



Research article

The journeys of acculturation of Western culture in Vietnamese travel writing in the first half of the 20th century

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Abstract

Western culture has had a profound influence on Vietnamese culture and literature during the colonial period, especially in the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. During this historical period, records appeared about the journey of Vietnamese people to France with different purposes. Based on this context, the article studies the attitude of Vietnamese intellectuals towards French culture to see the acculturation of Vietnamese to Western culture. Based on the cultural approach to studying travel writing, the article explores the French cultural awareness of some Vietnamese intellectuals such as Pham Quynh, Dao Trinh Nhat and Nhat Linh. Each story of their journey as an explanation for the purpose of the journey is the expression of aspirations: reforming Vietnamese culture, awareness of colonialism and feminism, and renewal of novels. These are current issues of contemporary Vietnamese culture and literature. From that, it is possible to recognize the characteristics of the travel writing about the journey to France representing the travel stories of the colonized people to the Western imperial countries and the process of escaping from slavery norms of Western culture. With an interdisciplinary approach to studying travel history, the article also provides a view of the process of modernizing Vietnamese literature in the first half of the 20th century.

Keywords: travel writing, French culture, cultural criticism, acculturation, cultural sensitivity



Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Introduction

Towards the end of the 19th century, French culture and colonialism first appeared in the cities of Cochinchina, a southern part of Vietnam. Meanwhile, the remaining geographical regions of Vietnam such as Tonkin and Trung Ky, which the French call Annam, still have a traditional Confucian culture along with the Nguyen Dynasty. In that context, the need to assimilate the

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Western culture gave rise to journeys to France for study, public service, or tourism. From it appeared the topic of writing about the journey to France in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Vietnamese travel writing was written in two opposite styles: traditional and modern. Traditional travel writing is usually written in Chinese characters, in the form of verse, poetry, or pure notes, which are works written during official journeys, such as: "Nhu Tay Nhat trinh" (Diary of the journey to the West), "Chu quac thai hoi" (Negotiations with the protectionist regime) by Truong Minh Ky; Monsignor Khai Dinh's poetry collection goes West... Modern travel writing written in modern Vietnamese, prose form, with characters, dialogues and journey plots such as "Phap du hanh trinh nhat ky" (The diary to France's Journey) by Pham Quynh, "Sang Tay - Muoi thang o Phap" (Going to the West - Ten months in France) by Dao Trinh Nhat, "Di Tay" (Going the West) by Nhat Linh... The travel writing written during these journeys to France provides important details about the Vietnamese assimilation of French culture, "from which Vietnamese readers can imagine our image through the mirror of others" (Vuong Tri Nhan, 2002, p.6). In this article, we approach some works of modern travel writing about their journey to France in the first half of the 20th century to see how they attempted acculturation to Western culture.

Approaching culture with travel writing research

Travel writing has a long history and always changes the form of the genre to adapt to the travel needs of people. The world is getting bigger and bigger thanks to the journeys and the advancement of means of transport. Since ancient times, when people were conscious of moving to another space with different purposes, travel has responded to the diversity of people's perception of the objective world. Even travel writing becomes a form of historical text in the case of historians who reflect historical truths through their journeys like Herodotus (Herodotus (484 - 425 BC), the ancestor of history scholar who used to write history in the form of a travelogue and is considered the first travel writer). Travel writing in the Vietnamese sense already contains two actions "going" (traveling) and "writing" in which "traveling is an essential condition for its creation" (Rubiés 2007, 7). These actions are cultural acts, so when combined, they create a cultural symbol, one of the characteristics of the travel writing genre.

The history of travel writing accompanies the history of human journeys, which has made it possible to create similar cultures such as the culture of displacement, the culture of landscape, travel culture, travel literature, travel language, etc. The journeys are not only for "tourist" but also for geographical discoveries, space conquest, connection and trade between Cultures and cultures search for "others",... Also, "writing" in travel writing is based on the principle of "taking notes", but it is a rather diverse linguistic activity to meet many purposes different purposes, and different possibilities of language transformation to form cultural discourses.

Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) was born as the beginning of the study of travel writing from a cultural perspective. Some argue that much of the work of travel writing research over the past forty years would not have been possible without Said's work (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999, p.26). And Cutbel asserts:

One of the inspiring innovations of Said's book was precisely its critical attention to travel writing, and as a result, the book catalysed broader inquiries into the discursive representation of power, difference, and desire in a globalising world. These questions required synthetic and interdisciplinary models of thought that remain fundamental to scholarly studies of travel writing. (Cutbel, 2018, p.23).

Cultural criticism with travel writing as a literary research movement in the world in the 90s of the 20th century. Because "cultural studies are not limited to describing and critiquing traditional values and interpretations" (Templeton, 1992, p.20) or not just analyzing "the results of forms" culture" (Johnson, 1986, p.72), but also contribute to those results by nudging readers toward liberal readings. In Johnson's words, it is the search for "really useful knowledge" (p. 40). Rather than simply being a description of "literature in use" it is rather concerned with "what meanings are constructed, what value is produced from the text" (p.78).

