



## The Process of Forming the Progressive and Distinctive Ideas of Nguyen Sinh Sac

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### ABSTRACT

Nguyen Sinh Sac was a patriotic Confucian scholar. His views, ideas, methods, and style constitute a system of thought centered on self-reliance and resilience; building political perspectives in line with contemporary trends; promoting Vietnamese patriotism with the people as the foundation for all political and social reform movements; reforming Confucian education and advancing learning in accordance with modern tendencies. The article employs scientific historical methods to analyze, compare, and affirm the value of these progressive ideas, while highlighting the distinctive elements of Nguyen Sinh Sac's thought

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## INTRODUCTION

In the book “The Life and Career of Revolutionary Nguyen Ai Quoc”, a concise yet comprehensive biography of leader Nguyen Ai Quoc, first published in Hanoi in April 1946, Nguyen Sinh Sac is described as follows:

“His father (referring to Nguyen Ai Quoc) was a Confucian scholar who achieved the title and served as a district magistrate. However, he was not a conservative or rigid Confucian scholar. He was a man of thought and passion who upheld the spirit of self-reliance and resilience. Due to his implicit participation in the Cần Vương uprising initiated by the Văn Thân group, he was dismissed from his post. This Confucian scholar, recognizing the realities of the country at the time, initiated his own revolution within the ranks of Confucianism”.

“When King Ham Nghi was captured, and when the court and its officials became mere servants of the colonial invaders, Nguyen Sinh Sac rejected the Confucian doctrine of loyalty to the monarch. He argued that loyalty to the king was not synonymous with patriotism. To love one’s country meant to love the people. And what is a nation? A nation is its people. Therefore, patriotism must mean loving the people. From then on, he used this doctrine to enlighten his peers and the young men who studied under him. He advocated for reform and modernization, aligning himself with Phan Chu Trinh in Quang Nam, who proposed that the people must be the foundation for all political and social reform movements”.

“This education fostered a clear political perspective and served as an inspiration for Nguyen Ai Quoc from a young age, even when he was still studying classical Chinese”.

“When Nguyen Ai Quoc later attended modern schools and became familiar with Western knowledge, he increasingly recognized the value of his father’s doctrine and understood that his own political outlook aligned with contemporary trends” (Vietnam, 1946, p.2).

The above historical sources initially outline the thoughts, style, and ethics of Nguyen Sinh Sac as a Confucian scholar who upheld self-reliance and resilience; initiated his own revolution within the Confucian ranks; and advocated for the people to serve as the foundation for all political and social reform movements. Nguyen Ai Quoc increasingly appreciated the value of his father’s doctrines.

Thus, the “doctrine” the theory and thoughts of Nguyen Sinh Sac truly existed. But what were Nguyen Sinh Sac's thoughts? Truthfully, Vietnamese scholars have long emphasized Nguyen Sinh Sac as a patriotic Confucian scholar but have yet to delve into or reflect upon his ideas of self-reliance and resilience, his “revolution within the Confucian ranks”, or his advocacy for “the people as the foundation for all political and social reform movements”.

Therefore, in this article, “The Progressive and Distinctive Ideas of Nguyen Sinh Sac as a Miraculous Legacy Contributing to the Formation of Ho Chi Minh’s Thought, Ethics, and Style”, the author attempts to apply scientific historical methods to analyze, compare, and (initially) affirm the value of these

progressive ideas, distilling the distinctive elements within the thoughts of Nguyen Sinh Sac.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The intellectual legacy of Nguyen Sinh Sac a Confucian scholar, government official, and father of President Ho Chi Minh (Nguyen Tat Thanh) – has yet to be fully explored as an independent object of philosophical inquiry. While traditional Vietnamese historiography often describes him as a patriotic Confucian with moral integrity, most existing studies fall short of analyzing his reformist thought and political philosophy as a coherent system that contributed meaningfully to the formation of Ho Chi Minh’s ideology, ethics, and leadership values.

