USE OF THESES

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IDEOLOGY AND HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION IN VIETNAM:
A STUDY OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by

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This study is the result of original research conducted by the author at the Australian National University.
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The problem of ideology in historical studies is central to this work. In addressing this problem, I have concerned myself with the task of analysing the nature of ideology through the case study of Vietnam, in which I examine the teaching material used in history curricula in three periods: French colonial (1885-1954), the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1945-1975) and the Republic of Vietnam (1955-1975). The theoretical framework employed for this empirical analysis is based on the thesis that the dominant ideology in a society -- in its process of diffusion and popularisation (defined here as 'hegemony') -- will necessarily pervade that society's interpretation of history, particularly the kind taught in schools.

I have demonstrated that within each period under investigation, there indeed emerged a dominant ideology which decisively influenced the historical consciousness of each: colonialism in the French system, foreignism in the RVN and autonomism in the DRV systems. This ideological identification was reached through a procedure based on the examination of the structural relationship between the ruling ideas, practices and social formation within each of these periods. In its study of history, each period selected, included and excluded both sources and aspects of history for emphasis and neglect. According to its own dominant ideology, each defined or redefined the concepts of tradition and nationalism, and projected a favourable image of itself in the future. In this procedure, it also attempted to incorporate opposing views -- which represented an oppositional ideology -- in order to neutralise their effects. I have also found that the immediate origins of the foreignist and autonomist ideologies and their related historiographic campaigns in Vietnam could be traced to the earlier colonialist ideology and historiography. This led me to identify the relationship between 'hegemony', 'para-hegemony' and 'counter-hegemony', and also the particular characteristics of each.

On the basis of this empirical study of Vietnam, I launched a theoretical analysis of the working of ideology. In the end, I was able to argue for a materialist conception of ideology which both
defines ideology in terms of a growing structure and rejects the conception which confines it to the realm of abstract ideas. I also arrived at a theoretical definition of 'dominant group' within this emergent understanding of ideology. All of this stems from my identification of ideology as 'contextual entity' and 'dialectical struggle' -- an identification which is at once intimately connected with the analysis of human interest in its process of acculturation. In an attempt to distinguish different kinds of consciousness, I arrived at the idea that the sociology of consciousness is a more appropriate form of study than what is commonly known as the sociology of knowledge. This finally led to my putting forward some theoretical considerations for the study of education: I attempted in this way to show the complexity of the educational environment and the realities as well as the potentials of education in its dual role as both apparatus and theatre of hegemonic struggle.
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<td>BGDCD</td>
<td>Ban Giáo Dục Cống Đồng</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEFEO</td>
<td>Bulletin de L'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bộ Đại Học</td>
<td>Bộ Đại Học và Trung Học Chuyên Nghiệp</td>
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<td>Chương Trình Ba Lớp</td>
<td>Chương Trình Ba Lớp Bảo Sóc Học Yêu Lực Bàn Xã</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRV</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Vietnam</td>
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<td>DVSK</td>
<td>Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư</td>
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<td>EFEO</td>
<td>L'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDCD</td>
<td>Giáo Dục Cống Đồng</td>
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<tr>
<td>HVĐN</td>
<td>Hùng Vương Đảng Nước</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICP</td>
<td>Indochinese Communist Party</td>
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<td>MSU</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
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<td>NCLS</td>
<td>Nghiên Cứu Lịch Sử</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIA</td>
<td>National Institute of Administration</td>
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<td>NLF</td>
<td>National Liberation Front</td>
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<td>OU</td>
<td>Ohio University</td>
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<tr>
<td>RVN</td>
<td>Republic of Vietnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDV</td>
<td>Sư Địa Văn</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIU</td>
<td>Southern Illinois University</td>
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<tr>
<td>STLS</td>
<td>Sở Thào Lịch Sử Việt Nam (by Minh Tranh)</td>
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<td>VKHGD</td>
<td>Viện Khoa Học Giáo Dục</td>
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<tr>
<td>VNSL</td>
<td>Việt Nam Sư Lược (by Trần Trọng Kim)</td>
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<td>VSD</td>
<td>Văn Sư Địa</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSTG</td>
<td>Khảo Đình Việt Sư Thông Giám Cường Mức</td>
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<td>UBKHXXH</td>
<td>Ủy Ban Khoa Học Xã Hội</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
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HISTORY : A SCIENCE OR A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT?

For quite a long time there has been a dispute within the area of what is called the philosophy of history over the nature of the subject of history and the approach which should be taken toward it. Is it a science or an art? Can it ever be independent of individual beliefs and social circumstances? Can history be approached in the same manner, for example, as that of a scientist approaching the phenomena of the natural world?

Modern methods of historical investigation can be said to have begun in the late eighteenth century, with J.C. von Schloezer and Johann von Mueller, whose aim was to endow the study of history with the status of a science. They set out to "eliminate the haphazard and the slipshod from historical learning, to destroy inaccuracy and error, to provide history with a firm bedrock of proven and verifiable facts" (in Thomson, 1969: 38). This movement, intensified by the pervasive positivism of the nineteenth century, set a scientific standard of historical scholarship which was taken up by later historians such as Leopold von Ranke in Germany, Acton in England, Fustel de Coulanges and Hippolyte Taine in France.

In the 1830s, in protest against what he saw as moralizing in history, Ranke maintained that the task of the historian was "simply to show how it was" (wie es eigentlich gewesen). The concept of scientific history has continued to hold sway since then. Between 1902 and 1911, under the direction of Acton, the Cambridge Modern History was published in a dozen volumes. Its aim was to "record... the fullness of knowledge in the field of modern history which the nineteenth century has bequeathed to its successor" (Ward, et al. 1903: V). In this spirit, the more than two hundred scholars participating in this composite work of history endeavoured to present, as they claimed, nothing but facts, and in such a way that "the reader has before him a series of presentations of the most important events and ideas", and so that "He may follow any line of investigation of his own, and may supply links of connexion at his will" (op.cit.: 5). 'Scientific' historiography of this kind, based
on the presentation of 'facts' and the avoidance of biased explanations thereof, originated in the belief which the editors of the *Cambridge Modern History* expressed in the following terms:

Each subject or period has a natural coherence of its own ... It is better to allow the subject matter to supply its own unifying principle than to create one which is inadequate or of mere temporary value.

(Ward et al., 1903: 5-6)

'History as a corpus of ascertained facts' became the principle and the goal of the 'scientific' historian. In *History as a Science* Taylor (1933), following in the path of Ranke, protested vehemently against moralizing and politicizing in history. Taylor described the historian as a person tortured by the conflict between two different personalities -- one, that of a seeker after knowledge, and the other, that of a moralist. The historian is "a man whose house is divided against itself" (Taylor, 1933: 7). There are thus two kinds of history, dependent on two antithetical viewpoints: that of science and that which is oriented toward conduct or sentiment. The former satisfies "the requirements of the human mind" and "has a permanent value", while the latter merely meets "the requirements of the human heart" and has no value (Taylor, 1933: 36-37). How, then is a proper scientific history to be achieved? Taylor's answer was as follows:

The principle of selection to be used in a science of history ... must be derived, like the principle of selection, in any other science, from the facts themselves, not from any outside source.

(Taylor, 1933: 27)

and:

An investigator who wishes to discover truth should make his mind, as far as possible, like the *tabula rasa* of the old psychologists, and be prepared to register first impressions faithfully and on a clear surface.

(op.cit.: 28)

There is no doubt that the school of scientific history bequeathed methods and standards of great intrinsic value to modern historians. By suggesting and refining many admirable techniques for reducing the incidence of traditional abuses and errors such as forgeries and invalid dating, exponents of scientific history made a great contribution to the assertion of the autonomy of historical
scholarship. But how much of real value is there in the claims of so-called scientific history? Is it true that a historical fact contains a "natural coherence of its own", and therefore the proper concern of the historian is "simply to show how it really was"? Is it really even possible "to avoid all invention and imagination ... and to stick to facts" as Ranke (in Gooch, 1913: 78) wished? Is it not rigid, arbitrary and unrealistic to categorize the psychological makeup of the historian, as Taylor suggests, in terms of a dichotomy of heart and mind, of a conflict between the desire to advance morality and the urge to promote knowledge?

I shall introduce this study in the simplest possible way, with the assertion that bias is inevitable in the writing of history. This will serve my purpose well enough until I further clarify this idea in Chapter I. It is mere superstition to believe that beyond all the 'biased' histories lies the possibility of producing, through the use of 'scientific' methods, a completely objective and impartial account of past events. Even Thiers, in his actual writing of history, for example his French Revolution, as was shown by Gooch (1913: 199-201), was never able faithfully to follow his own recommendation, which was that "we must extinguish all passion in our souls" if we are "to judge men [in history] fairly".

In the final analysis, the most serious weakness of the conventional conception of scientific history lies in its inadequate understanding of the historian as a human being: he or she is looked upon as being constantly in a state of full consciousness of intent when undertaking the writing of history. Taylor's picture of the hyper-aware historian, locked in a crisis of choice between the heart's passion and the mind's reason creates the impression that any 'moralistic' distortion of history can be the result only of a conscious and deliberate act of will on the part of the historian -- the election of the heart to rule the mind. It is as though in his view there appear before the historian two alternative roads -- one of them paved with cold, impartial detachment, leading towards 'scientific' history; the other, decorated with "invention and imagination", to "educational [i.e. moralizing] history" (Taylor, 1933: 37), and that to follow one path or the other was for the historian a matter of choice.

We shall not, in my view, come to any useful conclusion in
this matter unless we make a distinction between conscious distortion
and unconscious bias in histories. While the former indicates a
deliberate twisting of facts, and is at least theoretically avoidable,
the latter implies the presentation of 'facts' determined in terms of
specific modes of conceptualisation, and thus inevitable. These built-
in biases are created by the human social environment and upbringing,
including, most importantly, the very conceptual structure of a person's
native language. It is my contention that all genuine historiography
falls into the latter category, and it is clear that history is not a
'science' in terms of the positivist concept of the natural sciences,
but is clearly a 'social construct'.

The assertion that history is a social construct is of course
not merely a reflection of a sociological approach to the question and
therefore valueless from the historian's point of view. At the turn
of the century, the positivist doctrine of the primacy and autonomy of
'facts' in history began to meet challenges even within the historians'
own circle. Philosophers of history such as Dilthey, Croce, Becker and
Collingwood represented an anti-positivist school of historiography.
In their view, historiography necessarily entails value judgments :
"... by eliminating evaluation from historiography, one eliminates
historiography itself" (Croce, in Schaff, 1976: 86). Agreeing with
Croce (in Gramsci, 1975: 86) that "history is always, and can only be,
'contemporary' history", the historian Edward Carr (1964: 11) vehemently
rejected the positivist distinction between 'facts' and their inter-
pretation:

It used to be said that facts speak for themselves. This
is, of course, untrue. The facts speak only when the
historian calls on them: it is he who decides to which
facts to give the floor, and in what order or context.
It was, I think, one of Pirandello's characters who said
that a fact is like a sack -- it won't stand up till
you've put something in it ... It is the historian who
has decided for his own reasons that Caesar's crossing of
that petty stream, the Rubicon, is a fact of history,
whereas the crossing of the Rubicon by millions of other
people before or since interests nobody at all.

But does this necessarily mean that "All history is the
history of thought" as Collingwood (1946: 215) claimed? Does it
mean that there can never be an objective history, and that the
historian, in re-enacting the past, is the one who creates history? The
insight provided by the Crocean tradition is suddenly put at risk
by the dangers which accompanied it:
Unlike the natural scientist, the historian is not concerned with events as such at all. He is only concerned with those events which are the outward expression of thoughts, and is only concerned with these in so far as they express thoughts. At bottom, he is concerned with thoughts alone; with their outward expression in events he is concerned only by the way, in so far as these reveal to him the thoughts of which he is in search.

(Collingwood, 1946: 217)

To approach the problem from the other extreme, however, is both futile and meaningless. It is clear by now that to equate history with, or to distinguish it from science is ultimately nothing but a pseudo-problem. The fact which must be borne in mind is that there is a dialectical relationship between history as a real, objective process and history as a human cognitive endeavour. The two aspects of the subject interact with each other and neither can be considered in isolation. Since humans together make history, creating social realities which are in turn subject to human interpretation, it is human interpretation which also contributes to the making of social reality. How, then, does what is learnt through historical study come to be acknowledged as history? We have talked about history as a 'social construct', but this term, though appropriate in some circumstances, involves some difficult complications. At a superficial level, it may suggest a tendency toward 'sociologism', or treating human consciousness exclusively as a social product. At a deeper level, it is in fact a concept in the phenomenologist tradition of Schutz, Berger and Luckmann, and has a specific meaning which -- it will be made clear in Chapter I -- is not suitable as an analytical tool for the purpose of our research.

My proposition at this point is that we have to look at the study of history as a form of ideology. The question immediately arises: what exactly is ideology? This is a legitimate question, but since it is also a major theoretical problem within this whole investigation, the clarification of the concept requires a separate treatment, which is given in Chapter I. In the meantime, a general outline of the meaning of my proposition will have to suffice. In asserting that historical study is ideological, I support my view with the following general observations:

a) It is not possible to impose a sharp dichotomy between subjective thinking and objective facts.
b) Though generally written by individuals, and therefore subjective in its construction, history is essentially socially constructed in the sense that individuals do not exist outside their social context.

c) As both a subjective and a social construct, historical study is capable of becoming objectivated, and hence acceptable as reality.

