

THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN INDO CHINA

1. What was the influence of China on Vietnam's culture and life?

- i. When Vietnam, was made an independent country, its rulers continued to maintain the Chinese system of government as well as Chinese culture.
- ii. Vietnam was also linked to the 'silk route' of China that brought in goods, people and ideas.

2. How did the French form the Indochina?

French troops landed in Vietnam in 1858 and by the mid-1880s they had established a firm grip over the northern region.

The French assumed control of Tonkin and Annam after the Franco-Chinese war and, in 1887, French Indo-China was formed.

3. Why did the French think colonies necessary?

Colonies were considered essential to supply natural resources and other essential goods to France. Like other Western nations, France also thought it was the mission of the 'advanced' European countries to bring the benefits of civilization to backward peoples.

4. How did the French begin the colonization process in Indochina?

- i. The French began the colonization process by building canals and draining lands in the Mekong delta to increase cultivation. The vast system of irrigation works – canals and earthworks – built mainly with forced labour, increased rice production and allowed the export of rice to the international market.
- ii. Infrastructure projects started to help transport goods for trade, move soldiers and control the entire region. Construction of a trans-Indo-China rail network that would link the northern and southern parts of Vietnam and China was begun. This final link with Yunnan in China was completed by 1910. The second line was also built, linking Vietnam to Siam (as Thailand was then called)

Why did the French build infrastructure in Vietnam? (Answer Point ii above)

5. Why should the colonies be developed according to the French writer Paul Bernard?

Colonies to be developed to improve the standard of living of the people so that they would demand more goods. The market would consequently expand, leading to better profits for French business.

6. What were the barriers to economic growth in Vietnam? State the two measures recommended.

- i. High population levels, low agricultural productivity, and extensive indebtedness amongst the peasants were the barriers to economic growth in Vietnam.
- ii. To reduce rural poverty and increase agricultural productivity it was necessary to carry out land reforms as the Japanese had done in the 1890s. However, this could not ensure sufficient employment.
- iii. As the experience of Japan showed, industrialization would be essential to create more jobs.

7. What is meant by 'the civilizing mission'?

Europeans took for granted that Europe had developed the most advanced civilization. So it became the duty of the Europeans to introduce these modern ideas to the colony even if this meant destroying local cultures, religions and traditions, because these were seen as outdated and prevented modern development

8. Why did the French hesitate to educate Vietnamese people?

Once educated, the Vietnamese may begin to question colonial domination. Moreover, French citizens living in Vietnam (called colons) began fearing that they might lose their jobs – as teachers, shopkeepers, policemen – to the educated Vietnamese. So they opposed policies that would give the Vietnamese full access to French education.

9. What were the two broad opinions regarding the medium of instruction in Vietnam?

Or What were the differences of opinion between the two groups in Vietnam regarding the introduction of French educational system?

- i. Some policymakers emphasized the need to use the French language as the medium of instruction. By learning the language, they felt, the French culture and civilization can be introduced.
- ii. This would help create an ‘Asiatic France solidly tied to European France’. The educated people in Vietnam would respect French sentiments and ideals, see the superiority of French culture, and work for the French.
- iii. Others were opposed to French being the only medium of instruction. They suggested that Vietnamese be taught in lower classes and French in the higher classes. The few who learnt French and acquired French culture were to be rewarded with French citizenship.

10. Write a short note on the educational system introduced by the French in Vietnam.

- i. Only the Vietnamese elite – comprising a small fraction of the population – could enroll in the schools, and only a few among those admitted ultimately passed the school-leaving examination. This was largely because of a deliberate policy of failing students, particularly in the final year, so that they could not qualify for the better-paid jobs. Usually, two-thirds of the students fail. In 1925, in a population of 17 million, there were less than 400, who passed the examination.
- ii. School textbooks glorified the French and justified colonial rule. The Vietnamese were represented as primitive and backward, capable of manual labour but not of intellectual reflection; they could work in the fields but not rule themselves; they were ‘skilled copyists’ but not creative. School children were told that only French rule could ensure peace in Vietnam:

11. Describe the ideas behind the Tonkin Free School. To what extent was it a typical example of colonial ideas in Vietnam?