**Early Biographical Interpretations.** One of the earliest historical references to Nguyen Sinh Sac’s thought appears in *The Life and Career of the Revolutionary Nguyen Ai Quoc* (1946), which portrays him not as a conservative mandarin, but as an enlightened scholar who rejected monarchist loyalty and adopted the view that “patriotism means love for the people”. The biography emphasizes his participation in the Can Vuong Movement and his belief that the people—not the emperor—should be the foundation of any political or social reform. These early assessments laid the foundation for viewing Nguyen Sinh Sac not only as a moral figure but also as a proto-revolutionary intellectual. Additional insight comes from *The Memoirs of President Ho* (Nhưng mau chuyen ve doi hoat dong cua Chu tich Ho Chi Minh, attributed to Tran Dan Tien), which documents how Sac’s emphasis on autonomy, critical thinking, and civic responsibility deeply shaped his son’s intellectual development.

**Historiographical and Political Context.** Later academic works such as *Ho Chi Minh: Chronological Biography* (Dang Xuan Ky, ed., 2005) and *The Path of National Salvation of Ho Chi Minh* (Pham Ngoc Tram, 2011) provide broader historical narratives regarding Nguyen Sinh Sac’s life and political activities. These sources emphasize his rejection of conventional Confucian careerism, his critical stance toward French colonial policies, and his belief in education as a transformative tool for societal change.

Moreover, his service as District Magistrate in Binh Khe (1909–1910) is often cited as an example of legal activism. During his brief tenure, Nguyen Sinh Sac focused on defending the poor and reducing punitive measures against anti-colonial dissidents. His actions eventually led to his dismissal—a historical fact that supports his image as a morally principled dissenter within the colonial apparatus.

Despite these biographical narratives, few works focus on articulating Sac’s worldview as a structured set of political beliefs. His contributions are often subordinated to the larger narrative of Ho Chi Minh’s life.

**Contemporary Scholarly Reappraisals.** Recent Vietnamese scholars have begun reassessing Nguyen Sinh Sac’s intellectual legacy from a more theoretical standpoint. Nguyen Minh Tu (2020), writing in the *Journal of Historical Studies*, argues that Sac’s political orientation demonstrates early signs of democratic

humanism. Tu emphasizes Sac's belief in popular sovereignty, ethical leadership, and the necessity of adapting Confucian values to modern conditions.

Similarly, Nguyen Dac Xuan (2005) highlights Sac's strategic decision to educate his sons in Franco-Vietnamese schools, believing that mastering the knowledge systems of the West was essential for resisting colonial rule. This pragmatic and visionary approach marks a departure from the insular thinking of many early 20th-century Confucian scholars.

These reassessments acknowledge Sac as a transitional figure between feudal Confucianism and modern political thought. However, they remain limited in theoretical scope and often lack comparative or philosophical depth.

Gaps in the Literature and Scholarly Significance. While there is growing acknowledgment of Nguyen Sinh Sac's moral and pedagogical influence, a significant gap remains in the literature: his thought is rarely treated as a standalone intellectual system. His ideas on self-reliance, people-centered governance, anti-colonial resistance, and educational reform have not been systematically studied or contextualized within broader traditions of Vietnamese or Asian political philosophy.

The current study seeks to address this gap by reconstructing Nguyen Sinh Sac's progressive ideas using historical-comparative methodology. It argues that Sac was not merely a historical antecedent to Ho Chi Minh but a thinker whose political philosophy laid foundational groundwork for modern Vietnamese consciousness. His rejection of monarchism, embrace of civic education, and focus on the people as the core of national identity position him as an early voice in the development of Vietnamese modernity.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative research approach grounded in historical and philosophical inquiry. The scientific historical method is applied to analyze Nguyen Sinh Sac's ideological contributions within the socio-cultural and political context of late 19th and early 20th century Vietnam.

The research is primarily based on documentary analysis, drawing from both primary sources such as historical documents, personal writings, and contemporary records and secondary sources, including scholarly works on Confucianism, Vietnamese intellectual history, and the reformist movements of the period.

A comparative method is employed to contrast Nguyen Sinh Sac's ideas with classical Confucian doctrines and modern reformist trends in East Asia. This enables a contextual interpretation of his thought as both rooted in tradition and oriented toward progress.

Furthermore, content analysis is used to identify core themes in Nguyen Sinh Sac's thinking, including patriotism, educational reform, self-reliance, and the central role of the people in socio-political transformation.