Clearly, then, what we face is not the deliberate distortion of the 'truth' by an individual, but rather a situation where each historian can genuinely claim to be representing the 'truth' in his or her work, and in so doing can always be assured of at least some degree of support. This is a situation which always gives rise to heated debate about the truth or the 'scientific' value of the historical events experienced and/or recounted by people inhabiting different social milieux. The question at issue now is: how is it possible that the subjective meanings embedded in histories can emerge as objective, factual description?

APPROACH OF THIS STUDY

The question which I have just raised is, of course, very broad in its scope, extending over a wide spectrum of intellectual activity. At one extreme it touches on a practical problem of historical methodology: in what way should history be written? What techniques should be employed, in order to convince an audience about the truth of a particular perception of the past? At the other extreme we are confronted with a deep theoretical problem whose resolution requires a thoroughgoing philosophical discussion: what is the nature of the human perception of reality, in this case the reality of the past? And what is the ultimate purpose of historical reasoning?

It is not intended that this research project should cover either of these extremes of the philosophical spectrum. I am not particularly concerned with the methodology of history or with the quest for 'historical truth'. Neither do I see it in terms of an exclusively philosophical problem to which an answer may be sought
in purely abstract terms. The task of this study is to seek to perceive how particular social conditions may lead to a particular understanding of the past and to the acceptance of a certain view thereof, and in return, how a particular historical understanding can influence the shaping of a social formation. My purpose is to seek a proper understanding of the working of ideology through the study of historical writing and through an empirical investigation of a particular society. The task thus includes both theoretical and empirical considerations. Its focus will be on the relationship between the idea (specifically, the idea in historical perception) and the social system, and in particular, on the ways in which the idea and the social system change and interact with each other over time.

A project such as this requires a dual approach, since its perspectives are both historical and sociological. In attempting to trace the changes in historical interpretation associated with change in socio-political orientations, it is necessary to look far back into history in search of evidence of social change. This study can be called historical for the reason that the material on which it is largely based consists of historical documents.

Historical research of this kind is of course not an end in itself. My aim in tracing the changes in historical interpretation and in socio-political systems is to demonstrate that they are both interrelated and the product of social forces. The problems arising in the pursuit of this aim have to be delineated through the use of sociological conceptualisation:

a) **Description** of coherent ideological systems which arise in specific socio-historical environments.

b) Connection of such systems with particular social strata or categories.

c) Explanation of the social conditions in which such social groups adopt and develop specific ideological systems; and

d) Analysis of the process by which these ideologies are diffused among the public by the medium of historical accounts.
It is plain that this study, to some extent, cuts across the standard traditional boundaries between disciplines. On one hand, it will be empirical, involving the systematic study of historical documents. On the other, it has an important theoretical component. The latter involves a conceptual and analytical examination of actual historical situations and problems in order to explain a) how historical presentation reflects a particular ideology, and b) the nature of ideology itself, taking into account the particular ways in which histories can be seen to incorporate and transmit ideology.

With regard to the empirical aspect of the study, I propose to choose a period in comparatively recent Vietnamese history as the subject of empirical investigation. There are two main reasons for this choice.

First, and most importantly, it is the markedly eventful nature of Vietnamese history which makes the choice of its specific context both attractive and appropriate. If socio-political change itself is the key factor in this study, then modern Vietnamese society offers ideal opportunities for us to observe and analyse changes of this kind. For a period of 90 years (1885 to 1975) Vietnamese society underwent a series of quite fundamental upheavals highly relevant to this discussion. Emerging from a predominantly feudal/Confucianist era which had lasted for many centuries, Vietnam fell victim to the great wave of 19th-century European imperialist expansion, and was subjected to a long, alienating period of French colonial administration. The collapse of the French Empire in the Far East marked the end of this period, but Vietnam now found herself, through the machinations of cold-war politics, divided (de facto, if not de jure) into two parts, with an American-dominated, anti-communist government in the South (the Republic of Vietnam - RVN) set up in opposition to the nationalist, pro-communist and anti-American (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam - DRV) one in the North. The latter two periods, with three distinct political systems in existence at different times and places, present an ideal case study for the critical examination of hypothetical changes in historical perception.

Secondly, for many decades, but particularly during the war which ended in 1975, Vietnam has provided frequent and extreme examples
of political strife, human suffering, cruelty, heroism and violent death. Not surprisingly, research on Vietnam carried out in other countries has tended to focus on these topics. The society and culture of Vietnam has received little attention at the level of serious academic inquiry, especially in Australia. Until recently, discussion on Vietnam has been confined to journalists, politicians, political scientists and some historians. A sociological study of Vietnam is not only justified but also long overdue.

It is true that a number of minor attempts have been made to analyse Vietnamese historiography. All the works which I have encountered, however, have been produced by historians, approaching the subject from an historian's point of view (Honey, 1961; Chesneaux, 1961; Malleret, 1961; Osborne, 1970; Legge, 1976; Whitmore, 1976; Marr, 1979; Wolters, 1979; Taylor, 1980).

These works, except for some which are concerned mainly with tracing the evolution of the historiography of Vietnam (e.g. Honey, 1961; Malleret, 1961), attempt to deal with the subject in terms of its connection with social systems. But limited as they are by the historical approach, which lacks theoretical perspective as well as concern for directional analysis, they fail to provide satisfactory answers to the problem of finding how and why social structure and historical perception are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. On one hand we seem to be confronted with a view that does little more than acknowledge the fact of this dialectical interplay (e.g. Osborne, 1970; Taylor, 1980). On the other, although we are offered a much broader treatment of the subject, we are given no clear indication of the specific connections between ideology and historiography in the mass of facts marshalled in the discussion (e.g. Marr, 1979).

Because most historians work under, but seldom attempt to analyse conceptually, the assumption that there is a close relationship between the historically-bound mentality and historical reasoning, they are often caught in an ironic predicament where the contradiction in their own views, which reflects that which exists between their own time and that of their predecessors, passes undetected. This is evident in the cases where modern students of Vietnamese history in the West unconsciously assume 'colonially-biased' postures while simultaneously aiming criticism at what they see as colonial bias. 3
For the reasons which I shall discuss in Chapter I, school history in Vietnam will be the focus of my empirical research. Thus, a few words need to be said about the subject of Vietnamese education. This topic seems to have attracted more academic interest in the West than has the historiography of Vietnam. However, the predominant trend in this field has been to look at Vietnamese education from within, rather than from outside the system. As a result, most studies are non-theoretical, descriptive and policy-oriented. This is because the field of Vietnamese education has been almost completely the preserve of educators, many of whom were Vietnamese who did their research in the United States with the prospect of becoming educational administrators themselves on their return to Vietnam (see, e.g. Dương Thiệu Tông, 1968; Võ Kim Sơn, 1974).

PLAN OF THE STUDY

This work consists of nine chapters which can be roughly divided into three groups. In the first two chapters I shall outline the theoretical framework and the methodology of the research project. Chapter I introduces the theoretical problem and attempts to clarify some of the basic concepts used in this work, such as ideology and hegemony. It also contains an explanation of the relevance of education as an issue in this context. Furthermore I have proposed hypotheses regarding the three questions of ideology, hegemony and school history. My aim in Chapter II is to explain methods and sources and to sketch out the lines along which the empirical study of Vietnam is to be carried out. Chapter II will also provide definitions of such basic terms as 'the history of Vietnam', the 'Hung Kings period' etc., and will present the hypotheses formulated with reference to the particular case study of Vietnam.

The second major section -- of four chapters -- is devoted to an analytical presentation of the empirical data on Vietnam. Chapter III gives an introduction to the three school systems, viewed in the socio-political context of Vietnam in the period 1885-1975, while Chapters IV, V and VI focus on the interpretation of Vietnamese history by scholars under each of the three regimes.

Chapter VII concludes the study of Vietnam by bringing the
three systems together for comparison, analysing the operation of
hegemony through the writing of histories for use in schools and
showing how ideology is developed and transformed as a result of
this hegemonic process.

In the last two chapters I return to the theoretical issue
at the heart of the whole work, and examine it in the light of the
results of my empirical study. Chapter VIII involves a discussion
of the nature of ideology and leads up to my suggestion for a study
oriented toward the sociology of consciousness. At the same time I
point out the basic weaknesses in what is commonly known as the
sociology of knowledge. The purpose of my final chapter is to
address the question of education and to discuss it in the light of
the implications arising from the new theoretical arguments which I
have proposed in the preceding chapter.

Notes to the Introduction

1. In the view of Croce and Collingwood, it is only through
the historian that a fact is selected for interpretation,
thus becoming a 'historical fact'. This view leads to the
assertion that "history is the historian's experience. It
is 'made' by nobody save the historian: to write history
is the only way of making it" (Oakeshott, 1933: 99).

2. A short critique of this tradition will be attempted in
Chapter VIII.

3. This should become clearer to the reader in Chapter IV,
in which I examine the influence of the colonialist
ideology on the interpretation of Vietnamese history
under the French.
CHAPTER I

IDEOLOGY AND HEGEMONY: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
AND THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM

The nature of human perception of the world has long been at
the centre of philosophical debate, even before the emergence of
social theories. Epistemologists in the idealist tradition such
as Kant, in asserting the primacy of mind over matter, contended
that our knowledge and experience of the world are organised by
mental structures and categories. In a similar way, those of the
empiricist tradition such as Locke, in stressing the importance of
human senses in the perception of the world, were inclined to equate
consciousness with the sum of the sense-data of the world. Apparent­
ly, the two traditions, despite their differences, focussed attention
on the human ingathering of knowledge about the physical world and
thus treated human consciousness as if it were unrelated to the socio­
historical context. This epistemological position was contrasted
with the historicist idea put forward by philosophers such as Dilthey
who, as I mentioned in the Introduction, argued that (historical)
consciousness, being inseparable from its social context, changes
from one historical situation to another.

The relationship between human consciousness and the social
context from which it arises had thus been a subject of serious study
long before Max Scheler in 1925 proclaimed his 'sociology of know­
ledge' (Wissenssosziologie). Indeed, it can be said that this re­
lationship had attracted close attention from the very beginnings of
the discipline of sociology as we know it. August Comte's "Law of
Three Stages", which had sought to trace 'human progress' through
successive theoretical levels from the Theological to the Metaphysical
and then to the Scientific, recognised a close correlation between
types of knowledge and forms of social structure. Karl Marx also
propounded his celebrated thesis that the relations of production
constitute the real foundation for the superstructure of ideas.
Emile Durkheim, in his writing on education, repeatedly emphasised
its role as a 'mirror' of society; in his study of primitive forms
of knowledge he came to the definite conclusion that the origins of
categories of thought should be sought in group structures and group
relations, and that these categories vary according to changes in the
social organisation. Mention should also be made of Max Weber,
whose major effort was devoted to demonstrating the 'elective' affin­
ity between systems of ideas and social structures, and of Mannheim,
who tried to show the social determination of thought in the social
sciences. All of these may be considered as early contributions to
what has become known as the 'sociology of knowledge', despite the
differences in detail among the various thinkers in their theories
about the existential basis of consciousness.

In this chapter I shall attempt to clarify what I see as the
related concepts of consciousness, ideology and hegemony. I shall
argue that such a clarification is necessary to a sociological study
of consciousness and of the relationship between historical inter­
pretation and social systems.

IDEOLOGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS

The term 'ideology' was coined in 1796 by the French philoso­
pher Destutt de Tracy to designate his proposed 'science of ideas'.
Intended to be a branch of science in the empiricist tradition pas­
sed down from Locke and Condillac, ideology in its original sense
took the form of a reaction against metaphysics. Its basic propo­
sition was that all ideas ultimately arise from sensations, i.e.
from human experience of the world. In this sense, ideology -- so
it was claimed by de Tracy -- was "a part of zoology" because "we
have only an incomplete knowledge of an animal if we do not know his
intellectual faculties" (in Williams, 1977: 56).

Though the term 'ideology' then started life innocently enough
as merely denoting the core of a particular area of study, it never­
theless soon acquired a pejorative sense, one which has persisted and
intensified in the social sciences ever since. One of the first to
denounce the 'science' of ideology was Napoleon Bonaparte himself,
who, for political reasons, accused the 'ideologues' of being 'danger­
ous dreamers' and -- ironically -- branded ideology as a kind of
'metaphysical reverie'. Thus defined as abstract, impractical, even
fanatical, ideology entered the field of social science with a tarnished image. Marx and Engels often wrote about ideology as if it were synonymous with 'illusion', 'opiate' or 'false consciousness'. Stark (1958: 91), echoing Theodor Geiger, called it "a dirty river, muddied and polluted by the impurities that have flooded into it". Characterised as 'dualistic', 'alienative', 'doctrinaire', 'totalistic' and 'futuristic' by Shils (1958), ideology was thus stigmatized as being somehow warped, psychologically deformed and contaminated. Whatever the nature of the label attached to it, it is clear that ideology has been seen as distinct from 'truth', 'reality' or 'science'. "The essential criteria of an ideology", wrote Parsons (1959: 25), lie in its "deviations from [social] scientific objectivity".