Cultural criticism of travel writing inherits and promotes important theories, namely: structuralism (Claude Levi-Strass), cognitive anthropology, social biology, and gender anthropology (Michelle. Zimbalist), symbolic and interpretive anthropology (Clifford Geertz and Mary Douglas), and postmodernism (Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida).

Cultural criticism opens up many different approaches to literary research and is the cognitive basis of travel writing research. Many journeys are viewed as cultural and historical acts. The history of oriental travel is associated with several famous journeys with many cultural meanings. The journeys of monks have opened up Buddhism, opening the era of Buddhist culture in some countries such as China and Japan. Tran Huyen Trang was a monk of the Tang Dynasty in China who traveled thousands of miles to the Buddha realm to bring the primitive Buddhist culture in India to blend with contemporary Buddhism to create the Mahayana Buddhist culture in China. In terms of purpose, monk Tran Huyen Trang's journey to ask for Buddhist scriptures is considered a great cultural journey because he not only enlightened himself but also renewed Buddhism. Zen master Matsuo Basho in Japan also has journeys to distant lands to enlighten himself. Thanks to these journeys, Basho created a unique method of meditation, which is to meditate by moving from place to place instead of sitting still. On those long and dangerous journeys, the monk became a poet because he was instrumental in innovating Haiku poetry. Narrating his journeys, the journey character created a culture whose product is a travel work. Thus, travel writing about cultural journeys is an expression of cultural behavior in different fields such as history, law, religion, way of life, customs,... and scalability to other fields of social sciences such as anthropology, ethnography, and psychology.

From the above issues, it can be seen that travel writing is a cultural entity existing in a cultural population, each work has its own identity. Travel writing with official statements can represent the identity of a culture to dialogue with another culture through a certain cultural space. Traditional Western travel writing is associated with the explorations and conquests of space by explorers; where the dangers and hardships the characters go through can be mythologized with exaggerated stories. Traditional Vietnamese travel writing is typical of Eastern travel writing associated with simple journeys such as landscape travel writing or work travel writing. The move to another cultural space such as going to France mentioned in the Vietnam

travel writing is considered "A kind of cultural exploration by spectacular travels" (Vermeulen, 2015).

From an intercultural perspective, the journey to discover a certain culture is seen as a cultural journey with the aim of not only discovering but also adapting it to enrich one's culture. The journeys of colonial travelers to explore imperialist countries could result in cultural conflicts or intercultural communication.

The journey to another culture, and the cultural experience there based on the endogenous cultural background, through which the subject narrates the journey in his way is called an intercultural journey. The repetition of the route together with the differences of the subject creates a type of theme of travel. In the past, feudal dynasties in Vietnam sent emissaries to China to perform political duties. These men sent by the king narrated their journey in literary forms, and so they created the topic of travel writing theme emissaries to China. In the 19th century, in the face of the threat of invasion by Western countries, the imperial court of Hue (Vietnam) sent emissaries to several Western countries and these emissaries reflected the journey with travel stories also created the topic of travel writing theme emissaries to the West. By the first half of the 20th century, when the type of transcontinental tourism was developed in Vietnam, more journeys to France by Vietnamese people took place, and thus different types of tourists with different purposes. Different journeys make up the theme of travel writing go to the West. Places on the route to France may be the same, but the way the journey to those places is told varies from person to person. Thus, the Vietnamese travel writing about journeys to France reflected in various ways is an intercultural phenomenon. This reflection is mainly about how to perceive the details of Western culture in one's way, depending on social status, and cognitive and psychological level. Therefore, the interculturality of travel writing about France is reflected in the motivation of the trips that travel writers express their identity in French culture. Beilein and Schaff (2020) argue that "the intercultural traces in travelogue take various forms and are attached to the respective perceptions and ideologies of its period" (p.26).

Colonial period journey for Vietnamese tourists to Western countries with limited means of transport. The transcontinental journeys at that time were mainly by ships and the same route. In travel writing, the route and means may be the same, but the purpose of the journey will be different. The purpose of the journey is considered to be the creation of the travel writer when writing the same type of topic. In the travel writing work of each writer, there is a way to go that is not bound by genre stereotypes. Those who do not understand the genre characteristics of travelogue often perceive travel writing as "travel" and "writing" as its name suggests. However, the variety of ways and purposes of the journey has made travel writing diverse and flexible in terms of creative methods. Thus, the interculturality of travel does not depend on the means and route but on the way of "travel" and "writing", that is, the change in perception of the subject of the journey. As Joan-Pau Rubiés (1997) argues, "The important changes have less to do with 'what to describe' than with an emphasis on interpretation and the emergence of scientific concepts and models. New ideas dominate." (p. 252).

The context of the intercultural journey in Vietnamese travel writing is related to the relationship between the policies of the colonial empire and colonial society. This governs the

purpose and cultural perception of the characters taking part in the journey. Western culture penetrated Vietnamese society since the 17th century, through the missionary route with the appearance of the Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes. European involvement in Vietnam was limited to commerce during the 18th century. In 1787, Pierre Pigneau de Behaine, a French Catholic priest, petitioned the French government and organized the French army volunteering to support Nguyen Anh to recapture the lands his family had lost to Tay Son. This event laid the foundation for the French government's invasion of Indochina in the mid-19th century.