By integrating these methods, the study aims to reconstruct and evaluate the philosophical and educational dimensions of Nguyen Sinh Sac's thought, affirming its historical significance and relevance to contemporary discussions on educational reform and national identity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Nguyen Sinh Sac (real name: Nguyen Sinh Huy) was born in 1862 in Chung Cự village, now Kim Lien commune, Nam Dan district, Nghe An province. His father was Nguyen Sinh Nham, and his mother was Ha Thi Hy. By the age of three, he was orphaned by his father, and at four, his mother passed away. He was then raised by his half-brother, Nguyen Sinh Tro.

In 1878, out of compassion for the orphaned boy, Confucian scholar Hoang Xuan Duong ng of Hoang Tru village (also known as Chùa village) took 16-year-old Nguyen Sinh Sac in to raise and educate him. Nguyen Sinh Sac was intelligent, diligent, and a well-known outstanding student in the region. At the age of 22 (1883), he married Hoang Xuan Duong's eldest daughter, Hoang Thi Loan, who later gave birth to four children: Nguyen Thi Thanh, Nguyen Sinh Khiem, Nguyen Sinh Cung (Ho Chi Minh), and Nguyen Sinh Xin (who died young).

In 1890, Nguyen Sinh Sac passed the district-level examination in Nam Dan. That same year, in the small three-room house in the garden of scholar Hoàng Đường in Hoàng Trù village, Nguyen Sinh Cung (later Ho Chi Minh) was born.

Although living in poverty, Nguyen Sinh Sac only wished to farm and raise his children. However, both sides of the family encouraged him to pursue education. In 1894, he passed the Bachelor's degree in the Giap Ngo examination.

To continue his studies at Quoc Tu Giam (Imperial Academy), he and his wife decided to move to Hue in 1896. With deep love for her family, Hoàng Thị Loan left their eldest daughter with her grandmother, Hoang Thi Kep, and took her two sons, Nguyen Sinh Khiem and Nguyen Sinh Cung, to Hue with her husband.

At that time, there were no railways or automobiles between Nghe An and Hue. Travel was on foot, horseback, or by sedan chair along the Thien Ly (North-South) Road. As a poor scholar, Nguyen Sinh Sac's family had to walk. Children were often carried in baskets by adults, and Nguyen Sinh Cung rode in the basket carried by his mother.

Upon arriving in Hue, the family initially stayed with acquaintances and later found temporary shelter in a soldiers' barracks near the Imperial Inspectorate (today's address: 114 Mai Thuc Loan Street).

In those early days in Hue (On Ho Chi Minh's Path to National Salvation, 2011, p. 20-24), Nguyen Sinh Sac worked as a secretary at the Agricultural School, earning a meager salary of 15 đồng per month. The entire family relied on this income to survive. Despite financial hardship, Nguyen Sinh Sac juggled his studies at Quoc Tu Giam while working to support his family. Meanwhile, Hoàng Thị Loan purchased a loom and spent her days tirelessly weaving fabric to supplement their income and support her husband and children's education.

In 1898, Nguyen Sinh Sac took the Hoi examination for the second time but did not pass. Seeing his struggles, Bachelor Nguyen Si Do, a reputable Confucian scholar in Dương Nỗ, invited him to teach a group of students at the

home of Nguyen Si Khuyen (Nguyen Si Do's younger brother) in Duong No village. Nguyen Sinh Cung, along with his older brother, accompanied their father and began studying Chinese characters in their father's class.

In 1900, Nguyen Sinh Sac was appointed by the royal court to Thanh Ha to organize and grade the regional Hương examination alongside officials from the Ministry of Education. He brought along his eldest son, Nguyen Sinh Khiem. During this time, Nguyen Sinh Cung lived with his mother in a small house near Đông Ba Gate. A few months later, Hoàng Thị Loan gave birth to another son, named Nguyen Sinh Xin. He was named "Xin" (meaning "to beg") because during the days of his birth, Hoàng Thị Loan was so weak that she had no milk to feed him and had to beg for milk and rice gruel from neighbors. The harsh conditions caused her to suffer postpartum illness, and she passed away on February 7, 1901, at the age of 33.