At this point we can see an interesting similarity in the nature of the problems facing both historiography and ideology. Though apparently arising from different situations, both have been discussed and examined largely from the same axiological point of view: it is their validity rather than their functioning as systems which is in question. I have already shown my objection to the tendency which treats the study of history as being value-free, or that which tries to place it on the same level as an exact natural science. But in identifying historical study with ideology, I have also sought to question the idea that there is a sharp distinction to be drawn between objective historical fact and subjective thinking. My purpose in doing so was to prepare the ground for a parallel argument about ideology: the question is not one of making judgments about it or of comparing it with 'scientific' thinking, but rather to see how it is possible that subjective ideas might become objectivated and accepted as representing reality.

Approaching the problem from this direction means that we have to choose a neutral definition of ideology. For our immediate purpose, ideology may be provisionally defined as a systematic body of thoughts, beliefs and attitudes held by the members of a particular communal or social group. While the very complicated question of the nature of ideology can only be properly dealt with within the context of, and as a development of our empirical study, this provisional definition nevertheless provides useful theoretical guide-lines. Seen in this way, the concept of ideology has the following
specific characteristics.

First, it refers to human consciousness as something real and living. Ideology in this sense is not to be seen as an imposed distortion of social reality, but as a particular view of it, and is itself a part of this reality. The real existence of ideas is a characteristic of ideology. Adherence to an ideology thus means holding beliefs, and necessarily involves a degree of commitment: "Ideologies are not disguised descriptions of the world, but rather real descriptions of the world from a specific viewpoint" (Harris, 1960: 22). The intimate relationship between consciousness and reality suggested in this concept of ideology was clearly pointed out by Marx and Engels (1970: 47):

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour ... Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process.

In this sense, the term 'ideology' is preferable to 'propaganda', which suggests a certain lack of substance in thought.

Second, the concept of ideology as defined here implies an active role for thought in influencing human behaviour. Just as language is more than a mere means of expressing thoughts, but itself plays a part in the formulation of thoughts, ideology is more than a mere description of the world: it also serves to direct human actions with regard to the outside world. In recognising this dialectic between ideology and society, this conception of ideology goes well beyond the limits of 'idea' or 'world view' which it is commonly held to represent, and which give the impression of something static and abstract. It is at this point that we perceive its relevance to the Marxist discussion on the role of thought. Though Marx and Engels (1970: 47) can be accused of ambiguity in their use of terms such as 'ideological reflexes' and 'echoes', they really did not relegate thought to the status of a mere epiphenomenon of the socio-economic structure, as they have been commonly criticized for doing. When they asserted that "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas" and "the class
which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force*" (1970: 64), they implicitly attributed an active role to ideology: it functions as a stabiliser of the socio-political system. This becomes clear if we consider the following passage by Engels (in Williams, 1977, 79-80):

The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure -- political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogma -- also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*.

Concern for the practical and social functions of ideology is basically consonant with my earlier assertion that ideology must be analysed rather than judged. The question now is to see how ideologies serve as "maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of collective conscience" (Geertz, 1964: 64).

The realisation that ideology is both a 'description of reality' and a 'potent force for the creation of reality' leads to the further recognition that the emergence of ideology is essentially related to the existence of social groups. In this sense, ideology is group consciousness. It is through group membership and relationships with others that individuals absorb ideologies, which regulate their social experience and so provide the material for the creation of social reality. The identification of ideology with group admits the possibility that there is a complex relationship between rival systems of thought.

It has been my purpose in my empirical research to obtain material for an understanding of the working of ideology, which is the crux of the theoretical problem. However, before I can proceed to such an investigation, there are some other aspects of ideology which require clarification. I shall now move on to the concept of hegemony, which in my opinion is closely related to that of ideology.
IDEOLOGY AND HEGEMONY

Traditionally, hegemony has meant the exercise of cultural, political and economic dominion by one nation over another. But Marxism has extended this meaning to cover the relations between groups, and particularly between social classes. In the words of Marx and Engels (1970: 65-6):

...each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones. The class making a revolution appears from the very start ... not as a class but as the representative of the whole of society; it appears as the whole mass of society confronting the one ruling class. It can do this because, to start with, its interest really is more connected with the common interest of all other non-ruling classes, because under the pressure of hitherto existing conditions its interest has not yet been able to develop as the particular interest of a particular class ... Every new class, therefore, achieves its hegemony only on a broader basis than that of the class ruling previously, whereas the opposition of the non-ruling class against the new ruling class later develops all the more sharply and profoundly.

Hegemony, in this early Marxist sense, refers vaguely to the ruling position of a certain class over others. It was not until later that this meaning was developed further into a potent concept in the Marxist study of culture and consciousness. In the decade before the October Revolution it was one of the most popular slogans of the Russian Social-Democratic movement, used by Plekhanov, Axelrod, Lenin and others, when it acquired the sense of an alliance between exploited classes under the leadership of the proletariat in the struggle against capitalism. By 1922, however, at the Fourth congress of the Third International, the term had come to signify the dominance of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat (Anderson, 1977: 15-8).

Both of these meanings apparently penetrated into the thinking of the Italian Marxist, Gramsci, and it was during his term of imprisonment under the Fascist regime, between 1927 and 1935, that he wrote his 'prison notes' in which the term took on new significance. It was here that 'hegemony' became a concept, a 'theoretical unit', as
Anderson (1977: 15) remarked. Without going into the details of the controversy over the interpretation of the Gramscian concept of hegemony, one can say that it is generally understood to mean "the political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularisation of the world view of the ruling class" (Bates, 1975: 352).

Within this conceptual framework of 'leadership through consent', ideology is not to be judged as either true or false, but has to be seen as a force which has a vital function in preserving the unity of the entire social bloc. It serves, in Gramsci's own words, "to cement and to unify" (Gramsci, 1971: 328). From another angle, ideology, now seen within the context of a hegemonic situation, can be further related to the cultural and political dominance of a particular group, i.e. in terms of the exercise of cultural influence by the ruling group and the acceptance of this domination as a normal situation by subordinate groups. In other words, ideology is not only the 'ideas' appropriate to a group, particularly the ruling group, but also those absorbed and accepted by others in subordinate positions. Hegemony refers to the dissemination of one particular view through the whole society in terms of lived experience, and thus attributes the status of 'common sense' to the ruling or dominant ideology. Hegemony, as Raymond Williams (1977: 110) puts it, is a lived system of meanings and values -- constitutive and constituting -- which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a 'culture', but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.

Although -- in much the same way as is indoctrination -- hegemony is concerned with questions of control, power and influence, and distinctions between social groups, it is vitally different from indoctrination in that it emphasises ideology as a lived experience rather than a set of alien ideas arbitrarily imposed. If ideology is a particular description of reality, then hegemony is the living process by which this perception of reality becomes part of human consciousness. In
the same way, if ideology is a body of thought which can influence human behaviour, hegemony is the process by which this body of thought becomes realised as behaviour. I have described ideology as always relating to community or social group; in this context, the question of hegemony arises where social groups are distinguishable from each other in terms of power and influence. This general definition, with 'hegemony' serving both as an analytical tool and as a focus of theoretical inquiry, helps us to avoid both the mechanistic-determinist and the crude conspiracy theories of human consciousness.

Hegemony is the process by which ideology enters the political arena. Since the question of ideology is closely related to issues of power and social control, it is useful for us to recognise that, though people participate in the making of social reality, the kind of reality which most of them have to face exists quite apart from them and can exercise control over them. It is in this sense that the idea of 'social construct' presented in the Introduction is conceptually weak, because it merely mentions the fact that reality is socially constructed; it does not explain why it should be so.

We are now in a position to ask a specific question: How is a dominant ideology, i.e. the ideology which supports the political and economic interests of the ruling group, disseminated through society and accepted by other groups under its control as 'common sense'? In other words, how does hegemony work? In this context, education is a highly relevant issue, which has to be dealt with before we can return to the problem of historiography.

HEGEMONY AND EDUCATION

If 'hegemony' in Gramsci's view refers particularly to the kind of control exercised over people, not through physical or legal coercion, but primarily through moral and intellectual persuasion, then the question of hegemony is clearly related to the matter of education. Indeed, Gramsci emphasized that "every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship (1971: 350). Of course, Gramsci's view of education was not restricted to schools, but referred to a wide network of cultural institutions (which he
called the 'civil society') including the family, the church, labour unions, political parties, the press etc., and also, "in the international and world-wide field, between complexes of national and continental civilisations" (ibid.). It is nevertheless apparent that schools are a vital part of the educational apparatus, and it is to this relatively narrow field (formal education) that I shall restrict this study.

An analysis which is based on the idea that school is an important transmitter of ideology is part of a theoretical movement which recognises the fact that educational institutions play an important part as agents of social selection and power transmission, i.e. as agents of social control. Following the decade of the 1960s in which functionalism reigned supreme, the field of educational research gradually changed its orientation, with an increase in the number of studies carried out from Weberian, Marxist and phenomenological standpoints. The emphasis on the problems of social conflict, power struggle and social change which developed in the field of education after the 1960s contributed much to our understanding of the ideological function of schools. Collins, for example, (1971: 1010) argues that the main activity of schools is "to teach particular status cultures", and that the transmission of technical knowledge is therefore not so important as the teaching of "vocabulary and inflection, styles of dress, aesthetic tastes, values and manners". Going further, Bowles (1976) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) showed that education in a capitalist, hierarchic system is vital to the reproduction of the social division of labour. In the same vein, Althusser (1971c) provided a theoretical analysis of the role of education as "the number-one ideological state apparatus" in advanced capitalist societies.

One of the chief contributions to the critique of the positivist view of structural functionalism, whose 'input-output' models had treated the process of schooling as a 'black box', was made by the adherents of the 'new' sociology of education, in particular Young (1971 a,b), Bernstein (1971), Keddie (1971) and Esland (1971). They took "what counts as education as problematic" (Young, 1971a: 3) and started with

... the assumption that those in positions of power will attempt to define what is to be taken as knowledge, how accessible to different groups any knowledge is, and what
are the accepted relationships between different knowledge areas and between those who have access to them as make them available.

(Young, 1971b: 32)

More recent works involving investigation of the relationship between power, social control and school knowledge are those by Sharp and Green (1975) and Apple (1979).

The important point which emerges from the foregoing is that a study of school curricula and curricular knowledge is inevitably bound up with a study of ideology and hegemony. For it is true that "the cultural choices involved in the selection of content of education have an organic relation to the social choices involved in the practical organisation" (Williams, 1961: 125). If "curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge" as Bernstein (1971: 47; my emphasis) insisted, then curricular analysis should provide a good deal of information relevant to our macrosociological inquiry into the structure of the relationship between ideology and other social institutions.

Having established this general perspective, we may now turn to a more specific discussion on ideology and the study of history.

IDEOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF HISTORY

In the Introduction I pointed out that social reality is necessarily subject to human interpretation. History as an aspect of social reality, and itself a product of human endeavour, is subject to the same process, and thus in history there is no separation between an objective process and subjective thinking. This implies a recognition that the study of history must involve evaluation, and therefore is both an expression and an effective carrier of ideology. The question is: why should this necessarily be so? The answer to this question requires an examination of the process of writing history, which, for the purposes of this analysis, can be divided roughly into three parts: choice of subject, selection of facts and explanation.
In choosing the subject matter on which he or she intends to write, the historian will look for something which accords with his or her interests. Of course, there can be a multitude of reasons for choosing any particular subject, but there is a strong likelihood that the problem faced by the historian is related to the events of the time in which he or she is living. This shows the relevance of the choice of historical subject matter to politics and ideology. For if biography and simple chronicles are excluded from the field of historiography, the history which is being written about must in one way or another touch on such vital issues as government, nation, economics, culture and politics. Study of the past from this point of view really involves an attempt to achieve a better understanding of the present and to justify (even unwittingly) the existing system. This is evident from the fact that the predominant area of historical interest usually changes in line with changes in the dominant ideology. If one looks at mediaeval England, or at western Christendom generally, where the Church dominated the socio-political scene, including education, one will find that the content of historical study at that time, such as it was, centred on the growth of the Christian church and the lives of its saints. Later, when the effects of the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation began to make themselves felt, the religious mediaeval view of the past gave way to a secular, national outlook with the revival of classical studies and the emergence of national literature.

This present-oriented characteristic is most conspicuous in the writing of school histories, where curricular policy is often a matter quite beyond the responsibility of the writer. The educational administrators of a particular political regime usually give clear instructions to teachers and writers about what historical movements or events are to be given emphasis; the result is an 'official' history which is closely tailored to fit the political views, and reflecting also the contradictions and weaknesses in those views, of the ruling group. The case of history written for Australian school children in New South Wales public schools until World War I provides a good example. As shown by Firth (1970), the subject of history in this early period was dominated by the history of the British Empire. Under strict supervision of the Department of Public Instruction and careful scrutiny of the Chief Inspector, each monthly issue of the official Commonwealth School Paper For Classes V and VI published
between 1904-1905 presented in its recommended readings an air of "certainty about the British Empire, British military might, pride of race, honour, duty, self-sacrifice, the Victoria Cross, God, General Gordon, hard work, the Flag, wattle, the poor savages, Shakespeare, noble deeds, adventure, exploration, heroes and, in the end, World War I" (p.128). And though Australian history began to receive more attention after 1912, the primary tradition which had the strongest emphasis was still and always British (pp. 145-7).