Indochina, including Vietnam, is just an economically exploited colony (*colonie d'exploitation économique*), self-financing its budget through the collection of taxes on local people and consumption quotas on goods monopolies such as opium, salt and alcohol (Thi Lien Tran, 2022). The legal capitalists exploited the indigenous people by enslaving them in the mines and rubber plantations. However, the French in Indochina always propagated the "civilization mission", according to them, the French would help the Vietnamese to civilize by helping to overcome Eastern values (India, China) "old" to modernize and approach Western civilization (George Coédès, 1944). There was an anomaly between the colonial exploitation policy and the "civilization mission" rhetoric of the French that caused the discontent of the natives with the French protectorate government. In response to this issue, some Vietnamese intellectuals had the opportunity to travel to Western countries, mainly France, to explore Western cultural identity to identify the nature of cultural policies and culture they were applying in the colony.

Cultural sensitivity is the acculturation mentality of Vietnamese intellectuals during their journey to France. The term "cultural sensitivity" in the field of psychology is used by Amanda Kubokawa and Amber Ottaway in some of their research. According to Foronda (2008), the factors that create cultural sensitivity include knowledge, consideration, understanding, respect, and adjustment. In cultural tourism, not everyone can be culturally sensitive. To be culturally sensitive, one must know cultural differences and cultural element values experienced by the journeyman himself. Cultural sensitivity in travel is a response to the journey subject to cultural phenomena, usually prejudice or criticism. The character's journey travel diary Dao Trinh Nhat reacts to the rigorous search behavior of the French police, who suspect the act of bringing opium into France for tourists; the opposite in colonial countries. Respect refers to the appreciation and interest that a person shows for the experiences and values of a cultural phenomenon which also indicates cultural sensitivity. The final attribute of cultural sensitivity is conformity, which includes the idea that one's worldview changes or adapts to consider cultural objects or to satisfy one's need to enjoy one's culture. is essential to being culturally sensitive. The psychological reactions of Vietnamese travel writers mentioned below will shed light on the cultural sensitivities of travel writing.

Acculturation of French culture in Vietnamese travel in the first half of the 20th century through several journeys

Pham Quynh and his journey to discover French culture

Pham Quynh (1892 - 1945) was a cultural, journalist, writer, and politician who used to be a great mandarin under the Nguyen Dynasty. He was "talented to learn" and studied French from a young

age until he was 16 years old, and he graduated from the Interpretation school in 1908 (Nguyen Quyet Thang, 1999, p.1126).

Pham Quynh was the editor-in-chief of *Nam Phong magazine* (1917-1934), a monthly magazine published in Vietnam under the policy of the government of the Federation of Indochina initiated by Governor General Albert Sarraut. Through this magazine, Pham Quynh "advocated constitutionalism, absorbed Western culture to improve people's intellectual level, and gradually regained the country's sovereignty and autonomy based on the 1883 Harmand treaty and the 1884 Patenôtre treaty". (Nguyen Phuc Vinh Ba, 2015).

Commenting on Pham Quynh's views in *Nam Phong magazine*, Nguyen Duy Lap said: "Its editor, monarchist Pham Quynh, believes that selective absorption of Western ideas and institutions can be used to reinforce, rather than replace, the Confucian tradition that has long been the foundation of Vietnamese civilization. This disagreement was part of a broader debate among the Vietnamese colonial elite in the 1920s and 30s over how to deal with European imperialism." (Duy Lap Nguyen, 2019, p. 4).

In 1922, as a culturist, representing the "Hoi Khai Tri Tien Duc" (in French, l'Association pour la Formation Intellectuelle et Morale des Annamites¹), Pham Quynh went to France to attend the Marseille Expo. lectured at the Political Department and the Ethics Department of the French Academy on ethnic and educational issues. Pham Quynh's journey to France lasted for about 6 months, including 4 months in France and 2 months of going and returning.

As a result of this trip, Pham Quynh has 2 travel writing works: *Thuat chuyen du lich o Paris* (Narrative of travel in Paris, 1922) and *Phap du hanh trinh nhat ky* (Diary of a travel journey to France, 1922 - 1925). These two travel diary works are presented in two different genres: *Phap du hanh trinh nhat ky* presented in the form of a 'journey diary'; The *Thuat chuyen du lich o Paris* is presented in the form of a travel narrative. Pham Quynh's story of going to France in two works is told in a sequence of details, events, and the author's meetings and interactions in the French cultural space, which are cultural and historical relics; meeting politicians, and culturalists, listening to speeches, participating in speeches, etc. However, Pham Quynh's acculturation is not to what sees what hears, and what to narrate but is the expression of the author's ability to have a cultural dialogue about what he has heard and seen in France through travel writing discourse. That is the personal factor to created Pham Quynh's travel writing style in the process of receiving and experiencing French culture.