With their mother gone, their father and older brother away, and grandparents far off, the 11-year-old Nguyen Sinh Cung our beloved Ho Chi Minh had to beg for milk and rice gruel to feed himself and his baby brother. The heart-wrenching situation drew much sympathy. Neighbors came together to support the two brothers, providing food and care. Nguyen Sinh Cung and Nguyen Sinh Xin survived through the compassion and kindness of the people of Hue. Due to difficult communication, transportation challenges, and his work responsibilities, it was several months before Nguyen Sinh Sac could return to Hue.

Upon his return, Nguyen Sinh Cung tearfully threw his arms around his father's neck, sobbing. Seeing his two small, lonely children, the grief-stricken father could not hold back his tears. Carrying Sinh Xin in one arm and leading Sinh Cung with the other, he visited his late wife's grave, where he burned incense to express his sorrow and guilt. He then brought his children back to their maternal home in Hoang Tru, Nghe An. Unfortunately, due to his fragile health since birth and the absence of maternal care, Sinh Xin did not survive long.

Back in their hometown, Nguyen Sinh Sac enrolled Nguyen Sinh Cung in a Chinese character class taught by scholar Hoang Phan Quynh. The class was held in Vang hamlet, Huu Biet village, about 3 kilometers from Hoang Tru (now part of Nam Giang commune, Nam Dan district, Nghe An province). Meanwhile, Nguyen Sinh Sac returned to Hue to prepare for the "Hoi" examination. That year, 1901, he passed the Nguyen Sinh Sac exam and received great honor.

Starting from the Tan Suu examination year (1901), those who passed the Nguyen Sinh Sac exam were granted a ceremonial banner by the king and permitted a triumphant return to their hometown. During the announcement ceremony, Nguyen Sinh Sac received a banner from King Thành Thái inscribed with the four characters "An Tu Ninh Gia" (Blessed and Graced for a Virtuous Family), along with financial support for his return to An Tinh provincial capital (Vinh). Governor Dao Tri of An Tĩnh then ordered local officials to prepare a grand procession, complete with palanquins, banners, and drums, to welcome the Nguyen Sinh Sac laureate back to his village. This was a monumental honor for Nguyen Sinh Sac, a far cry from his impoverished childhood as an orphaned cowherd who "did not own even a patch of land".

For the first time, Kim Lien village had produced a high-ranking scholar. Local officials immediately allocated 5 sao of Central Vietnamese land and used public funds to build a three-room thatched house. From then on, Nguyen Sinh Sac and his children lived there.

Nguyen Sinh Sac was recognized as one of the “Four Great Scholars of Nam Dan” (Nam Dan Tu Ho), celebrated for his exceptional intelligence. The people praised:

“Erudition unmatched like San” (No one is as erudite as Phan Van San – Phan Boi Chau),

“Talent unmatched like Quy” (No one is as talented as Vuong Thuc Quy),

“Memory unmatched like Luong” (No one has a better memory than Tran Van Luong),

“Intelligence unmatched like Sac” (No one is as intelligent as Nguyen Sinh Sac).

After passing the Nguyen Sinh Sac exam, Nguyen Sinh Sac lived in Sen Village for five years (1901–1906). Like many rural areas in Nghe An, Sen Village, already poor, became even more impoverished after the country fell under colonial rule. In addition to farming, the villagers engaged in various trades such as weaving, basketry, collecting firewood, and charcoal burning.

In the past, this area was called Trai Sen (Lotus Hamlet) and was characterized by lotus-themed landmarks, including Dong Sen Can (Dry Lotus Field), Đồng Sen Sâu (Deep Lotus Field), Gieng Sen (Lotus Well), Đầm Sen (Lotus Pond), Vuc Sen, Bau Sen, Cho Sen (Lotus Market), and Con Sen (Lotus Hillock). The abundance of lotus flowers contributed to the area's unique natural beauty, which gave it the name “Sen Village” (Lotus Village). The villagers were proud of their beautiful village, which often hosted Confucian scholars gathering to discuss literature and current affairs. This cultural richness also foreshadowed Nguyen Sinh Sac's later connection to the “Pink Lotus” region of Cao Lanh.