Having chosen a subject, the historian then has to deal with facts (which, in a broad sense, include events and information on events) and which are again a matter of interpretation. Those who talk about historical facts are really referring to certain ones which have been selected in preference to others. The problem for the historian is to decide which of a virtually limitless number of facts are significant and relevant to the subject at hand. The problem has been explained in vivid fashion by Carr (1964: 23):

The facts are really not at all like fish on the fishmonger's slab. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend, partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use -- these two factors being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants.

In selecting his or her facts, the historian thus defines what is or is not a 'fact'. The definition of what constitutes an historically significant and relevant fact depends on the frame of reference, which I call 'ideology'. A set of social values and beliefs, which are mainly determined by the environment in which the historian lives, will direct this process of definition. Here, again, the task of defining historical fact takes on an ideological significance. Since some facts have to be excluded, while others are included, and since 'facts' in history are often left in the form of written records, the process of selection applies to sources as well. This procedure is in fact to be found in any field of intellectual activity, not merely historical study, and is too familiar to need illustration. The fact that heated arguments arise in historians' circles even about apparently minor matters such as the date of an event indicates strongly the
importance of the selection of facts from the ideological point of view. For example, it was once a matter of contention and of definite ideological choice in Vietnam whether the country had regained its independence on March 10, 1945 (when the Japanese government of occupation formally declared it) or on August 19, 1945 (when the Việt Minh seized power following huge popular demonstrations in Hanoi).

The writing of textbooks for use in schools shows the same tendencies to an even more marked degree. Thomson (1969: 29) mentions that, in accounts of the War of the Spanish Succession, English historians give full details of the battles of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet, while the French tend to gloss over these and to give more attention to the battle of Denain, which is seldom even mentioned in English textbooks. In these cases, apparently, it is simple national pride which determines the choice of facts and their significance.

As in any other intellectual discipline, of course, the work of the historian does not end with the collection and selection of facts; it also involves an attempt at explanation. Facts can only 'speak for themselves' (as is believed by positivists, including positivist historians) when they have been placed into a coherent relationship with each other. Since explanation involves the identification of causes and effects, the historian, in presenting a collection of facts, will be concerned to see that the proper causal and chronological relationship between them is established. The historian deals not only with a sequence of facts, but also with a multiplicity of causes ranging from the immediate and obvious to the ancient, distant and obscure. One of the tasks of the historian is to examine the causes of events and to rank them according to their relative degrees of importance. As Carr (1964: 89-90) puts it:

The true historian, confronted with this list of causes [of the Russian revolution] of his own compiling, would feel a professional compulsion to reduce it to order, to establish some hierarchy of causes which would fix their relation to one another, perhaps to decide which cause, or which category of causes, should be regarded 'in the last resort' or 'in the final analysis' ... as the ultimate cause, the cause of all causes. This is his interpretation of his theme; the historian is known by the causes which he invokes.
Evaluation thus enters into every step of historical explanation. In a broad sense, this includes the passing of moral judgment on the events, policies, institutions and personalities of the past. Whether moral judgments are made explicitly or by implication, they appear to be inevitable in works of historical exegesis; they are very often bound up in the concepts and the language itself used in historiography. Very often, a writer's opinion about the causes of a particular historical event will indicate his or her attitude toward that event and the developments resulting therefrom after it has become in its turn cause as well as effect. An example of this can be seen in histories of the French Revolution, an event which has spilt an uncommon amount of both blood and ink. Insofar as the conservative, royalist Barruel saw the Revolution as "the result of the most profound criminality" (in Schaff, 1976: 6); he would have agreed with others who shared his background, such as Taine, Madelin and Bainville, that the Revolution itself was a source of great trouble in modern times. Conversely, if the socialist republicans Jaurès, Mathiez and Lefèbvre saw the Revolution as having been brought about as a result of the oppression of the lower classes, of the general economic development of France and of the growing influence of the bourgeoisie, one may deduce that their attitude toward the Revolution itself and subsequent developments was anything but hostile (see Thomson, 1969: 32; Schaff, 1964: 3-42).

Concepts such as 'freedom', 'democracy', 'progress', 'backwardness', 'savagery' and so on are commonly used in historical works, even though they are value-laden terms. Often without given any theoretical definition, they are generally used in historical works as a legitimate means of expressing moral judgments. The meaning of the word 'democracy', for example, as was noted by Harris (1968: 17-8), may "vary over an immense area, ranging from 'control of the State or society by a popular majority' to merely 'popular' or, in modern times, 'liberal' or 'what exists today in Britain or the United States or somewhere else'."

The recognition of this fact, of course, does not imply a denigration of historical study per se. My purpose is rather to show that evaluation -- in the form of moral judgments -- is inseparable from the writing of history. As far as education is concerned,
historical knowledge has been considered necessary for the moral instruction of the young, and it precisely on this level that historical study has frequently been justified.

We return here to the question of the relationship between the past, the present and the future, which lies at the centre of both historical research and historical teaching. I have expressed a conviction that the need which people feel to learn about the past stems from their deep desire to understand their situation in the present. Since it is not easy to discuss historical events without reference to governments, nations, social institutions and political systems, 'the present' necessarily includes the existing social order. Historical study, therefore, and in particular the kind of 'official' history certified as legitimate for use in schools, should be understood in terms of its function in providing legitimation for a particular view of the existing socio-political reality. The practical function of historiography in each new generation, or whenever there is a change in social conditions, is to find new ways of presenting historical facts so that they can be absorbed and interpreted in a way which helps the interests of the ruling group, whatever position it might occupy on a political spectrum and irrespective of how it came to power.

This argument may become clearer when we consider the case of schoolroom history. Though hardly ever seen as a 'bread-and-butter' subject in the sense of arithmetic or basic science, the study of history is nevertheless consistently seen as an essential element in education at schools of all types. Starting in mediaeval Europe as "a sacred science reserved for the future rulers of states, a science for princes, not for subjects" (in Marwick, 1970: 18) history officially entered the European school curriculum in the 19th century. It was then regarded as an essential tool for the teaching of morals, and was also used quite deliberately as a vehicle for the propagation of nationalism, imperialism and loyalty to established authority (see Burston, 1972). In every case, ruling groups clearly perceived the value of history as an ideological weapon in the service of the State.

In more modern times, and in particular since the emergence of the 'new' approach which emphasises the 'discovery' method in teaching, students of history, it is often claimed, have been encouraged
to 'discover' historical facts for themselves (ibid.). Alongside this development, however, the teaching of history has not deviated in its purpose, which is openly and universally proclaimed as being to help children to understand and to function in the society in which they live. The recognition of such a purpose leads us back to the proposition which I have already raised: that historical study serves the present system and ensures that the latter will be continued into the future. This is essentially an ideological function, as I have mentioned before.

In concluding this section, I should point out that the three parts into which I have divided the process of historical writing (for my own analytical purpose) are in reality inseparable from each other. There is a great deal of overlap between the tasks of choosing a topic, selecting facts and explaining cause and effect. While it is true that the choice of a topic may influence, even decisively, the selection of facts, it is equally true that without first having gone through a process of collecting and sifting facts, the historian would be unable to make a rational choice of a subject for study. Explanation is also at work in both of these activities. In looking at historical facts, for example, the historian usually has some tentative explanations, which we call hypotheses. It is essentially because historical study is an integrated process, with evaluation taking place at all stages, that we can say that the presentation of history is ideology at work in its hegemonic role. To analyse historical study from this point of view, the relevant questions which must be asked are: history by whom and for whom? Whose ideology, and for what purpose?

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DIRECTION OF THE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL CHANGE, HEGEMONY AND IDEOLOGY

The foregoing discussion prepares the ground for the statement of some basic propositions which can guide this research study. At the most general level, we have the proposition that social change would entail corresponding ideological change. In a sense, this proposition is based on reasonable expectations with almost the same status as commonsense knowledge. However, the question is not merely to see whether or not but also how and why (if it is) it should be so.
To this end, it is necessary to divide the general proposition into a number of separate levels.

I have made clear that my position on the concept of ideology is not a traditional one which tends to judge ideology against the standard of 'science' or 'truth' and treat it as a well-worn slogan. Instead, it is the social function of ideology which is the primary concern here. With the concept of hegemony already introduced and the political aspect of ideology thoroughly discussed, the next proposition is that ideological change, where it occurs, will tend to promote and consolidate the hegemony of the dominant regime. I have also argued for the necessary connection between hegemony and education, and that between evaluation which involves ideology and the study of history. The last proposition I am inclined to make in relation to this question is that any hegemonic ideological transformation should be reflected in the writing of history and in the ways history is presented in schools.

How, then, can one go about testing these propositions in relation to the case study of Vietnam? The next chapter will focus on the methodological problem lying at the heart of this empirical study.

Notes to Chapter I

1. The controversy over 'ideology' and 'ideologues' in France at the turn of the 19th century was covered in detail by Kennedy (1979).

2. To gain an understanding of this controversy, see and compare Sassoon (1978), Mouffe (1979), Anderson (1977) and Hall, et al. (1978).

3. See Karabel and Halsey (1977: 54) for a penetrating discussion of the changing trends in educational research.
CHAPTER II

THE STUDY OF VIETNAM : THE METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEM

At the most general level, discussion of the problem of methodology in a study of this nature leads us back to the theoretical problem, since the identification and definition of the latter presupposes a particular orientation of the former. The two are inseparably connected with each other, just as the sociology of consciousness or knowledge is necessarily intertwined with epistemology. The problem which we now face is not, of course, that of reopening the theoretical argument but rather of grasping its methodological implications and, most importantly, of applying it to the empirical study of Vietnam. How should the investigation be conducted in empirical terms? And what are the problems, the sources, the assumptions and the reservations? If there is indeed a correlation between social change, ideological shift and the writing of history, as I have hypothesized, then it should be possible to find supporting evidence in a case study of Vietnam. My immediate aim is to suggest some guiding propositions for the empirical task; this will involve the operational definition of terms, the formulation of empirical hypotheses and an indication of the direction of the research.

DEFINITIONS AND HYPOTHESES

It is apparent from the general hypotheses proposed in the last chapter that 'social change' and 'history' are important terms in the study of Vietnam, and so have to be operationally defined; in other words, what do they mean in the Vietnamese context?

Social Change

Like culture, 'social change' is a broad term which may be understood differently by different people. Where Lewis Morgan, for example, saw social change in terms of evolutionary improvement
in the qualitative level of a society (from savagery through barbarism to civilisation) measured by factors like family type, property relations and the level of technology, Emile Durkheim defined it in terms of changes in the forms of social solidarity ('mechanical' and 'organic'), manifest through changes in types of social units (including the family), systems of law, economic relations and personality. The common feature of all theories, however, is that 'social change' generally denotes a significant alteration in the structure of a society. Thus, if social structure is definable as "the total pattern of social organisation produced by a cultural group's social practices" (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1974: 274), then social change, in its broad sense, should refer to visible changes in a socio-political structure, in a system or in a historical context, rather than a surface change involving individual leadership only. For the purposes of this study, 'social change' refers specifically to the changes which took place in the social and political system in Vietnam during the period between 1885 and 1975, which saw three different regimes holding state power: the French colonial administration (1885-1954), the DRV (1945-1975) and the RVN (1955-1975). Minor changes of direction or emphasis within each of these regimes are not to be taken as meaning 'social change' within the terms of my general hypothesis.

What, then, are the characteristics of a socio-political system? Social change in the sense I have indicated for this study has to be defined in terms of ideological change. Each system is characterised by a dominant 'system of ideas', but in order for this latter to be identified, one first has to examine the whole political and social context of each period. This is a major task, but it is one of the chief aspects of this study, and will form part of the analysis of Vietnam presented in the following chapters. It is, however, necessary to delineate now, at least in broad terms, the guiding concepts and the general character of each of the three ruling systems. It seems reasonable to assume, from a preliminary survey of the data, that the French colonial regime, being an alien, colonising power, would have been preoccupied with the idea of justifying and praising colonialism. In the same way, one could assume that the two rival Vietnamese regimes which appeared after the fall of the colonial system would have shown hostility to colonialism.
With regard to the two post-French regimes in Vietnam, however, we have to go beyond the concept of anti-colonialism, which set them both apart from the French regime, if an analysis which treats them as separate and different to each other is to make sense. In view of what is commonly known about the nature of the post-colonial regimes, it is reasonable to expect that national unification would have been the main concern of the DRV, while the idea of separateness from the DRV would have prevailed in the RVN.

**History**

The second key definition which has to be made is that of the word 'history'. In this empirical study, of course, it is clear that I am referring only to Vietnamese history. Since it is clearly not possible for an analysis of this kind to cover the entire history of Vietnam, I have selected a particular episode from that history which will serve to illustrate, and to reflect, in their various interpretations of it, the ideologically-determined historical perspectives of the regimes in question. The period from Vietnamese history which I have chosen to focus on is that of the Hùng Kings, which is traditionally supposed to have lasted from 2897 to 258 BC. There are two reasons for my choice of this historical period.