In Pham Quynh's eyes, each city in France has a unique personality like a human, because it is people who create the cultural space where they live. Pham Quynh goes to see the beautiful scenery in the streets, but also always observes people's personalities and compares the people's personalities here with the people in other places. The city of Marseille is a bustling place with a bustling life, the people here "like to talk or laugh, or brag, or wander in the streets, or gather in crowded places, often joking around, joking with each other. , swearing at each other, fighting, so the city is always noisy with people's voices, bustling with cars" (Pham Quynh, 1923a, p.100). Meanwhile, Lyon is a city with a concentration of factories producing handicrafts or traditional

¹ the Association for the Intellectually and Moral Formation of the Annamites

goods, "the people here are calm, calm, quiet, rarely smile; it seems that everyone who walks in the street seems to have something new to do, but few people go out to play" (Pham Quynh, 1923a, p.101). This sensitivity reflects his cultural prowess.

Cultural sensitivity is individual, it depends on factors of cultural level, cultural awareness, and cultural sensibility. Donohoe has provided a rich analysis of the concept of 'cultural sensitivity for tourism:

"Cultural sensitivity is the extent to which those who conduct, support, and participate in tourism: minimize their impact on the cultural environment, increase awareness and respect between cultures, and contribute to the protection, cultural heritages are built and lived, promoting informed participation and local and indigenous empowerment, and respecting the socio-cultural value systems of the host communities" (Donohoe, 2011, p.37).

Cultural acquisition through tourism is a psychological process in which elements of cultural competence are used as a means of cultural reflection in a context of subjective reality. Acculturation also depends on the purpose of each journey and the cultural capacity of each journey subject. Pham Quynh's cultural competence is reflected in his ability to observe, and thanks to this observation capacity, he makes subtle and accurate comments.

Through the journey of discovering French culture, Pham Quynh has realized: "The first feature of Paris is that it has a look that is both modern and antiquated, the two do not reflect each other but use together, making Paris have its spirit" (Pham Quynh, 1922a, p.252). This was consistent with Pham Quynh's view of the combination of the nation's traditional culture and the modern culture of the West. On the remaining diaphragms now at Van Phuoc Pagoda (Hue city), there is a 4-word horizontal painting "Tho nap Au A" (mix of European and Asian cultures) by Pham Quynh. Mixing European and Asian cultures is to release the old backwardness and collect the quintessence of Western and Eastern civilization. These four words can be considered as covering the point of view of Nam Phong magazine, pointing out the direction of building national studies according to Pham Quynh's intention.

The place name in Paris, which he called the "sacred soul of a world's first scenic place", was also the place where he wanted to feel that sacred soul, not "see the outside scene" (Pham Quynh, 1923b, p.273).

Pham Quynh's acculturation of French culture is the connection between legend, history, and art so that cultural objects not only have the meaning of conservation but also heroism in women. Art with a cultural function is not only capable of recreating history and legend but also creating a cultural imprint to maintain its value. When observing the above painting, before its historical and artistic value, Pham Quynh made a point of view: "Are Mrs. Geneviève and Mrs. Trung Trac as real as the stories in history? It is impossible to know, and there is no need to know for sure." The heroine of France or Lac General Hai Ba Trung of Vietnam, when she became the object of art, must have the meaning of the profession, because: " An artist cannot create without a cultural background, does the artist borrow history to describe it? That is the supreme duty of the artist." (Pham Quynh, 1923, p.15).

French culture in Pham Quynh's travel diary is a mark of the depth of knowledge that combines cultural experience with cultural sensibility. He is a Western-educated intellectual who has been exposed to French culture from school, and has been active in cultural activities in a cultural organization that "advocates cultural exchange between Western studies and traditional academics of Vietnam" (Marr, 1981, p.153) so direct contact with French culture was an opportunity for him to practice to test his cultural competence.

Acculturation of a culture is not the reproduction of visual objects in the journey but sees it as a means of experiencing and realizing oneself. Through the cultural details in the journey to discover France, Pham Quynh not only reveals his thoughts and expressions about it but also recognizes the characteristics of the culture. Pham Quynh's perceptions and thoughts expressed in his travel writing works on French culture always aim at a noble goal, which is how to embellish the national culture in all aspects, to both preserve traditional values and develop in the direction of civilization and modernity as in the West.

Dao Trinh Nhat and the cultural feminist journey

Dao Trinh Nhat (1900 - 1951), was a self-proclaimed Quan Chi, who signed many different pseudonyms: Tinh Ve, Vo Nhi, Nam Chuc, Hong Phong, and Van Anh, ..., He was both a writer, and a journalist, He was a historical-cultural researcher and a famous translator in the first half of the 20th century. He is also the editor-in-chief of Women's Newspaper Tan Van, a newspaper representing women's voices with the policy of fighting for feminism, strongly advocated for the learning and writing of the national language, and encouraged young people to write newspapers to practice the national language.

From 1925 to 1929, Dao Trinh Nhat studied in France. *Sang Tay – 10 thang o Phap* (Journey to the West - 10 months in France) is the result of a journey to France during that study abroad trip. His travel writing has been published in the magazine Women Tan Van many times. This travel writing is divided into two parts: the first part is published continuously in numbers from 2 to 12 (1929), with the title "Journey to the West – a Journey of a young girl" by the character Pham Van Anh narrated about the journey of her from Vietnam to France by ship; The following part, titled "Ten Months in France", continued to be published in this newspaper from the 25th (in 1929) to the 63rd (in 1930) about what he had seen and heard in France. In 2019, this travel diary was published as a book by Tri Thuc Publishing House, collected and introduced by Nguyen Huu Son.