- i. The Tonkin Free School was started in 1907 to provide a Western style education. This education included classes in science, and hygiene. To be ‘modern’ it was not enough to learn science and Western ideas: to be modern the Vietnamese had to look modern.
- ii. The school encouraged the adoption of Western styles such as having a short haircut. For the Vietnamese this meant a major break with their own identity since they traditionally kept long hair.
- iii. The French sought to strengthen their rule in Vietnam through the control of education. They tried to change the values, norms and perceptions of the people, to make them believe in the superiority of French civilization and the inferiority of the Vietnamese.

12. How did Vietnamese schools become an important place for political and cultural battles?

- i. Teachers and students did not blindly follow the curriculum. Sometimes there was open opposition, at other times there was silent resistance.
- ii. In 1926 a major protest erupted in the Saigon Native Girls School. A Vietnamese girl sitting in one of the front seats was asked to move to the back of the class and allow a

local French student to occupy the front seat. When she refused, the principal expelled her. When angry students protested, they too were expelled, leading to a further spread of open protests.

- iii. Elsewhere, students fought against the colonial government's efforts to prevent the Vietnamese from qualifying for white-collar jobs. They were inspired by patriotic feelings and the conviction that it was the duty of the educated to fight for the benefit of society.
- iv. By the 1920s, students were forming various political parties, such as the Party of Young Annam, and publishing nationalist journals such as the 'Annamese Student'. Schools thus became an important place for political and cultural battles.
- v. The French sought to strengthen their rule in Vietnam through the control of education. They tried to change the values, norms and perceptions of the people, to make them believe in the superiority of French civilization and the inferiority of the Vietnamese.
- vi. Vietnamese intellectuals, on the other hand, feared that Vietnam was losing not just control over its territory but its very identity. Its own culture and customs were being devalued and the people were developing a master-slave mentality. The battle against French colonial education became part of the larger battle against colonialism and for independence (any four points)

Why did the battle against the French colonial education become part of the larger battle against colonialism and for independence? (Answer points v and vi above)

13. How did the establishment of the modern city of Hanoi lead to the spread of bubonic plague in Vietnam?

The French part of Hanoi was built as a beautiful and clean city with wide avenues and a well-laid-out sewer system. The waste from the old city drained out into the river or, during heavy rains or floods, overflowed into the streets. Thus what was installed to create a hygienic environment in the French city became the cause of the plague. The large sewers in the modern part of the city, were an ideal and protected breeding ground for rats. The sewers also served as a great transport system, allowing the rats to move around the city without any problem. Rats began to enter the homes of the French through the sewage pipes.

14. Why did the measures adopted to prevent plague become ineffective in Vietnam?

The French hired Vietnamese workers and paid them for each rat they caught. Rats began to be caught in thousands. Those who did the dirty work of entering sewers found that if they came together they could earn a big amount. They also discovered innovative ways to profit from this situation. The bounty was paid when a tail was given as proof that a rat had been killed. So the rat-catchers cut the tails and released the rats, so that the process could be repeated, over and over again. Some people, in fact, began raising rats to earn a bounty.

How did the rat hunt in Vietnam give an opportunity to the people to protest against the colonial rule. (Write the answer above)

15. What was the role of religious groups in the development of anti-colonial feeling in Vietnam?

- i. Vietnam's religious beliefs were a **mixture of Buddhism, Confucianism** and local practices. Christianity was introduced by French missionaries. From the eighteenth century, many religious movements were hostile to the Western presence in Vietnam.