First, it is no exaggeration to say that the Hùng period, more than any other in Vietnamese history, represents an emotionally-charged issue among Vietnamese people: it is a symbol of their national unity, strength and consciousness. There have been many challenges in academic circles to the historical veracity of accounts of the Hùng period, but the memory of this dynasty has persisted in the consciousness of the Vietnamese and has remained a most powerful influence in their concept of nationhood.

At an informal, village level, the legend of the Hùng survives in folk tales, songs and periodic nostalgic visits to the temples erected in honour of the kings in both North and South. At a formal, State level, the Hùng dynasty is commemorated at annual celebrations on the tenth day of the third lunar month, often with official festivities, parades, meditation, incense-burning and a great deal of emotive political rhetoric. Though doubt has been cast on the very fact of the existence of the Hùng dynasty by many historians at various times, its
influence has been remarkably persistent in official history books in Vietnam ever since the account by the fifteenth-century author Ngô Sĩ Liên in his Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư (DVSK, or Complete History of the Great Viet). Given the importance of the Hùng in the Vietnamese consciousness, then, it is reasonable to expect that accounts of their era written for use in schools are a sensitive barometer for developments in the prevailing ideologies of the three periods.

The ideological sensitivity inherent in written accounts of the Hùng period is increased by the fact that this remains one of the most controversial issues in Vietnamese historiography. Three major problems associated with the writing of accounts of this period are readily apparent: these relate to status, dating and content. With regard to the problem of status, historians in Vietnam have been divided over the issue of whether the Hùng era should be considered genuinely historical or merely mythical. On the question of dating, the precise dates of 2897 BC and 258 BC, giving a duration of exactly 2639 years for the dynasty which included 18 kings, have been a controversial subject ever since the appearance of DVSK in the 15th century, if not longer. In view of all the problems surrounding the issue, it is not at all surprising that the historical content of the period should have been a subject of heated debate for so long. In a sense, the three questions are inter-related. If it could be determined exactly when the dynasty began and ended, there would be no more argument about whether or not it had existed, and some of the facts relating to the period could be more or less determined. The process, of course, would also work in the reverse direction.

In the face of these problems, one has to resort to an arbitrary definition of the Hùng period in order to avoid insurmountable difficulties with research procedures. Since I chose this period for analysis first of all because of my awareness of the emotional reaction it produces among Vietnamese and of its importance in their national consciousness, I feel it is justifiable to deal with it on the basis of its symbolic, rather than its concrete, features. The question of whether or not there were real kings who lived and ruled at specific times is not so important as the fact that the Hùng period is widely seen as symbolic of a) the ethnic origins of the Vietnamese people and b) the foundation of Vietnamese tradition, culture and national consciousness. My empirical study will therefore take as the object
of analysis the different interpretations, under three different regimes, of an historical period beginning with the earliest known records of the Vietnamese people and ending in the year 43 AD, which marks the end of the first significant attempt by them to overthrow their Chinese rulers and the beginning of a period of systematic and ruthless sinicisation. In other words, I am concerned with the study of this period on a general level, rather than with the dates, personalities and duration of the Hùng dynasty. This is why it encompasses the dynasties of Thục and Chao or Triệu (257-207 BC and 207-111 BC respectively) and the early period of Chinese domination, which are all traditionally given separate classifications.¹

In dealing with such a remote period in history, we inevitably have to face the problem of the interpretation of legends. With the exception of the Hùng legend itself, which is directly related to the theme of the Vietnamese origins, I do not propose to venture into the recounting of folk tales or their interpretation by modern writers. As far as history books are concerned, folk tales were prevalent in those written for children in very junior classes, to whom history as a discipline had not yet been introduced. In any case, the study of folklore and folk consciousness is another issue, deserving of attention in its own right. Having said this, I should add that information derived from these legends and folk tales, and used in school textbooks for the purpose of illustrating the various aspects of cultural and economic life under the Hùng, will of course be given normal treatment as part of the historical content of the Hùng period.

To sum up, the questions regarding the Hùng period on which I shall concentrate in my analysis of the varying interpretations of it made under different regimes are as follows:

a) the origins of the Vietnamese;

b) their early cultural organisation;

c) the founding of Nam Việt by Chao T'o and its rule by the subsequent dynasty;

d) the Han intervention;

e) the Trưng rebellion.
The extension of the close of the Hụng period from the traditionally-accepted date of 258 BC to 43 AD, to cover part of the period of foreign intervention, is useful from the methodological point of view. Ideally, it could provide a basis for further testing my assumption that colonialism and anti-colonialism would have been among the main philosophical concepts of the three regimes in question. If they were, a comparison of their views on the matter of Chinese domination and indigenous reaction to it would cast further light on the ideological differences between these social systems. This will make it necessary to include in the discussion a comparison between their views on the consequences of the period of Chinese domination and on the final Vietnamese success in regaining independence in 939 AD.

Since my central argument is that the writing of history, particularly for teaching in schools, has an ideological function in both justifying and stabilising the existing social order, it is also necessary to look at each regime's interpretation of recent history, including that of its own period. In this way we can compare the interpretation of the past with that of the present by a particular regime, thereby revealing the major influences shaping the ideology of the system and determining its historical perception. Altogether, then, the historical periods which I shall use to illustrate the differences between the three socio-political systems are the Hụng era and the modern era, starting at the beginning of the French colonial administration.

Having made all the necessary definitions and clarifications, we can now proceed to the formulation of the hypotheses concerning Vietnam. What should we expect to find in the case of Vietnam if the general hypotheses stated in Chapter I are to be proved? The following propositions are therefore put forward:

a) In the French period, the justification and perpetuation of colonialism was the main issue. Thus the originality and value of Vietnamese traditions and culture were denied, and Vietnamese history treated as a mere footnote to that of powerful and 'civilising' foreign societies like those of ancient China or modern France.
b) Under the RVN regime, anti-colonialism and the idea of separateness from the DRV (expressed in the form of anti-communism) were the dominant themes. Since there were severe contradictions both within and between these concerns, the simultaneous embrace of both resulted in confusion and ambiguity in historical interpretation and the originality of Vietnamese culture was neither completely denied nor wholeheartedly affirmed.

c) Since anti-colonialism and national unification were used as ideological weapons by the DRV in the anti-imperialist war, histories produced there were necessarily devoted to the glorification of the Vietnamese past and the originality of its culture and traditions.

METHOD AND SOURCES

For the kind of inquiry indicated above, and in view of the nature of the theoretical problem, it is necessary that the investigation be conducted using a qualitative method: that of hermeneutics which involves the interpretation of texts, historical periods and ideologies. How is hermeneutics to be defined as an analytical tool in this context?

In its general meaning of 'interpretation' or 'understanding', hermeneutics refers first of all to the re-experiencing of the mental processes of the text's author. This early meaning came from Schleiermacher and has since remained a part of the hermeneutic tradition (Palmer, 1969: 84-97; Wolff, 1975: 813-6). Despite the controversy which has arisen over the exact meaning of Schleiermacher's proposition, the interpreter, in practising hermeneutics, is generally expected to understand the subjectively-intended meanings in terms of an individual author's psychological and personal situation. The goal of re-experiencing the mental processes of the author is to reconstruct his or her mental experience as objectively as possible.

But if the distinction between subjective meanings and objective reality is a misconception, as I have said earlier, hermeneutics
cannot stop at the psychological and personal level. It is precisely in order to 're-experience' the mental processes of the author that the interpreter must understand the relationship between subjective meanings in the text and social structure from which they arise. This requires us — as interpreters — to progress beyond the level of meanings and intentions to look at things structurally or relationally. "To focus purely on the positivity of what a text explicitly says", said Heidegger (in Palmer, 1969: 234), "is to do injustice to the hermeneutical task. It is necessary to go behind the text to find what the text did not, or perhaps could not, say".

Within this framework, texts -- as the object of our analysis -- should not be treated merely as expressions of individuals' ideas, but essentially as symptoms of the objective social situations in which the authors find themselves. This requires more than a mere description of the content of a text; it has to be analysed in relation to the constructed themes, which reflect the most basic concerns and the dominant ideology of each society. This means going beyond the level of historical understanding and proceeding to a social-scientific explanation. It is through the analysis of the socio-historical situation that we understand the text and also through this textual analysis that we come to identify the social structure and ideology of each period. The hermeneutical dialectic is the basis of the method of textual interpretation.

With such a methodological approach, it is clear that the primary source of the data which I shall use for the purposes of analysis are teaching materials, including history textbooks, and official or semi-official publications on historical matters as well as on pedagogy and on the general purposes of history teaching. Since it is difficult to obtain a very large sample of school history textbooks, I have restricted my choice of these materials generally to those designed for use at the levels of primary and secondary school, although in exceptional cases I have used tertiary-level material where it can help to clarify some points.

This source material was obtained largely as a result of the field trip which I undertook in Vietnam in 1979. This field trip was more successful in terms of the collection of documents and history texts which had been used in the French and the DRV periods. With regard to RVN textbooks and political documents, I had considerable
difficulty both in obtaining them and in bringing them legally out
of Vietnam. Because of the sensitivity of the subjects of history
and politics, most of these texts and documents had been destroyed
through genuine or mistaken fear of the consequences of possessing
them. In addition, they were largely unavailable in the Library of
Social Sciences and other libraries because of the general dis-
organisation of these places. However, what had been unobtainable
in Vietnam was fortunately provided later by a large collection of
documents found at Cornell University, U.S.A. Despite these dif­
ficulties, the collections are assumed to have provided a represent­
ative sample of the periods under investigation. The field trip to
Vietnam, apart from providing the opportunity for material collection,
was also useful in that it enabled me to observe many features of
'social change' in Vietnam, a country which has recently undergone
a socio-political transformation. Discussion with scholars in
Vietnam was also a valuable secondary source of information.

In an analysis of this kind, in order to understand the
general atmosphere prevailing in a society at a particular period,
one also has to consult a wide and varied range of supplementary
historical and contemporary records. These include official govern­
ment reports, all kinds of books, both popular and learned, and pam­
phlets on a range of subjects, including those for purposes of
propaganda. It is plain that, since I have not approached this
study from the point of view of an historian, it is not within my
capacity to offer judgment or re-interpretation concerning any as­
pect of Vietnamese history. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that
it will not be possible to avoid the problem entirely in carrying
out this kind of sociological analysis: the line of demarcation is
not so distinct as one might think. It is precisely in order to be
able to identify the ways in which ideology may be structured through
historiography that I have had to extend my research beyond the basic
sources of historical interpretation (textbooks) into the study of
alternative historical works. It is inevitable that in the course
of my analysis I will to some extent overstep into what is usually
regarded as the domain of the historian.
Notes to Chapter II

1. In this study, ethnic Chinese people will be referred to by their Chinese names (e.g. Chao T'o, Jen Yen, etc.). The Vietnamese versions will be shown in brackets where they are mentioned for the first time. The romanisation of Chinese personal and place names is based on the Wade-Giles system.

2. It is for this methodological reason that I will treat all textbooks within each period (as analysed in Chapters IV, V and VI) as representing the system in which they are used. Thus, no initial distinction will be made between, for instance, French and Vietnamese writers who served the same colonial regime. However, I do see an important theoretical implication of this distinction; and this point will be taken up in Chapter VII.

3. The collections related to the French period were also augmented as a result of a short period of research conducted in Paris afterward.
Before we turn our attention to the modes of historical understanding presented in Vietnamese textbooks, it is necessary for us to examine the whole context from which this historical understanding arose. My intention in this chapter is to look at the educational system under each regime and relate it to its socio-political environment in each period. In this examination of the relationship between education and society, I shall be establishing theoretical guidelines which, it is hoped, will be useful later on in our analysis of the relationship between historiography -- as presented in schools -- and the dominant ideology, whatever it might be. The connection between the general and the particular, like that between the past and the present, cannot be too heavily stressed. For this purpose, the chapter serves as background and introduction to the following empirical study of Vietnam.

FRENCH COLONIAL VIETNAM (1885-1954)

Before the French set foot in Vietnam in pursuit of their so-called mission civilisatrice, that country had for several centuries been dominated by a pervasive Confucian system of thought and government administration. From the time of the Trần dynasty in the thirteenth century AD, Confucianism had begun to emerge as a clear winner in its battle for influence with other powerful contenders, Taoism and Buddhism. Though the Chinese-style educational practices followed in Vietnam can be traced back as far as the eleventh century, only from the Trần, and particularly from the Lê of the fifteenth century onward, was the content of Sino-Vietnamese education based exclusively on Confucian texts.

After the long civil war between the Trịnh and Nguyễn clans, and the intervention of the Tây Sơn brothers, Nguyễn Ánh ascended the throne in 1802. He founded the Nguyễn dynasty, which was to rule
Vietnam for the next 143 years, though in name only for the last sixty years of that time. Under the Nguyễn, a form of neo-Confucian orthodoxy was imposed on the country and practised with a certain amount of harshness, rigidity and obscurantism (see Trần Văn Giàu, 1973).