"Journey to the West – Ten Months in France" is a travel writing work based on feminist discourse for cultural dialogue to criticize the French colonial policy in Vietnam. In this work, the author, the subject of the journey has anonymously become the character Pham Van Anh, a young girl who narrates her journey to France on the occasion of sending her brother off to study abroad. The gender discourse in the travel diary as reported by Dao Trinh Nhat is modern but does not violate the principle of "objective truth" of the genre "because travel and writing about travel are well-represented cultural practices, a significant part of female travel writer's subjectivity is constructed by gender discourse" (Heaps, 2000, p.5). Based on the feminist methodology to analyze the French cultural imprint in the travel diary of Dao Trinh Nhat is the approach in this section.

According to Emily Falconer, feminist methodology has emphasized the importance of including women's voices and personal experiences in travel research (Falconer, 2009, p.21). Studying women's narratives of their travels, Falconer emphasized the significance of feminist statements "Through personal narratives, subjects create and recreate representations of the self within socialized contexts, and feminist researchers have therefore stressed the importance of using women's own experiences as a starting point to theorise about broader social relations" (Falconer, 2009: 25).

Feminist discourse is fostered by personal experience through journeys to lands of other cultures. Dao Trinh Nhat chose the narrative point of view of a girl who told the story of her travel to France to create a representative spokesperson for women's voices in the colony about French colonial policies. This is Dao Trinh Nhat's intention towards the topic of Tan Van Women newspaper, which he is the editor of.

In the work, the young girl Pham Van Anh had a wish "If there is a chance to go to (France) and see their civilization, and consider the western men in France as different from the men in the other countries, that's a good thing too." (Pham Van Anh, 1929a, p.13). The journey to France was the realising of her dream, and the whole story recounts her travels with the aim of "seeing the civility of the French".

The issue of feminist discourse is the object of the perception of cultural criticism in the modern era. In the first half of the 20th century, Vietnam was a country with two coexisting social systems: feudalism and colonialism. In Vietnamese society at that time, there were debates between two factions: the conservative faction and the reformist faction, representing two contemporary schools of thought: the traditional Confucian thought and trend-driven innovation modern West. Van Anh's journey in the work is like the journey of Eastern culture to Western culture to dialogue and debate the cultural policies that the French did in Vietnam.

The Panthéon is both a museum of the history of France and a place to store images of famous French cultural and historical figures. In it, there are many images of two women, but both Pham Quynh and Dao Trinh Nhat can only see one of them. In the travel diary of Pham Quynh, the historical character Geneviève, a heroine who fought against the enemy to protect the country in the past thousands of years, is a legend. In Dao Trinh Nhat's travel memoirs, the virtuous woman is a special phenomenon. "There is a remains of a woman also buried in it, Mrs. Berthelot. If a French woman can enter the Pathéon temple, she is the first" (Pham Van Anh, 1929c, p.20). Dao Trinh Nhat has seen that in the traditional culture of the French, in addition to respecting gender equality, they also uphold values, which moral values, personality values, and happiness value of women. This valuable way of thinking that meets with the civilized way of life in French culture has left its mark on the journey character's mind.

Women are revered in stately national places of worship such as the Panthéon, revealing the place of women in French culture. Many researchers are skeptical of feminism in the context of patriarchy, and warn that "the privilege of individual storytelling should not be viewed as a form of women's liberation from cultural silence, because often when women create narratives, they unconsciously reproduce the 'main scenario' of patriarchal ideologies" (Bloom 1998, 62). Dao Trinh Nhat opened up cultural feminism in traveling to Vietnam in the first half of the 20th century. That

is, some conceptions of women need to be changed, and the issue of women's obligations and merits needs to be changed to be transparent so that women are not only physically liberated but also by the value of sacrifice and love that they bring to society.

The feminist statements rich in humanity in Dao Trinh Nhat's travel writing are also the issue of women in the colonial country in a society of "respect for men and despise women". Women must be half of the world's conquest, and at the same time capable of representing half of the community. At this point, feminist statements are no longer "personal voices" to escape cultural silence (Fanconer, 2009, p.25) but epochal statements when gender equality such as It is one of the measures of the social development of a country. The first French men that appeared in Ms. Pham Van Anh's eyes were "most of the secretive soldiers (secret agents, police) are Corsicans because they are more than people who are both upright and healthy, both ferocious, these are the essentials of that profession" (Pham Van Anh, 1929c, p.13).

Approaching feminism, Dao Trinh Nhat demolishes heroism in French culture through a storytelling about 'secret soldiers' (secret agents), and 'sen dam' (police) in strictly controlled France with the colonists who came to France. In the eyes of a girl, the French men who are performing their national duties are just poor soldiers who are "meddlesome" in their job of checking passengers' belongings, but mainly "yellow-skinned guests with noses flat" (Asian only). Ms. Pham Van Anh looked at the French policeman not with admiration but with historical irony: "Although the island of Corsica is small, today it only contributes to France with a few secret soldiers, but like a hundred years ago, it gave birth to Napoleon the Great, famous throughout Europe, giving glory to France" (Pham Van Anh, 1929c, p.17). From a cultural perspective, the feminist statement in Dao Trinh Nhat's travel book has raised doubts about the humanity in French culture and the colonial violence they applied in the colonial country.