In September 1901, Nguyen Sinh Sac sent Nguyen Sinh Cung to study classical Chinese with teachers Vuong Thuc Quy and Tran Than in Kim Lien Village. Vuong Thuc Quy, a Confucian scholar with strong patriotic ideals, greatly influenced Nguyen Sinh Cung and his classmates. Like his father, Nguyen Sinh Cung was a quick learner with an excellent memory, earning the affection of his teacher. Under Vuong Thuc Quy's guidance, Nguyen Sinh Cung felt comfortable and found the lessons easy to grasp because the teacher was progressive, avoided rigidity, and did not force his students to memorize ancient texts in the traditional rote learning style. As a role model, the teacher inspired Nguyen Sinh Cung to explore deeper questions he would continue to pursue throughout his growth and development.

During the years 1901–1902, Nguyen Sinh Sac gradually educated his two sons, Nguyen Sinh Khiem and Nguyen Sinh Cung, to embrace the patriotic ideals of their elders through his relationships with scholars in the region. In Phan Bội Chau Nien Bieu (Phan Boi Chau's Chronology), Phan Boi Chau recounts that Nguyen Sinh Cung often listened to Phan and Nguyen reciting a couplet, which he would later recall:

“At every meal, never forget to record history;  
The lowest way to establish oneself is through mere literature”  
Translated as:

“At every meal, never forget to record history;  
The lowest way to establish oneself is through mere literature”.

Nguyen Sinh Sac and Phan Boi Chau (Nguyen Sinh Sac, born in 1862, was five years older than Phan Boi Chau, who was born on December 26, 1867, and passed away on October 29, 1940) were both quick-witted intellectuals with a thirst for knowledge. They shared a fondness for hát phường vải (a traditional Vietnamese singing style) and studied together under the teacher Đông Khê Nguyen Thuc Tu, nurturing the tradition of scholarly learning and patriotism that was characteristic of Nghe An. This mutual foundation allowed the two to form a close, understanding, and respectful relationship.

This bond contributed significantly to shaping Nguyen Sinh Sac's patriotism, which he then passed on to his children - Nguyen Thi Thanh, Nguyen Sinh Khiem, and Nguyen Sinh Cung (later known as Ho Chi Minh).

In the spring of 1903, Mr. Nguyen brought Sinh Cung to live in Vo Liet commune, Thanh Chuong district, Nghe An, where he continued to study Chinese characters. During this time, Mr. Nguyen also frequently interacted with patriotic scholars from the Nghe - Tinh region, such as scholar Nguyen Xuan On and Phan Boi Chau. He had written on the rafters a few words: “Do not adopt the style of the officials as your own” (“Vật dĩ quan gia, vi ngô phong dạng”), to teach and always remind his children: “Learning is necessary to understand the principles of being human. One should not study just to become an official” (According to the Kim Lien Memorial Site materials).

In September 1905, Nguyen Sinh Khiem (Nguyen Tat Dat) and Nguyen Sinh Cung (Nguyen Tat Thanh) were enrolled in a preparatory class at the French-native elementary school in Vinh, about 14 km from Kim Lien. The two brothers stayed with a poor family in Cau Ram (Vinh) and usually walked home on Saturday afternoons, returning to Vinh on Monday mornings. This was a very important event, marking a turning point in Mr. Nguyen's thinking, as he hoped to introduce Nguyen Tat Thanh to Western values: Liberty - Equality - Fraternity.

Within the family, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Sac placed a lot of hope in Nguyen Tat Thanh, often taking him along when traveling. Thanks to this, Nguyen Tat Thanh frequently participated in his father's discussions. For Mr. Nguyen, although he greatly admired the spirit and determination of Phan Boi Chau to save the country, he declined the Eastern Movement path (In May 1905, Phan Boi Chau wanted to take Sinh Cung to Japan, but Mr. Nguyen refused - Based on materials from the Kim Lien Memorial Site, Nghe An province).

In 1906, Mr. Nguyen returned to Hue (for the second time) to take up the position of “Thua bien” in the Ministry of Rituals, overseeing education at Quoc Tu Giam, and serving as an Han Lam Kiem Thao of the seventh rank. During his days in Hue with his two sons, Mr. Nguyen increasingly recognized the true face of the semi-feudal colonial regime in Vietnam. The people were heavily exploited with hundreds of unreasonable taxes, such as the personal tax, alcohol tax, opium tax, residence tax, bicycle tax, ferry tax... These taxes not only burdened the

working people but were also constantly changing. The colonial government kept imposing more taxes at increasing rates. They vigorously implemented cultural policies, instilling feelings of loss of identity and inferiority while suppressing popular uprisings; they indoctrinated the people with reactionary and immoral culture; and relentlessly pursued policies of keeping the populace ignorant. Later, Nguyen Tat Thanh - Nguyen Ai Quoc summarized this in "The Colonial Regime's Judgment": "To keep the people ignorant to make them easier to rule; this is the policy most favored by the authorities in our colonies" (Ho Chi Minh, 1980, p.180).