In 1847, with the French naval attack on Đà Nẵng harbour in Central Vietnam, the era of French subjugation of Vietnam began in earnest. Through a series of military ventures conducted over the next twenty years, France came to occupy the whole of South Vietnam in 1867. On August 25, 1883, after successive defeats, the Nguyễn court agreed to sign a 27-point peace treaty, according to which the French were to place the rest of Vietnam under their 'protection'. Resistance to the treaty, however, immediately arose from many quarters within the court. It was not until June 6, 1884 when another, 19-point treaty was signed to replace the 1883 one that the French protectorate was acknowledged. Despite the widespread popular resistance which followed this treaty, by the turn of the century, French colonial rule had become a fact of life to the Vietnamese, no matter where they lived -- in the colonial possession of the South (called Cochinchina by the French) or in the protectorates of the North and Centre (called Tonkin and Annam respectively).

Education in Transition: New and Old

As soon as South Vietnam came under France's suzerainty, the French rulers made vigorous efforts to establish and develop a functioning colonial administration there as soon as possible. There can be no question that this huge task would have been impossible without the collaboration of Vietnamese administrators. The scholar-gentry, who had formed the core of the previous Vietnamese administration, were no longer available. Many of them had fled to the remote mountainous areas of Vietnam in despair following unsuccessful attempts to lead uprisings against the new rulers. Those who remained in the occupied areas could not bear the humiliation of co-operating with their conquerors. In these circumstances, the French colonial rulers had no choice but to rely on those Vietnamese who had been trained by foreign Catholic missionaries and opportunists willing to come to terms with the new rulers.
In fact, for quite a long time after Saigon fell into French hands in 1859, the Church-administered Collège d'Adran was the chief source of interpreters, secretaries and other low-level officials for the early French administration. By a decree issued on September 21, 1861, the French colonial government changed this institution into an official government-sponsored College of Interpreters, whose overall aim was to train Vietnamese as clerks and interpreters (De Francis, 1977: 76; Osborne, 1969: 99).

It was natural that the educational form which dominated the early years of French colonialism should have followed the pattern of the College of Interpreters, where French and quôc ngữ (Vietnamese written in romanized script) formed the basis of the curriculum. The popularisation of quôc ngữ was a clever solution to some of the difficulties faced by the French rulers in the administrative and political spheres. First, quôc ngữ was far easier and less time-consuming to master than the Chinese characters which for centuries had been used as the official script in Vietnam. The teaching of quôc ngữ at the mass level would assist the process of understanding of and adjustment to the new regime. Second, the use of quôc ngữ to the exclusion of the Chinese style of writing would alienate the young from the ancient influence of the rival Chinese philosophy and the rebellious local scholar-gentry who had formed the traditional cultural leadership in Vietnam. Not surprisingly, once all of South Vietnam had been made into a French colony, the Sino-Vietnamese examination system was immediately abolished (in 1867) and Chinese writing was banned from official publications and documents.

Apart from government schools, missionary and French schools were also established. Missionary schools, directed by French Catholic priests, offered basic arithmetic, hygiene, quôc ngữ, a little French and, of course, religious doctrine. The French schools, under the direct control of the 'Metropolis', offered a complicated programme to the children of French nationals resident in Vietnam and, to a much lesser extent, those of wealthy Vietnamese in the service of the colonial government.

The fact that the French conquest of Vietnam was uneven in time as well as in form resulted in an uneven application of
administrative, political and educational policies. By 1885, when South Vietnam had already absorbed a degree of French influence, North and Central Vietnam still retained their traditional Vietnamese characteristics. Education in the 'protectorates' was left virtually untouched for two decades. A triple educational system, based on Chinese, French and Franco-Vietnamese programmes, was in existence in those regions until the first decade of this century. Side by side with the Colleges of Interpreters and the French and quốc ngữ schools were the stubbornly persisting, though gradually diminishing village-based Sino-Vietnamese schools where Confucian ethics and Chinese-oriented literature and history formed the core of the curriculum.\(^3\)

On the whole, it can be said that by the turn of the century education in Vietnam had ceased to be guided by a coherent pattern or policy. In the midst of this ambiguity and confusion, a somewhat lax atmosphere was permitted by the colonial rulers. Generally, wealthy Vietnamese in limited numbers could attend French schools in Vietnam as well as in France. Private schools, including 'modern', non-Chinese institutions, were allowed to operate freely without any obligation to abide by the government curricula. This permitted the opening in 1907 of the famous Đông Kinh Free School (Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục) headed by potential anti-colonial activists. The 'new' style of education in the Đông Kinh Free School, as well as in other similar schools, was infused with a spirit of hostility toward both colonialism and traditionalism. In addition to the teaching of Vietnamese political history and geography, quốc ngữ, French, Chinese, hygiene, science and mathematics, the school also began a campaign against many of the old Confucian customs (such as the growing of long hair and fingernails) and a number of government practices (e.g. by urging Vietnamese to boycott the government's newly-minted iron coinage in 1907). The Đông Kinh Free School movement revealed the truth underlying the apparently 'free' education policy maintained by the French. It was summarily shut down by the government barely a year after its opening (Marr, 1971: 156-184; Vũ Đức Bằng, 1973; Nguyễn Hiến Lê, 1956).

Once the early administrative problems had eased and there had been a corresponding decrease in the original pressing need for local collaborators, the French authorities became more and more conscious of the subtle role which education could play in their suppression of the
continuous turbulence and repeated political crises of Vietnam, especially in the protectorates. In an attempt to unify the educational system, the government set up in 1906 the "Council for the Improvement of Native Education". This was the first Indochina-wide planning body. Its activities over seven years were largely responsible for the 1917 Code of Public Instruction, which was the basis of a fairly uniform Franco-Vietnamese education system in later years.

The Franco-Vietnamese System

Under the Code of Public Instruction, the French managed to tighten their control over Vietnamese education. The Chinese-style Confucian examination system was officially abolished in North Vietnam in 1915 and in Central Vietnam in 1918. Not unexpectedly, in 1924-25 the Office of Public Instruction ordered the closure of 1,835 Sino-Vietnamese schools. In 1930, 25 clandestine schools were also closed down. The same fate even befell schools which adhered to government regulations if it was found that their students were active in anti-colonial movements either before, during or after their actual period of schooling (Kelly, 1975: 35-36).

From 1930 onward, after several reforms, the Franco-Vietnamese schools offered five levels of education: elementary, complementary, upper-primary, secondary and tertiary (fig. 3.1). The three years of elementary education were based on Vietnamese as the medium of instruction, while French was the teaching language at all higher levels. Subjects taught at elementary schools included arithmetic, moral precepts, the history and geography of Indochina, hygiene, rudimentary manual skills, physical education, with elementary science and French as options. In the three-year study programme at the complementary level, other subjects were added: French, Vietnamese, basic geometry, science and Chinese characters. At this level, the history and geography of France replaced those of Indochina. In the upper-primary cycle, pupils spent four years studying these subjects plus the combined history and geography of both France and Vietnam (Vũ Tam Ích, 1959: 73).
It was not until 1929 that the government created some Franco-Vietnamese secondary schools worthy of the name. Before then, secondary education for Vietnamese either had been offered in French lycées (and so had not differed from that given to French students) or had taken the form of 'complementary' courses housed in schools which functioned mainly as elementary and primary schools. In about 1923, however, a separate Franco-Vietnamese course was taught in the "Native Sections" of two French institutions -- the lycées Albert Sarraut in Hanoi and Chasseloup Laubat in Saigon (Kelly, 1975: 60-3). It is clear that the French authorities had made a decision to draw a clear distinction between the Franco-Vietnamese programmes and the French curricula. Sciences in the former were now to be geared more closely to practicalities and local conditions; hence, 'applied' science was to take precedence over 'pure' science. While Vietnamese replaced German or English as a modern language subject, the classical Latin was superseded by Chinese. Confucian morality, in the guise
of subjects taught as "Oriental Humanities" made its reappearance on the Vietnamese educational scene (Kelly, 1975: 63-4; Dao Duy Anh, 1951: 262).

The new official enthusiasm for the Vietnamese to return to their 'traditions' which led to this change in educational policy stemmed in large part from French anxiety about the growth of anti-colonial sentiment in Vietnam. Their earlier determination to erase all Chinese influence from the minds of their conquered subjects, particularly the intelligentsia, now appeared somewhat unwise in retrospect. The French began to realise that, by reviving the study of Chinese script and Confucian ethics at upper levels of schooling, they stood to gain more than they would lose. There was no danger of their having to face renewed insurrection led by a revived mandarin class on a scale capable of shaking their iron military control; however, the French were aware of the anger and resentment felt by the scholar-gentry and by the mass of the population toward their alien culture, and sought a cheap but effective means of diverting pent-up feelings into other channels. A conservative Confucian ethic, its content carefully selected and presented, could serve as well to defend and justify a French-dominated status quo as in earlier years it had served the interests of the mandarin class, by stressing the virtues of deference to established authority. Vietnamese nationalist feeling and European revolutionary theory had already met and ignited a small yet potent spark; by steering that nationalism into the relatively safe channels of Confucianist nostalgia, the French sought to extinguish that spark.

Furthermore, in shifting the emphasis away from the teaching of theoretical or pure science and onto the applied sciences, the French were again showing their concern about the growth of a Western-educated and Western-oriented elite. Although Table 3.1 shows clearly that this growth — expressed here in terms of those having a post-primary education — was hardly impressive, the mere fact of a trend in that direction was enough to cause concern among the colons for their job security, based as it was only too often on their race rather than their ability.

It is hardly surprising, then, to see that vocationalism — with particular emphasis being given to 'traditional' skills such as
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<tr>
<th>Levels or Types of Education</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1923</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1938</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>76.9 (96,687)</td>
<td>72.5 (123,373)</td>
<td>68.8 (153,737)</td>
<td>61.3 (147,690)</td>
<td>60.1 (147,863)</td>
<td>58.5 (145,548)</td>
<td>52.5 (150,812)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Full Primary</td>
<td>21.1 (26,571)</td>
<td>25 (42,590)</td>
<td>29.2 (65,329)</td>
<td>36.5 (87,832)</td>
<td>37.8 (92,890)</td>
<td>39.5 (98,333)</td>
<td>44.9 (129,020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Superior</td>
<td>1.9 (2,430)</td>
<td>1.9 (3,252)</td>
<td>1.6 (3,656)</td>
<td>1.7 (4,135)</td>
<td>1.4 (3,564)</td>
<td>1.3 (3,302)</td>
<td>1.6 (4,552)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>** (83) IC</td>
<td>** (56) IC</td>
<td>** (121)</td>
<td>.1 (294)</td>
<td>.1 (275)</td>
<td>.1 (400)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>.5 (820)</td>
<td>.4 (839)</td>
<td>.4 (981)</td>
<td>.6 (1,388)</td>
<td>.5 (1,244)</td>
<td>.8 (2,253)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (125,688)</td>
<td>100 (170,118)</td>
<td>100 (223,617)</td>
<td>100 (240,759)</td>
<td>100 (245,999)</td>
<td>100 (248,702)</td>
<td>100 (287,037)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 Distribution of students by course in official Franco-Vietnamese schools 1920 - 1938

* Full primary denotes a six-year course, including elementary level - all in one institution
** IC : incalculable

Source: Kelly (1975: 76-7)
farming and handicrafts -- was a theme which ran right through the whole course of Franco-Vietnamese education from the elementary to the tertiary level. The colonial government, indeed, made no attempt to conceal its political intentions. Cognacq, Director of Public Instruction in 1923, even made a public statement that Vietnam needed no intellectuals (Langlois, 1966: 95). Albert Sarraut, the former Governor-General of Indochina who fathered the 1917 Code of Public Instruction, was more diplomatic. For Vietnamese, he advocated "a simple education, reduced to essentials, permitting the child to learn all that will be useful to him to know in his humble career of farmer or artisan to ameliorate the natural and social conditions of his existence" (in Kelly, 1975: 17).

Because the authorities consciously pursued a policy of incorporating vocationalism into general education, the position and role of 'pure' vocational education under colonialism was vague and somewhat obscure (Fig. 3.1). This is reflected in the mysteriously low number of students enrolled at specifically vocational institutions (Table 3.1) -- a fact which seems at first glance to contradict sharply what we know to have been the official colonial policy of education. In 1921, vocational schools were considered only as post-primary institutions; later, as primary vocational schools, they accepted elementary certificate holders. The secondary level of vocational training was open, not to those who had completed a three-year course in vocationalism, but to upper-primary degree holders. The curriculum in these schools included traditional crafts (lacquering, weaving, wood carving etc.), skilled and semi-skilled manual subjects (mechanics, carpentry, chauffeuring etc.) and, of course, farming (Kelly, 1975: 66).

It is clear that what the French aimed at in their colonial educational policy was mere 'functional literacy' for the majority of Vietnamese, i.e. their acquisition of just those basic reading and writing skills necessary for carrying out the duties required of them by a colonial government, such as filling in forms, understanding government documents, work instructions, public decrees etc. The introduction of a fragmented and vocationally-oriented programme of education for the Vietnamese was most revealing of the colonial purpose: both to keep out of the reach of 'les jaunes' the managerial and professional jobs reserved for French nationals, and to
divert them from more advanced academic pursuits which might in time lead to a radical questioning of the whole colonial system.\textsuperscript{10} Education under the French, though apparently open to change and reform, never in fact deviated from its basic purpose: to keep the mass of the colonised people from self-development and self-consciousness. Only in this way could the colonial power hope to maintain and consolidate its hegemonic position within Vietnam.