- ii. An early movement against French control and the spread of Christianity was the **Scholars Revolt in 1868**. This revolt was led by the officials at the imperial court, who were angry at the spread of Catholicism and French power. They led a general uprising in Ngu An and Ha Tien provinces where over a thousand Catholics were killed.
- iii. Catholic missionaries had been active in **winning converts** since the early seventeenth century, and by the middle of the eighteenth century had converted some 300,000. The French crushed the movement but this uprising served to inspire other patriots to rise up against them.
- iv. There were many popular religions in Vietnam that were spread by people who claimed to have seen a vision of God. Some of these religious movements supported the French, but others inspired movements against the colonial rule.
- v. The **Hoa Hao Movement** began in 1939 and gained great popularity in the fertile Mekong delta area. It drew on religious ideas popular in anti-French uprisings of the nineteenth century.
- vi. The French tried to suppress the movement inspired by Huynh Phu So. They declared him mad, called him the Mad Bonze, and put him in a mental asylum. The French authorities exiled him to Laos and sent many of his followers to **concentration camps**.

(any four)

Explain any two contributions each of ‘scholars revolt in 1868 and Hoa Hao Movement in 1939 against religious and social evils respectively.

(Write points ii & v & vi)

Describe any 3 steps taken by the French to suppress the movement inspired by Huynh Phu So? (Write points v & vi)

16. What were the different visions of modernization in Vietnam?

- i. Some intellectuals felt that Vietnamese traditions had to be strengthened to resist the domination of the West, while others felt that Vietnam had to learn from the West even while opposing foreign domination. These differing visions led to complex debates, which could not be easily resolved.
- ii. Phan Boi Chau, a nationalist, became a major figure in the anti-colonial resistance from the time he formed the Revolutionary Society (Duy Tan Hoi) in 1903, with Prince Cuong De as the head. He believed that Vietnamese traditions had to be strengthened to resist the domination of the West and develop a common culture with that of China.
- iii. Phan Chau Trinh , another nationalist, was intensely hostile to the monarchy and opposed to the idea of resisting the French with the help of the court. His desire was to establish a democratic republic. Deeply influenced by the democratic ideals of the West, he did not want a wholesale rejection of Western civilization. He accepted the French revolutionary ideal of liberty but charged the French for not abiding by the ideal. He demanded that the French should set up legal and educational institutions, and develop agriculture and industries, in Vietnam as well.

17. What ideas did Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chu Trinh share in common? What did they differ on ?

Both of them wanted modernization of Vietnam. Phan Boi Chau felt that Vietnamese traditions had to be strengthened to resist the domination of the West, while Phan Chu Trinh felt that Vietnam had to learn from the West even while opposing foreign domination.

18. Explain the ‘Go East Movement’. What was the primary objective of the ‘Go East Movement’? What was the result?

- i. In 1907-08 some 300 Vietnamese students went to Japan to acquire modern education. For many of them the primary **objective** was to drive out the French from Vietnam, overthrow the puppet emperor and to re-establish the Nguyen dynasty that had been deposed by the French.
- ii. These nationalists looked for foreign arms and help. They appealed to the Japanese as fellow Asians. Japan had modernized itself and had resisted colonization by the West. Besides, its victory over Russia in 1907 proved its military capabilities.
- iii. Vietnamese students established a branch of the Restoration Society in Tokyo but after 1908, the Japanese Ministry of Interior clamped down on them. Many, including Phan Boi Chau, were deported and forced to seek exile in China and Thailand.

How did the development in Japan inspire Vietnamese nationalists? (answer above)

19. How did China inspire Vietnamese nationalists?

- i. In 1911, the long established monarchy in China was overthrown by a popular movement under Sun Yat-Sen, and a republic was set up.
- ii. Inspired by these developments, Vietnamese students organized the Association for the Restoration of Vietnam (Viet-Nam Quan Phuc Hoi). Now the nature of the anti-French independence movement changed. The objective was no longer to set up a constitutional monarchy but a democratic republic.

‘Early Vietnamese nationalists had a close relationship with Japan and China’.

Support your answer with 3 examples. Write two answers above)

20. Why were the provinces of Nghe An and Ha Tinh called the ‘electrical fuses’ of Vietnam ?

Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces were among the poorest, had an old radical tradition, and have been called the ‘electrical fuses’ of Vietnam – because when the (economic) system was under pressure they were the first to blow. They were the first to be affected by the Great Depression of the 1930s.