During his time in Hue, Mr. Nguyen and his two sons not only witnessed but also participated in the movement against the tax collection by the working people of Hue, which took place on both sides of the Perfume River and on the Trang Tien Bridge. On the morning of April 11, 1908, Mr. Nguyen and his two sons joined thousands of fellow Hue residents in a demonstration. When the authorities sent soldiers to fire warning shots to disperse the crowd, the oppressed protesters surged forward to fight back against the soldiers, capturing the deputy commander and forcing the local governor to lead the demonstration. Along the way to the imperial city of Hue, some places had already set up to cut hair short and shorten the clothes (i.e., in line with the reform trend) for those who still wore their hair in buns and long robes.

The anti-tax movement in Central Vietnam (1908) "was truly a public, spontaneous struggle by farmers to implement democratic reforms. The movement was closely linked with the developing Duy Tân movement. Therefore, the forms of struggle were very new and diverse. However, due to a lack of leadership and tight organization, the movement was suppressed and ultimately dissolved. The government was forced to make concessions in many areas. After this incident, they had to reduce the personal tax from 2.40 to 2.20 dong, decrease the days of public service labor from 4 to 3, and not increase the land tax by 5%. At the same time, in an effort to appease and win over the people, a hospital and a school were opened" (Truong Huu Quynh, Dinh Xuan Lam & Le Mau Han, 2005, p. 626).

Due to his patriotic activities and participation in the struggle of the people of Hue, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Sac was reprimanded by the Southern court. However, he did not lose heart and persisted in educating and guiding his son Nguyen Tat Thanh toward the cause of national salvation. He deeply understood the plight of officials (like himself) in the situation of "lost country, broken home". At times, he felt discouraged by the court and wanted to retreat, live in seclusion, and open a school for teaching. Nevertheless, he continued to arrange for Nguyen Tat Thanh to "enter the world" and "build a career".

After participating in the anti-tax movement in Central Vietnam (1908), pushed by the circumstances, he agreed to let his eldest son Nguyen Tan Dat (Nguyen Sinh Khiem) engage in the patriotic struggle led by his fellow countryman Phan Boi Chau. As for Nguyen Tat Thanh, some of Mr. Nguyen's intellectual friends in Nghệ An and Hue also encouraged him to heed the call of Phan Bai Chau's "Eastern Movement" and Phan Chau Trinh's "Duy Tan", but

both Mr. Nguyen and Nguyen Tat Thanh declined. Although Phan Boi Chau was a trusted intellectual among the “four tigers of Nam Dan”, Mr. Nguyen highly valued his enthusiasm. However, reflecting on the failures of previous patriotic movements, he was troubled and did not believe that the Eastern Movement led by Phan would succeed. This was recounted by the author Tran Dan Tien in “Stories About the Life of President Ho Chi Minh”.

From there, Mr. Nguyen discussed and directed Nguyen Tat Thanh to look toward the West, to learn Western writing. Nguyen Sinh Sac went to Hue to assume the position of Thừa biện in the Ministry of Rituals, and then he enrolled Nguyen Sinh Cung in the French-Vietnamese school, no longer studying Confucian classics but Western writing. According to him, to fight the French, one must understand the French, and to understand the French, one must learn Western writing. This reflects the sensitivity of Mr. Nguyen Sinh Sac, and thanks to this, Nguyen Tat Thanh was soon able to come into contact with and understand the essence of the values of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity that the French claimed to offer. Later, when recalling the process of searching for a path to save the country, President Ho Chi Minh said: “The Vietnamese people, including my father, often asked each other who would help them escape from oppression. Some thought it would be the Japanese, others thought it would be the British, and still others thought it would be the Americans. I thought I had to go abroad to see for myself” (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, vol.1, p.476-479).