The real meaning of the development of tertiary education in Vietnam can only be understood fully within the same hegemonic frame of reference. On the surface, it is true that the setting-up of a local university for the colonial subjects appeared to be a fair response to the desire of the small indigenous elite which had managed to traverse the difficult road of Franco-Vietnamese education but could not hope to attend universities in France. The increasing disparity between French and Franco-Vietnamese programmes eventually led to the development of a local system of higher education. At a superficial level, the educational reforms prompted by the "Council for the Improvement of Native Education" appeared to bring about a marked advance in the educational sphere. At its roots, however, the introduction of this change had a profound political significance. It was designed to keep the colonized subjects isolated from revolutionary European currents of thought which might menace colonial rule. Evidence for this can be found in the policy of the colonial administration toward the creation of a Vietnamese elite.

At first, it was the policy of the French government, represented by the Governors-General Doumer and Beau in the early years of colonial rule, to form a pro-French elite by sending promising students to further their education in France. Although this policy undoubtedly produced a number of Vietnamese with loyalty to France, it also had the unforeseen effect of turning others into 'traitors'. The French hope of 'gallicizing' the Vietnamese elite who would, in turn, imbue their fellow-countrymen with pro-French sentiment did not turn out very successfully. The Kỳ Động incident,\textsuperscript{11} one of the first disillusionments for the French, was only the beginning of an intense anti-French movement instigated and led by overseas-educated Vietnamese (Thompson, 1937: 297-299). Furthermore, the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5 provided a striking example of an Asian power shattering the carefully-cultivated myth
of European invincibility, an event which attracted the intense interest of many young people in Vietnam. The Đông Kinh Free School managed to send some of its students to Japan for higher education and military training. The French were thus forced to consider opening a local university to counter the dangerous attractions of modern subjects in foreign institutions from which the students might return with uncontrolled and revolutionary ideas.

However, the opening of a local university soon resulted in further French disillusionment and embarrassment. When the Indochinese University opened its doors in 1907, its students quickly turned it into a hotbed of political protest and demonstrations. As a result, the French suppressed its operation in 1908, leaving intact only the School of Medicine (Kelly, 1975: 69).

It was not until a decade later that the French, under mounting pressure from Vietnamese and outside critics, decided to reinstate the University. In the 1920s, the Indochinese University -- renamed the Hanoi University -- consisted of eight faculties: Medicine and Pharmacy, Law and Administration, Pedagogy, Agriculture and Forestry, Public Works, Veterinary Science, Commerce, and Fine Arts (painting, sculpture, lacquerwork, decoration, architecture etc.). Then, in the 1930s, the great economic depression forced a major rationalisation of the University, reducing it to only three Schools -- Medicine and Pharmacy, Law and Administration, and Fine Arts (Vũ TâmITCH, 1959: 72-73; Kelly, 1975: 68-76).

While there is no doubt that traditional social and family backgrounds can be held accountable for some of the high failure rate among Vietnamese students, it should also be stressed that the obstacles inherent in the system made education under the French an unbearable ordeal to many Vietnamese (see note 9). It is not surprising that only a very few students eventually managed to climb beyond the post-primary level of education (Tables 3.1, 3.2). A close examination of the content of the University curricula during the first two decades of its existence reveals a remarkable similarity in policy with those developed for lower-level schooling. Petty vocationalism riddled even the tertiary programmes. Education at this level had the same purpose as that noted in the high school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>1917 N</th>
<th>1922 N</th>
<th>1929 N</th>
<th>1937 N</th>
<th>1940 N</th>
<th>1943 N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine &amp; Pharmacy</td>
<td>147 (34.1)</td>
<td>118 (23.6)</td>
<td>174 (34)</td>
<td>202 (32)</td>
<td>230 (32.7)</td>
<td>353 (27.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law &amp; Administration</td>
<td>115 (26.7)</td>
<td>107 (10.2)</td>
<td>26 (5)</td>
<td>378 (59.9)</td>
<td>297 (42.2)</td>
<td>594 (45.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>34 (7.9)</td>
<td>53 (20.6)</td>
<td>63 (12.3)</td>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>84 (19.5)</td>
<td>103 (21.4)</td>
<td>81 (15)</td>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>50 (7.1)</td>
<td>78 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>Not Yet Founded</td>
<td>39 (10.6)</td>
<td>54 (10.6)</td>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>17 (3.9)</td>
<td>29 (5.8)</td>
<td>32 (6.3)</td>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>49 (7)</td>
<td>99 (7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary</td>
<td>33 (7.7)</td>
<td>51 (7.8)</td>
<td>27 (5.3)</td>
<td>Abolished</td>
<td>5 (.7)</td>
<td>46 (3.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Not Yet Founded</td>
<td>Not Yet Founded</td>
<td>54 (10.6)</td>
<td>51 (8)</td>
<td>72 (10.2)</td>
<td>130 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>430 (100)</td>
<td>500 (100)</td>
<td>511 (100)</td>
<td>631 (100)</td>
<td>703 (100)</td>
<td>1300 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 University enrolments by Faculty in Colonial Vietnam, 1917 - 1943

system -- to produce technicians with sufficient knowledge and skill to enable them to assist the colonial bureaucracy. This was a deliberate policy, since the French themselves often referred to the University as an aggregation of "secondary level practical schools" (in Đoan Việt Hoat, 1971: 80). It is not surprising that the diplomas awarded by the University failed to achieve recognition by French universities (Vũ Tam Ich, 1959: 72).

If it is to contribute to a hegemonic process, education must be able to show flexibility and adaptability when confronted with new political crises. During the Japanese occupation in the 1940s, the French colonialists ordered a reorganisation of Hanoi University. Standards in the School of Medicine and Law were raised to meet those of its French counterparts. Technical schools were separated from the University, and the long-overdue Faculty of Science finally came into being in 1941. Reforms permitted by colonialism, however, have their own limits. If they are nothing more than a reaction to some circumstantial force, they may have little genuine value. The opening of the Faculty of Science in Hanoi is a case in point. It was a conscious move, carefully calculated to maximize the political gain for the colonialists: to quiet local protests and to counteract the Japanese threat. In a telegram to the Minister of Colonies dated August 12, 1941, Governor-General Decoux explained that its inauguration was aimed at "promoting the influence and prestige of the University among the Indochinese population and the great powers [i.e. Japan]" (in Trần Huy Lê, 1960: 131). He further assured his Minister that this reform was merely "a change in name, not a change in the system" (ibid.).

In a situation such as this, it seems that real reform was to be more feasible at a lower level. Competition with the Japanese for influence was in fact more direct in the junior grades of schooling. The idea of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" launched by the Japanese had its educational expression in Vietnam in the creation of a number of Japanese-Vietnamese schools (Vũ Tam Ich, 1959: 100). The French reaction to this move was to undertake an expansion of the existing Franco-Vietnamese school system: within five years after 1939, the enrolment of pupils in these schools had nearly doubled (Devillers, 1952: 85).
In 1945, however, this relatively peaceful form of competition was summarily terminated. In March of that year the Japanese attacked, disarmed and interned the French garrisons throughout the country and proclaimed Bảo Đại, the last king of the Nguyễn dynasty, emperor of an 'independent' Vietnam. Coincidental with this declaration of 'independence' was the introduction of what came to be known as the 'Hoàng Xuân Hân programme' of education, in which French was to be replaced by Vietnamese as the language of instruction up to and including secondary level. In August 1945, the Việt Minh (the League for the Independence of Vietnam, whose most significant organisational component was the former ICP) under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh, seized the moment. The French were interned and the Japanese going down to total defeat in the last stages of the Pacific War, so Việt Minh cadres assembled huge demonstrations throughout the country in order to take power. After some local skirmishes, the Việt Minh troops entered Hanoi in triumph and set up a provisional government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). Bảo Đại abdicated and surrendered his powers to the Việt Minh within a few days.

However, within a short time of this event it became clear that the French, following the Japanese surrender, would seek to re-establish their power in Vietnam. In September 1945, with the aid of British forces, they re-conquered Saigon, the initial act in what was to be the first Indochina War, of nine years' duration, through which France sought in vain to restore the status quo ante.

Political confusion and war in the post-1945 period in Vietnam was reflected in the educational system. In Việt Minh-controlled areas, of course, education and all other organised activities were geared to the resistance struggle. In the French-controlled zones, the Hoàng Xuân Hân programme, mentioned earlier, continued in operation. In June of 1948, under great military and political pressure, the French resorted to the 'Bảo Đại solution', restoring the ex-emperor at the head of a puppet Vietnamese government of what they called 'self-governed Vietnam within the French Union'. A result of this was the formal transfer, on December 31, 1949, of school administration from French to Vietnamese (Bảo Đại) control. Reflecting the fiction of a "self-governed Vietnam", however, this transfer of educational
responsibility had many strings attached. The 1949 agreement under which the transfer was made secured for France the right to "open an unlimited number of public and private schools which, however, must observe all Vietnamese regulations concerning education" (Fall, 1954: 553). Also, the French language was assured of "a privileged position between the national language and foreign languages" and of being taught "in the biggest possible number of primary schools" (in Fall, ibid). And in addition to all this, there was another article which guaranteed for France the right to have "a certain number of primary and high schools and other establishments", which, "in order to permit the French education to organize itself...would be put at the disposal of the French University Authorities" (op.cit.: 554).

The catastrophic defeat of her forces at Dien Bien Phu in May, 1954 signalled the end of France's colonial empire in the Far East. On July 21, 1954 the Geneva accords were signed, under which the Vietnamese territory north of the 17th parallel belonged to the DRV and the south to the French-created 'State of Vietnam' under the resuscitated Bao Dai and his Prime Minister, Ngo Dinh Diem, pending nation-wide elections to re-unify the country. However, not long after this, Diem, with American help, ousted Bao Dai and took power himself in the South, founding the so-called Republic of Vietnam (RVN) under his own presidency in October 1955. The temporary division of Vietnam was made permanent by Diem's subsequent refusal to participate in the internationally-supervised elections scheduled for 1956.

THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (1955-1975)

The Heritage of French Colonialism

The educational system of the RVN had its roots in the Japanese occupation of Vietnam and the Bao Dai regime under French control. As we have seen, under the Hoang Xuan Hanh programme which took effect from the time of the Japanese coup in 1945, the colonial system of Franco-Vietnamese schooling assumed a new image in response to the new social and political situation. Vietnamese replaced French as the language of instruction, but everything else remained virtually unchanged.
Diệm's Republic of Vietnam inherited and progressively developed a policy of education based on the coexistence of the Franco-Vietnamese and the French schools (Fig. 3.2). Despite Diệm's well-known anti-French attitudes, education under his regime, for the first five years at least, was still largely the French system with modifications. Following the Geneva Agreement, Diệm set about extending the anti-communist crusade with which his American sponsors had entrusted him to all areas of government policy in the South, including education. The system which he had inherited was in any case already strongly biased in that direction. At the 1953 education convention held in Hanoi, 'nationalism' (độc tộc) 'humanism' (nhân dân) and 'liberalism' (khai phóng) had been adopted as slogans to counter the well-known Việt Minh principles of 'nationalism' (độc tộc), 'science' (khoa học) and 'education for the masses' (dài chủng), so the anti-communist basis for the new policy was already in place.

*Figure 3.2 Structure of school in the Republic of Vietnam in the 50's and early 60's*
Moreover, in the early years of the RVN, Diệm's main concerns were to secure his own political power base and to maintain the separate identity of South Vietnam. For both of these reasons, the system of education in the RVN continued to bear a remarkably close resemblance to the French system. In fact, it could be said that the whole Franco-Vietnamese system was re-introduced, with the only major difference being the language of instruction. Everything else was virtually unchanged: the same textbooks in translation, the same curricula and the same methods of examination. French schools continued to thrive well into the sixties and still bestowed elite status upon their graduates.

It was not until 1957 when a national cultural convention was held that minor changes began to appear in the educational system. These were most evident in primary schools. The six-year course was reduced to five years and culminated in an examination leading to the award of a certificate of primary studies. The curriculum was simplified with the dropping of French as a foreign language. The reasons for this move, given at the 1957 convention, were that "rural people had no contact with foreigners" (i.e. French) and that "we should not confuse children's minds" (Nguyễn Thiệu, 1957: 284). The most interesting innovation was perhaps the UNESCO-supported experiment in basic education programmes.

The underlying principle of basic education was to make children "understand the problems connected with their living areas as well as their citizenship ... so that they will gradually improve their living conditions and develop the economy of their own community" (BGDCD, 1971: 12-13). Generally, basic education schools, or community pilot schools as they were more often called, were designed for country people, their purpose being to impart basic general knowledge and practical skills in the simple trades essential to village life. In essence, the innovative trial was aimed at producing a succession of low-level vocational schools. There was thus not much difference between the community pilot schools and the Franco-Vietnamese schools at the elementary and complementary levels. By 1958, nine schools of this kind were operating in the RVN; eight of them in distant Central Vietnam (BGDCD, 1971: 25).
The basic similarity in the vocationally-oriented primary schools set up both by the French and by the RVN indicates their common attitude toward rural mass education: for rural people, intellectualism was useless, if not dangerous; 'functional literacy' was the goal. Such a policy, of course, operated to perpetuate the existing economic and power relationships. Young rural people were expected to continue in humble rural pursuits. Despite this, the 'new' community schools managed to convince some educational 'experts' of the new "spirit of democratization" abroad in the RVN (see, e.g., Nguyễn Hữu Phước, 1975: 127; cf. 126-154). It is interesting to note that Gramsci witnessed the same kind of phenomenon in Fascist Italy, which prompted him to remark:

The multiplication of types of vocational school...tends to perpetuate traditional social differences; but since, within these differences, it tends to encourage internal diversification, it gives the impression of being democratic in tendency. The labourer has become a skilled worker, for instance, the peasant a surveyor or petty agronomist. But democracy, by definition, cannot mean merely that an unskilled worker can become skilled. It must mean that every "citizen" can "govern" and that society places him, even if only abstractly, in a general condition to achieve this.