21. What were the challenges faced by the new republic in Vietnam?

- i. The new republic faced a number of challenges. The French tried to regain control by using the emperor, Bao Dai, as their puppet. Faced with the French offensive, the Vietminh was forced to retreat to the hills.
- ii. After eight years of fighting, the French were defeated in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu. In the peace negotiations in Geneva that followed the French defeat, the Vietnamese were persuaded to accept the division of the country. North and south Vietnam were formed. Ho Chi Minh and the communists took power in the north while Bao Dai’s capitalist regime was put in power in the south.

22. What were the consequences of the partition of Vietnam in to two countries?

- i. The division turned Vietnam into a battlefield bringing death and destruction to its people as well as the environment.
- ii. The Bao Dai regime was overthrown by a coup led by Ngo Dinh Diem. Diem built a repressive and authoritarian government.
- iii. Anyone who opposed him was called a communist and was jailed and killed.
- iv. Diem retained **Ordinance 10**, a French law that permitted Christianity but outlawed Buddhism.

- v. His dictatorial rule came to be opposed by a broad opposition united under the banner of the National Liberation Front (NLF).

23. Why did the U.S.A interfere in the Vietnam War?

- i. North Vietnam, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh , followed a socialist Government. South Vietnam under the leadership of Bao Dai followed a capitalist Government formed with the help of U.S.A..
- ii. When North Vietnam attacked South Vietnam for unification under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh and NLF , USA interfered to give support to South Vietnam.
- iii. USA did not want South Vietnam to become socialist and the expansion of socialism.

24. How did the entry of USA mark a new phase in the Vietnam War?

- i. US entry into the war marked a new phase that proved costly to the Vietnamese as well as to the Americans.
- ii. From 1965 to 1972, over 3,403,100 US services personnel served in Vietnam (7,484 were women).
- iii. Even though the US had advanced technology and good medical supplies, casualties were high. About 47,244 died in battle and 303,704 were wounded.
- iv. Thousands of US troops arrived equipped with heavy weapons and tanks and backed by the most powerful bombers of the time – B52s. The wide spread attacks and use of chemical weapons – **Napalm**, Agent Orange, and phosphorous bombs – destroyed many villages and decimated jungles. Civilians died in large numbers.

25. What was the effect, of U.S involvement in the Vietnam War, in the United States?

The effect of the war was felt within the US as well. Many were critical of the government for getting involved in a war that they saw as indefensible. When the youth were drafted for the war, the anger spread. Compulsory service in the armed forces, however, could be ignored for university graduates. This meant that many of those sent to fight did not belong to the privileged elite but were minorities and children of working-class families.

26. How did the nationalists draw women in to the struggle in Vietnam?

- i. As the nationalist movement grew, the status of women came to be questioned and a new image of womanhood emerged. Writers and political thinkers began **idealizing women** who rebelled against social norms.
- ii. In the 1930s, a famous novel by Nhat Linh caused a scandal because it showed a woman leaving a forced marriage and marrying someone of her choice, someone who was involved in nationalist politics. This rebellion against social conventions marked the arrival of the **new woman** in Vietnamese society.
- iii. **Rebel women** of the past were similarly celebrated. In 1913, the nationalist Phan Boi Chau wrote a play based on the lives of the Trung sisters who had fought against Chinese domination in 39-43 **CE**. (Common Era) In this play, he depicted these sisters as patriots fighting to save the Vietnamese nation from the Chinese.
- iv. Nationalists popularized image of **another rebel leader Trieu Au**, who lived in third century CE. to inspire people to action.
- v. In the 1960s, **photographs in magazines** and journals showed women as brave fighters. There were pictures of women militia shooting down planes. They were portrayed as young, brave and dedicated.
- vi. **Stories were written** to show how happy they felt when they joined the army and could carry a rifle. Some stories spoke of their incredible bravery in single-handedly killing the enemy – Nguyen Thi Xuan, for instance, was reputed to have shot down a jet with just twenty bullets.