In 1909, Mr. Nguyen was appointed as the District Chief of Binh Khe, but he did not think much about his position. He often mediated in lawsuits, defended the poor, and consistently sought ways to release patriotic individuals who were imprisoned there, which led to his demotion by the court (He served as District Chief of Binh Khe for only 5 months and 17 days, from July 1, 1909, to January 17, 1910). During his time in Binh Định, he remained close to his son, encouraging him that if he wanted to go to the West, he needed to learn French. Therefore, while in Binh Dinh (the scientific seminar on Ho Chi Minh in Binh Dinh in August 2009 confirmed that he arrived in Binh Định in May 1909 and left in August 1910), Ho Chi Minh continued to study French at the French-Vietnamese school in Quy Nhơn or directly learned French from teacher Pham Ngoc Tho (the father of Doctor Pham Ngoc Thch). Nguyen Sinh Huy had sent Ho Chi Minh (who later became President Ho Chi Minh) to his close friend, teacher Phạm Ngọc Thọ, a teacher at the French-Vietnamese school in Quy Nhơn, for nurturing and education. In the autumn of 1910, the family of teacher Phạm Ngọc Thọ left Quy Nhơn for Phan Thiet.

On January 17, 1910, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Huy was removed from his position as district chief. On May 19, 1910, the Council of Regency discussed the matter, and subsequently, on August 27, 1910, the Central Governor Grolean approved that decision. In the report from the Ministry of the Interior dated May 29, 1909 (the 14th day of the fourth month in the third year of Duy Tan), it clearly stated: “The Ministry of Interior reports,

According to the decree, the position of District Chief of Binh Khe (Binh Dinh Province) is currently vacant (due to Ho Tieu Khanh’s involvement in

financial issues, pending investigation). The province has sent Pham Le Doan as a temporary replacement.

My ministry has chosen from among those who have served long and are currently in position (namely Mr. Le Van Tuong, acting as assistant in the Ministry of Rites; Mr. Nguyen Sinh Huy, assistant in the Ministry of Rites; and Mr. Nguyen Dinh Quang, assistant in the Ministry of Justice), and twelve days ago, we convened to discuss and received the response from your Excellency Governor General Grolean, appointing Nguyen Sinh Huy as the District Chief of Binh Khe.

Considering Mr. Nguyen Sinh Huy (forty-eight years old, from Nghe An Province, passed the second degree examination in April of the 13th year of Thành Thái, appointed as an examiner, served as an assistant in the Ministry of Rites, promoted in February of the second year of Duy Tân to the position of document editor, and in March of the same year took the official role of document editor), we request to appoint him as the District Chief of this district" (Dang Xuan Ky, 2005).

During this time, Mr. Nguyen and Nguyen Tat Thanh discussed political matters together, preparing the necessary aspects regarding Nguyen Tat Thanh's thoughts and psychology for going abroad to seek a path to save the nation. Later, President Ho Chi Minh recalled, "From that time, I really wanted to become acquainted with French civilization... So what should I do now? I decided to find a way to go abroad" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, Vol. 1, p. 476-479)..

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First and foremost, it can be said that Nguyen Tat Thanh (Nguyen Ai Quoc, Ho Chi Minh) is a reflection of the great portrait of Nguyen Sinh Sac. He passed on to future generations, including Ho Chi Minh, the aspiration for national independence and freedom for the people. The views, ideas, methods, and style of Nguyen Sinh Sac represent a coherent system of thought emphasizing self-reliance and resilience; establishing a political concept aligned with contemporary trends; promoting Vietnamese patriotism with the people as the foundation for all political or social reform movements; reforming Confucianism, and developing education in line with new trends. Through the study of the family and social circumstances and the process of forming the progressive and distinctive ideas of Nguyen Sinh Sac (as presented above), we (at this initial stage) would like to systematize his progressive and distinctive thoughts into three key issues: (i) Nguyen Sinh Sac was a contemporary intellectual (in Confucianism) with progressive ideas, dedication, self-reliance, and resilience, rejecting the doctrine of loyalty to the king in Confucianism. (ii) He integrated new progressive ideas into practical activities, advocating for reform and modernization, and emphasizing the importance of the people as the foundation for all political or social reform movements. (iii) He sought to reform the examination system and develop education in accordance with new trends. Of course, to deepen the above arguments, we hope to present the results of our research in the near future.

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