The ruling policies of the French colonialists in Indochina were very little known to Europeans. Europeans before 1945 only read documents published by French government officials about Indochina about the positive changes that the French built in the colonies. Many books "discussed how the Annamites benefited from European intervention with little to do with how Indochina reacted to French power" (Thompson, 1937, p.14). Virginia Thompson made a journey to discover the country, people, history, and culture in Indochina to publish the book French Indochina (1937) and it is considered an exception. Thompson looked at indigenous culture to demonstrate that the Annamites were not people who were easily influenced by the French. They opposed the way the French brought 'civilization' to them, despite oppression or killing, and condemned the French countercultural crimes in various forms of language, including discourse Feminism such as Ms. Van Anh's story is a typical case.

Pham Van Anh's travel story in Dao Trinh Nhat's travel writing 'Sang Tay - 10 thang o Phap' (Journey the West - 10 months in France) is not a story about a landscape tour but a story about an 'exploration to the truth' from within French culture by a feminist perspective. Through this story, Dao Trinh Nhat discovered the contrast between French civilization and the 'civilized' reality that the French implemented with policies of 'civilizing' people in colonial countries. When the author brought this issue to the press, it annoyed the colonial government in Indochina. The press decree signed by President Gaston Doumergue on October 4, 1927, implemented in the colonies

and protected Vietnamese newspapers until 1931, cut many parts of this travel writing work. Vietnamese-language newspapers were subject to censorship, cutting sentences and paragraphs up to the deletion of an entire article that was deemed not conducive to colonial rule (Dao Duy Quat, 2010, p.9). Therefore, many passages in Dao Trinh Nhat's travel writing published on Tan Van Women were removed. Readers, although not able to read passages omitted due to censorship of the colonial government, can feel the feminist statements of the travel writing work, which proves the behavior culture of the French in the colony.

Nhat Linh and the journey to renew the novel

Nhat Linh is the pen name of writer Nguyen Truong Tam (1906 - 1963), who advocated the establishment of the group 'Tự Lực Văn Đoàn' (Literary Group of Tu Cuong) and editor of the newspapers 'Phong Hóa' ("Customs", or "Mores"), 'Ngày Nay' (Today). In 1927, he and some friends attended the funeral of patriot Phan Chu Trinh; His friend was captured by the French, and he fled to Cambodia and tried to study abroad in France until 1930, dumped his bachelor's degree and returned home. Nguyen Truong Tam is a Western intellectual who has assimilated French culture. He adopted the French "progressive ideal" as a prism to visualize Vietnam in the modern light of social equality and democracy (Nguyen Duy Lap, 2018).

The work *Di Tay* (Going to the West) was published in Phong Hoa newspaper, a weekly newspaper on Friday, from issue 151 (August 3, 1935) to No. 181 (April 3, 1936). Later, when publishing this publication, Doi Nay (of Self-Strengthening Literary Group) did not call it 'du ky' (travel writing) as the title of Phong Hoa newspaper said, but called it "a satirical reportage novel". In 1964, the publishing house, Sống mới (New Living), also kept the same way of calling the genre of Going to the West as before (Nhat Linh, 1964, p.3).

The problem of the genre of the work *Di Tay* is the basis for determining the content of the text. Nhat Linh's *Di Tay* has the characteristics of semi-fictional travel work. Nhat Linh's journey to France is an "objective fact" because he "went to France to study and obtained a bachelor's degree in science in 1930 and studied more about journalism, publishing [...] Nguyen Quyet Thang, 1999, p.1038).

The semi-fictional character begins with the impersonation of Lang Du. The purpose of the journey of the Lang Du character of this travel work is "to France to collect Western culture, learn the mysterious dark science of France, study astronomy and geography. , philosophy..." (Lang Du, 1935a, p.13). Here there is something similar to the purpose of the journey to France of Pham Quynh, Pham Van Anh as mentioned above.

In addition, Nhat Linh also narrated the cultural experiences of traffic such as traveling by train and subway in Paris but in her way. However, Nhat Linh's *Di Tay* has 03 characteristics that make it a semi-fictional travel work. First, the person narrating the journey to France is another person with a name, age, and family background; but the character's name Lang Du is questionable. The dictionary meaning of the word "lang du" is an act of "going out and about without purpose" (Linguistics Institute, 1997, p.523), but the colloquial meaning of this word is used to refer to those people who like freedom, and freedom, no be constraint. Second, the story is told with a non-serious tone, words, situations, and narratives with humorous effects. Third, the

journey through time and geography is symbolic without being entirely authentic. In particular, the cultural space in *Going to the West* is not described directly, not many cultural details are recounted, but mainly narrates the character's situation in a cultural space that sometimes has a few landmarks that appear to know the travel story taking place in France.

