have quickly accumulated enough funds for technical upgrades, improved living standards, and established Life Publishing House. This is a dynamic and effective way of doing journalism that not many media organizations can achieve today.

The professionalism of those working at the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is also reflected in their creativity in presentation.

The professionalism of the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers is further demonstrated through advertising in the newspaper. During research, the author found this paper has quite a large number of advertisements, with around 25-30 pieces per issue in Phong Hóa and 45-50 pieces per issue in Now.

### ***3.3.2. Regarding courage and self-reliance of journalists***

*Firstly*, progressive social reform ideas were formed and spread from their works and published in their newspapers.

*Secondly*, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers are politically independent.

*Thirdly*, they have economic self-reliance. This independence is something we greatly admire about those who work for *The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers*.

Certainly, this is also what a journalist, reporter, and more importantly, a genuine news organization should strive towards today.

### ***3.3.3. Regarding the method of creating typical characters for a newspaper***

Currently, journalists have not built up characters as prominent as Ly Toet, Xa Xe, Bang Banh. However, creating such characters to promote the good, beauty, progress, and civilization of Vietnamese farmers, in rural areas is very difficult because these characters like Lý Toet, Xa Xe, and Bang Banh were widely accepted by the public for their strong satirical nature. The society in Vietnam has undergone significant changes. Agricultural issues, farmers, and rural areas are no longer what they used to be. But can anyone guarantee that there aren't any arrogant or ridiculous individuals in the countryside of modern-day Vietnam just like Ly Toet, Xa Xe, Bang Banh? Therefore, constructing "characters typical of hamlets" in today's context could also serve as a valuable suggestion for reporters and writers specializing in agriculture, farmers, and rural areas. The issue lies in the creativity of contemporary journalists themselves.

### ***3.3.4. About staff and creative works***

*Firstly*: The first principle is that journalists must objectively and truthfully reflect the social life, contributing to the development of society. It's important to identify what issues society cares about, what problems it's struggling with, and what legitimate rights of citizens should be considered when creating journalistic works.

*Secondly*: Journalists and reporters need to be proactive and actively approach sources quickly and accurately. Despite facing numerous challenges in its early years, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have shown a spirit of openness by adopting advanced methods from foreign countries while also being able to envision events more broadly



without distorting information or negatively affecting readers; instead, they enhance the attractiveness of their work.

Thirdly: Practice has shown that the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers operates in a situation where technical means are still very outdated and professional knowledge about journalism is quite shallow. However, with self-reliance, they have improved themselves from training to raise their own level on all fronts to develop the newspaper and be warmly welcomed by readers. Ppecially the spirit of solidarity and respect for talent in journalism activities.

Fourthly: Each news and articles needs to identify key areas to invest in and create attraction, which must be consistent with the characteristics of the newspaper, its principles and purposes, and suitable for the reception psychology of readers. A newspaper with good content and accepted by readers will certainly form a style of stable and developing.

Fifthly: The journalists at the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers know how to use newspapers as a medium to promote and teach the use of Vietnamese language, while also creating a habit of daily reading newspapers among people. On the other hand, the newspaper itself has continuously reformed its content and format, using concise language; affordable paper size and prices when distributed to make it easier for people to access.

The essence of this lesson is teamwork within a media organization. To achieve unity, it is inevitable to respect each other and democracy serves as the nucleus for creating the famoust Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. The reformist ideas of the newspaper the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers were born and existed in a context of significant changes in Vietnam's economy, politics, culture, and journalism.

2. Along with progressive social reform ideas, the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers were warmly welcomed by the public and readers, considered as "bombshells" in the publishing world at that time, thanks to numerous innovations from both content and form, under the guidance of editor-in-chief Nguyen Tuong Tam – Nhat Linh and his dedicated colleagues.

3. Rural reform is urgent as our country is primarily agricultural and lagging behind. Modern people should adopt a scientific way of living, and engage in physical activities, and women should strive for beauty and be encouraged to enhance it. From its very first issues, the newspaper has brought a fresh breeze full of vitality to readers, winning the affection of the majority of citizens.

4. The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers have contributed to the struggle for social progress. Right from the beginning, the newspaper affirmed its mission to expose the outdated nature of Confucian remnants still dominating society, making people realize that Confucianism is no longer relevant, openly opposing feudal rituals, causing “shock” waves across all segments of society that were somewhat related to Confucian studies. It focuses on individual liberation as the center of all actions, respects personal freedom, encourages ambition, and always believes in progress.

5. It is clear that this issue remains a rather bitter and outdated story until now. The "ego" in the eight years of operation has grown powerfully, breaking down old-fashioned and outdated ideas surrounding humanity, shattering established prejudices, superstitions, and backward thinking that have been built up for thousands of years.

6. However, doing investigative journalism is not easy: it can be easily suppressed or silenced; it may face censorship and repression. We need to acknowledge that, amidst a society tightly controlled by strict censorship like the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers, which have survived and continued for eight long years, living and existing, is indeed admirable.

7. The Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers only existed for a short period of time and have been around for almost a century. Although there were some limitations in terms of ideas and attitudes towards the times reflected on it, reading the Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay newspapers still allows us to see a small society amidst the vibrant and widespread cultural exchange. The experiences left by the newspaper in its journalism approach still hold value today as the wave of cultural integration is sweeping through the life of society.

## **THE SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO THE THESIS**

1. Ngo Van Phong (2023), The Reform of Women's Clothing in Early 20th Century: A Case Study on Phong Hoa Newspaper, Journal of Political Logic and Media Studies, Special Issue 1, Page. 208 - 212;
2. Ngo Van Phong (2023), Ideological Reforms in Rural Areas by the Tự lực văn đoàn Team of Phong Hoa, Ngay Nay Newspapers on Cultural Studies, Vol. 43, Page. 93-102;
3. Ngo Van Phong (2023), Phong Hoa newspaper and the Women's Rights Movement at the Beginning of the 20th Century, Journal of Political Logic and Media Studies, Special Issue 2, Page. 112 – 115;
4. Ngo Van Phong (2024), Phong Hoa newspaper with specific articles on Vietnam's rural reform at the beginning of the 20th Century, Journal of Political Theory and Communication, Special Issue 1, Page. 126 – 128.