In the vast cultural space of France, Lang Du is less involved in experience to describe culture but details mainly express individual cultural reactions as a form of cultural self-experience in the journey. Therefore, when visiting famous landmarks of France such as Marseille, Paris,... Lang Du did not visit any cultural facilities or historical sites, although he once asked his companion about places where the visit worth seeing.

Among the three things worth seeing in Paris are "the Eiffel Tower, the smile of Mr. Daunergue (the French president), the legs of Miss Mistinguett", and the Lang Du character chose to see Miss Mistinguett's legs. This means that characters come to France not to visit as tourists. So, what exactly is Lang Du's journey to France?

From the beginning to the end of the journey, Lang Du encounters many difficulties and struggles with many challenges, can see what the character goes through like the suffering of Western explorers. When he arrived in Marseille, he looked for a place to sleep and a high-floor restaurant to eat soup. Tourists often go to places with monuments and landscapes, while Lang Du goes to the countryside (rural area) of France. Here, Lang Du discovered "Here they give up the family hobby and live in a society", from which the character compares 5 things "the countryside in France is different from the countryside in our country" about the episode. shop, civilized lifestyle (Lang Du, 1935c, p.7). When he arrived in Paris, Lang Du told the story of traveling and eating popular food, sometimes falling into a miserable position because he had no money. The story evokes the image of a journey character who is a poor man who doesn't have much money, so he tries to manage. To escape the adversity of sailing without money, the character chooses to "go on deck" (roaming on the deck), without food, and "goes to the kitchen to beg for food" (Lang Du, 1935b, p.13). Lang Du pointed out the adversity in the time of lack of money: going down to 'hell' (i.e. taking the subway) costs 7 cents, but going up to 'paradise' (is going to the 'Cao Lầu Tàu' (high floor dishes of Chinese) restaurant costs 10 francs, so you have to choose ' Hell' (Lang Du, 1935e, p.7) In the work, Lang Du talks less about enjoying travel but complains about poverty such as lack of money, hunger, walking many times, etc. Lang Du is a difficult journey to French culture in the cultural context of the colonial country wanting to become rich. It is a contrast between two cultures: rich country cultures are often civilized holding power and poor country cultures are often backward and ruled. Lang Du's journey is an escape through the French cultural space to return to literature facing two currents of thought: conservative and innovative.

When exposed to Western culture, Nhat Linh has recognized the challenges when Vietnamese literature, develops according to the modern trend of the West. One of the elements of literary modernization is the language along with the non-traditional modes of reflection of modern literature. This is the biggest challenge in the contemporary context of Vietnamese literature. Literary language following the trend of Westernization has many identifiers in French that are suitable for "Western-educated" intellectuals (who have studied in France or studied in

French-Vietnamese schools) but will not be suitable for 'Confucian' intellectuals (schools teaching Chinese or Vietnamese) and popular classes. Contacting Western culture for literary innovation is also difficult as experiencing adversity, suffering, and scorn like the character Lang Du in this work. The important thing is that Lang Du's character's journey to French culture, where there is romantic literature with many world-famous writers, is not Lang Du's journey story what is seen, what is heard? It's about what you've seen, how you've heard, and how you've acculturation French culture and literature to modernize literature.

Nhat Linh's *Di Tay* the West is considered to be written in a postmodern style. The difference between Going to the West and contemporary travel writing is the parody method that Nhat Linh used to build the work. This has made many people mistake Nhat Linh's travel diary as a satirical novel.

Parody is derived from the Greek word (paroidia) meaning imitation of a particular writer, artist, or genre, deliberately exaggerating it for humorous effect. In a literary work, the reproduction of language by the method of parody as an essential whole has an internal logic and opens up a special world associated with the language being mocked. According to Bakhtin (2003), parody is the creation of a powerful equivalent character (hence the appearance of "the world upside down") and he emphasizes that "parody is never a negative crude, naked what is mocked" (p.23). Therefore, parody performs the function of "the flip side" of the style being mocked (genre style, author's personal style, school style or literary tendency, literary style of another nation) and the world associated with it, i.e. the "reverse side" of things that become the object of description and become the true characters of parody in such a sense. This allows parody to play the role of the self-reflection characteristic of literary languages. In the work *Di Tay*, Nhat Linh uses parody as an artistic measure to reflect his journey to Western civilization through the French cultural space.

Modern and postmodern travel writing is based on the principle of non-fiction to create based on a certain artistic thought. One of the works that exemplify this type of creativity is Xavier de Maistre's *A Journey Around My Bedroom* (1794), as Emmanuel Laurentin (2020) observes, "This satirical and light-hearted text is a parody of travel stories that were very successful before the Revolution" (p.120) is considered a modern travelogue. Modern travel writing focuses less on great journeys and more on what is considered ordinary but must be meaningful or philosophical. According to Manfred Pfister: "A common trend in travel writing follows modernism and postmodernism to a stage of self-consciousness which earlier travel writers tended to downplay". (Manfred Pfister, 2007, p.5).

In the work, *Di Tay*, Nhat Linh has put into his travel writing the language of everyday life that has not been sharpened. This is his way of rejecting the refinement of the Vietnamese language in traditional literature (Nhat Linh, 1952). The use of this language is a parody of the beauty of literary language from the past to the present. In particular, with the personality language of the Lang Du character and through his act of transcending space, Nhat Linh has expressed an approach to culture existing in life from a close-up perspective - a look at the real thing, no paint, no cover-up, no illusions...

The use of Vietnamese to deviate and Vietnameseize the Indo-European language in some nouns indicating places and things of Nhat Linh in *Going To The West* has created the feeling that the writer can immediately grasp the details anywhere, on the street, sidewalks, unpolished, straight into literature. It is a primitive, natural language, a pure, naked language of a lively, changing everyday language that is always present in the majority of people who are not bound by books and literature. The sentences that express the character's words, at first glance, seem that it was said from the mouth of an innocent and honest person, but when you read carefully, you can realize the meaning of the humorous words that Nhat Linh has. use them as an artistic trick: "My name is Nguyen Van Lang Du. Age 22. Unmarried, but has a mistress. I went to France to study photography to return home to take pictures for the French" (Lang Du, 1935d, p.7)

The method of parody in performing in situations to cope with the situation of the Lang Du character along with the words and silly, humorous personality of this character in those situations made Nhat Linh's *Di Tay* have a deep meaning. The parody technique *Di Tay* is a combination of everyday stories with cultural behavior, the simplicity of language, and the coherent structure of the travel genre, which makes *Di Tay* exude a sharp intellectual quality, always discovering all things, phenomena, and at any time, making it humorous in the style of Nhat Linh.

Nhat Linh also once discussed artistic writing in novels: "Literature does not hold an important position in novels, but novels still have written. So what is that text? It must first be simple." (Nhat Linh, 1952, p.75). He criticized those who "most of the writers are not good at French but write in the French way of making sentences, are not good at Confucian characters, or use Confucian characters" (p. 76), and he warned "their readers very clever, not easily deceived and the eccentric literary style will disappear" (p. 78). The artistic thought of a literary work is derived from the nature and personality of the author, what the writer experiences in a different cultural space, and it is expressed by a significant artistic perspective, stable and long-lasting, which makes up the style of the writer. Narrative language and character dialogue in Nhat Linh's *Di Tay* are simple, humorous, sometimes amplifying events and events. Behind this layer of language lies the writer's conception and view of culture and literature. *Di Tay* is a journey to France, representing Western culture, as a personal experience and leaving its mark on that culture with a novel genre travel story for Vietnamese literature. This cultural journey has made Nhat Linh's travel writing become one of the works representing the reform of the literary genre in the genre of travel writing in the first half of the 20th century of Vietnamese literature. With a parody writing style to narrate the journey through a character with an unusual name and personality, along with the changing everyday language, *Di Tay* can be considered a travel book with a unique style, postmodernism in Vietnamese literature.

Conclusion

The conformity with this study is the establishment of a theoretical basis as a research tool for acculturation in the travel writing of indigenous peoples going to Western imperial countries. Approaching culture with travel writing studies presents an insight based on elements of cultural criticism in literature studies. This approach poses many problems for the analysis of travel writing written about cultural journeys. Several concepts are introduced as tools for analyzing travelogue

works in terms of content, namely: intercultural journey, context of the intercultural journey, and cultural sensitivity. These concepts along with the concept of travelogue work as a cultural entity have created a theoretical system of cultural approach to travel writing research.

The cultural approach is applied to analyze some travel writing works of Pham Quynh, Dao Trinh Nhat, and Nhat Linh. The character of French acculturation through the journey in the travel writing of these writers has been elucidated. The analysis results have identified the ideas and themes of the travel books: "Phap du hanh trinh nhat ky" (Pham Quynh), "Sang Tay - 10 thang o Phap" (Dao Trinh Nhat), "Di Tay" " (Nhat Linh). Pham Quynh's travel diary neutralizes Eastern and Western cultures, so in some cases, he participates in cultural activities in France as a form of testing his cultural innovation project. Dao Trinh Nhat's travel writing implies overturning the cultural policy of the French in Indochina right on French soil by feminist methods. Nhat Linh's travel writing work is the writer's journey of experience in the French cultural environment to renew the novel in national literature. Indigenous people's way of acculturation with Western imperial culture is here as Carl Thompson wrote in the "Introduction" of the book *Travel Writing* that modern travel writers "usually do not seek to reflect or explore contemporary realities, but rather to escape them" (Thompson, 2011, p.5).

Approaching culture with the study of travel writings of the three writers mentioned above has clarified many issues that have not been mentioned in Vietnamese literature and history in the period of national literary modernization in the first half of the 20th century. In addition to the innovation of the travel genre, the works of these writers also explain more about the nature of the process of modernizing Vietnamese literature, because culture is the source and driving force of the development of literature.

The above research only stops to explore the value of content and ideology of travel writing works of some writers, journalists, and cultural writers. They represent the knowledge team of indigenous countries traveling to Western empire countries from the perspective of acculturation. The research prospect of this issue is an intercultural communication approach to analyze the linguistic and artistic elements of travel writing.

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