(Gramsci, 1971: 40)

Like 'democracy', 'anti-colonialism' was a loudly trumpeted slogan in the South. Yet, even after the 1957 national cultural convention, the RVN secondary education programme still bore a marked resemblance to the former Franco-Vietnamese system. It was still basically a 7-year course consisting of an initial 4-year cycle followed by one of three years (Fig. 3.2). The curriculum was similar to that followed in the Franco-Vietnamese system, except that English had been added to the foreign-language courses in Chinese and French. The end of the first cycle was marked by the examination for the diploma of middle education. Those who passed the first-cycle examination were qualified for the second cycle, which ended in the examinations for Baccalaureate I and II in the final two years (Fig. 3.2). Apart from the general subjects like those in the first cycle, the second-cycle programme provided for three major subject divisions: classical Vietnamese and Chinese studies, literature and modern languages, and sciences (Vũ Tâm Tích, 1959: 125).
Higher education was even more heavily influenced by the French system. The National University, established in Saigon in 1955, was, after all, only the old Joint Franco-Vietnamese University under a new name and with a Vietnamese rector (see Nguyễn Đình Hòa, 1963: 13). The University comprised seven faculties: Pedagogy, Letters, Law, Sciences, Architecture, Medicine and Dentistry, and Pharmacy. Except for the first three faculties, where Vietnamese had been used as the teaching language since 1955, French remained the medium of instruction. Thus, even though Vietnam was no longer a French colony, the colonialists' language continued to be the medium for the dissemination of knowledge bearing the highest status (see Smith, 1967a: 155-6).

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the strongly French-oriented education system of the RVN did not receive any attention from Diệm's American backers. In fact, though they maintained what was virtually a hands-off policy as regards the general system, the Americans, from the very beginning of the RVN set about implementing an American programme for public administration in South Vietnam. It should also be noted that from 1956 onward, American aid was provided for the building and equipping of the community pilot schools, and that from 1957 they helped to finance the printing of primary school text books and to train local teachers of English (VKHGD, 1978, vol.1: 70).

In any case, the American effort to influence the education system at this stage was still comparatively feeble, and showed little result. Only after 1957, and particularly after 1960, did the RVN education system begin to deviate from its French heritage.

Americanism in Education

United States involvement in Vietnam, apart from the activities of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during the Pacific War, dates from the late 1940s, when the Indochina War became a focus of East-West ideological rivalry. In Washington's view, the communist aspect of the Việt Minh's policy overshadowed its nationalist and anti-colonial character. The United States was erecting political and military fences in various parts of the globe to
contain the 'spread of communism'. All their other interests, even their traditional anti-colonialist policy, were subordinate to this one. Their support of the French against the Việt Minh was carried out within the framework of this broad strategy. Barely a month after the Chinese and the Soviets had recognized the government of Hồ Chí Minh (January 1950) the United States, with Britain, countered by declaring that, in their eyes, the ineffectual Bảo Đại administration was the only legitimate representative of the Vietnamese people. Accompanying Washington's recognition was massive financial support for the 'State of Vietnam'. Hundreds, then thousands of millions of dollars were spent in support of the French military campaigns. Little attention was paid to the problems of education at this stage -- Washington's main concern was to stave off French defeat for as long as possible.

By 1954 the war had become a bleeding ulcer for France and Dien Bien Phu sealed her defeat and final withdrawal. The Americans, however, saw that the battle for control of Vietnam was by no means over, and they remained. They saw the opportunity to set up another 'free world versus communism' political and military line of confrontation, and their aid programme was immediately redirected toward the consolidation of the new Diemist regime in the South. The Michigan State University Vietnam Advisory Group (MSUG) -- the first team of American academics to be involved in Vietnam -- arrived in May 1955 to conduct a massive programme of technical assistance in four areas: public administration, police administration, public information and economics and finance (Scigliano and Fox, 1965: 2).

Thus, in much the same way as the French did when they first arrived in Vietnam, the new American interventionists at this early stage of their involvement saw education in terms of the contribution it could make to the easing of their administrative problems. Of course, the Americans were not the French, just as the former's strategic interest in Vietnam was very different from the latter's narrow economic one. The historical condition of Vietnam in the mid-1950s was also quite different from that which had prevailed 80 years earlier. By the time the Americans became involved in Vietnam on a large scale, there was already a sizeable foreign-oriented Vietnamese elite and a relatively large bureaucracy. The
administrative problem therefore required a different kind of solution. Instead of crash courses to teach local people to understand the language of the colonizers, as had happened under the French, there was now a need for a much more systematic and sophisticated programme of public administration. To this end, the MSUG busied itself with the establishment of the National Institute of Administration (NIA) in Saigon. The academics associated with the MSUG were involved in teaching, training local teachers and structuring the curriculum. However, the aid project for the NIA was not a first priority. Like the French, for whom security was the major early concern, the US advisors in the RVN at first devoted most of their attention to police services and other immediate problems:

Almost upon his arrival in Vietnam, the chief of the MSU group was told by the American ambassador that his mission should concentrate on helping the police services and the refugee resettlement administration.

(Scigliano and Fox, 1965: 6)

Hegemony may be a matter of ruling by consent rather than coercion, but the priorities established by the United States in their involvement in Vietnam clearly indicate an awareness that consent could only be founded on a firm basis of physical coercion.16

By 1958, Diệm's vigorous offensive military policy had disrupted the residual Việt Minh organization in the South, sectarian warfare had been quelled and he was now firmly in power. His regime and its American backers now were free to devote more time and money to educational problems. Perhaps, it would be more correct to say that the time was now opportune for education to be given a more prominent place in the anti-communist arsenal in the expectation of a protracted political struggle.

In the 1960s, a series of contracts signed between American university teams and the Saigon-based USAID office heralded a new stage in RVN education. Under the contracts signed in 1960 and 1961, the Southern Illinois University (SIU) and Ohio University (OU) teams came to Saigon with the mission of training primary and secondary teachers as well as restructuring the curriculum at both levels. While the SIU group monopolised the primary teacher training programmes, the OU team was assigned “to help the [Vietnamese] Ministry
of Education to develop study programmes for training and improving secondary teachers" (in VKHGD, Vol.1, 1978: 71). As part of their training assignment, the American academics set out to design curricula, orchestrate the administration, and provide instructional methods and materials for the Faculties of Pedagogy and Normal Schools throughout the RVN. They also sent selected students to the United States for advanced training (Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 280).

The teacher training programme was the first step in the planned systematic Americanization of the education system in the RVN. The content and philosophy of education also underwent a fundamental change. While more than a decade before, the French had extolled the virtues of farming and artisanal skills in their colonial education policy, the Americans now began to emphasize business, managerial and industrial skills in their schemes for community education in the RVN. This, of course, accurately reflects the changing nature of imperialism in the modern era. Under direct French colonial rule, local industry was suppressed in any area where it might compete with the metropolitan export economy, and the colony was primarily made to function as a source of cheap raw materials. The American neo-colonial strategy, on the other hand, required a relatively skilled industrial workforce and a degree of commercial growth and industrial infra-structural development if US-based transnational corporations were to be able to take advantage of the key commodity: cheap and abundant labour.

However, the theory of US-based industrialization failed to develop into a reality in Vietnam, where the crucial factor of military security was never achieved. In the end, the US commercial aid programme "simply permitted the client regime to continue the subsidised import economy which it had inherited from the French colonial period" (Porter, 1976: 251, my emphasis).

What, then, was the role of the 'community education' programme, with its emphasis on business and industrial skills, in such a situation? As mentioned earlier, at the primary level, the community school was little different from the Franco-Vietnamese vocational school of earlier times: its purpose was to train village children in some practical skills associated with village life.
But from 1965 onward, i.e. from the time when the United States launched wide-scale bombing and 'pacification' sweeps in the countryside, resulting in a massive influx of refugees to the cities, the community schools began to move into urban areas. Unlike the early "basic education" schools, which were established as vocational schools separate from general education schools, the community schools were the result of the transformation of the general schools themselves. Instead of being geared to village life, the curriculum at primary community schools was now centred around 'community problems'. The aim was "to provide them [the students] with practical understanding for their livelihood and in serving the community", as was stated in 1966 by the Minister for Education, Nguyễn Văn Thọ (USAID, 1966: viii). Each programme was based on a theme (e.g. malaria eradication, growing sugar cane, the Assembly elections etc.) which tied together the contents of all subjects (see BGDCD, 1971). As the name of the new system suggests, the community school involved not only the classroom teaching of children, but also extended into the community outside. It conducted literacy courses, political rallies, and organised meetings, exhibitions and parades. Students were expected to put their lessons into practice within the community (BGDCD, 1971).

The communalisation of primary schools made rapid progress. From 1957 until mid-1960, the number of community schools increased from 9 to 121. By 1968 there were 1,336, with an enrolment of 954,407 students -- 56.9% of all primary school pupils (BGDCD, 1971: 27,32,34, 57). Under the decree of 25 August, 1969, all primary schools in the RVN had to be communalised as from the academic year 1969-70 (BGDCD: 1971: 307).

Looking behind RVN government statements about the primary community education scheme, it is not difficult to discern a direct political reason for its development at this time. By the mid-1960s, and particularly in the wake of the 1968 Tết offensive by the National Liberation Front (NLF), the anti-communist political and 'psywar' effort had reached unprecedented levels, even in the cities which had been until then relatively isolated from the fighting. Community education was seen as one of the methods by which community activities could be controlled: "our urgent task at present is to seek immediately to thwart the political and cultural attacks of the enemy" said

The concept of community education was not limited to the primary level. It penetrated the secondary level in the guise of 'comprehensive schools'. The same political aim -- the fight against 'communism' -- underlay the community education system at this level as well. Dương Thiệu Tông (1969: 43-7), whose name is associated with the whole RVN comprehensive school movement, stated explicitly in his "Proposal for the Comprehensive Secondary School Curriculum in Vietnam" (the title of his Ph.D. dissertation at Columbia University) that one of the foremost aims of this "radical reform" was to create an "education for democracy"; i.e. against communism:

After World War II, in the face of the challenge of communism which threatens the complete destruction of the existing traditions [of Vietnam], it was felt more strongly than ever that something more direct and explicit must be done to make citizens more intelligent [sic] about the meaning and significance of democracy. (1969: 46; cf. 1971: 9-11)

Realising that in this "war of ideologies", "the schools are Vietnam's first line of defense of its culture and democratic way of life", Dương (op.cit.: 46-7) proposed that "education should work toward the goals of equality of opportunity, a minimum of class distinction, fair play for all, and individual freedom". The myth of democracy and of the 'spirit of democratization' expressed in these educational goals has been dealt with earlier and needs no repetition here.

As well as 'democratization', 'economic development' was an underlying concern of both RVN educationists and their Ohio University advisers, who together were responsible for the RVN's comprehensive secondary education (see, e.g. Dương Thiệu Tông, 1969: 47-51). But how could education speed up economic development when the national economy was mainly a foreign-subsidised import system? A close look at the new curriculum reveals that 'economic development' in effect referred to the development of an economy based largely on consumption and small-scale, low-level trades. Apart from standard subjects such as
history, mathematics etc., the school presented a 'comprehensive',
vocationally-oriented programme. This included business education
(accountancy, shorthand, typing, office procedures, etc.), 'industrial'
or practical arts, mostly for boys (farming, tailoring, photography,
simple woodwork or metal work, gardening, animal care) and home
economics (household management, child care, nutrition, cooking,
home nursing) for girls (Dương Thiếu Tông, 1969: 156-80).

Defenders of comprehensive secondary education were fond of
talking about 'free development', 'equality of opportunity' and
'individual freedom'. But with vocationalism structured along the
lines shown above, only the comparatively rich could afford to take
a course in 'free development'. For instance, how many Vietnamese
people could afford photographic equipment of the kind used in the
photography classes? And how would a photographer be employed in
Vietnam in any case? The refrigerators and microwave ovens used in
the cookery classes were unattainable luxuries for the vast majority
of Vietnamese, and the idea of a nutritionally-balanced diet must
have had an ironic ring in a country where a diet of any sort was
hard enough for many people to obtain.

Community education, in the final analysis, contributed much
to the maintenance of a hierarchical social structure based on
inequality. It reinforced sex roles (and introduced some new American
ones) through specialisation. It taught 'better consumption' to a
minority: the urban middle class, which included "the families of
civil servants, military officers, professional men, property owners
and businessmen in the cities and administrative centres who purch­
as ed most of the imported goods" (Porter, 1976: 254). It also pro­
vided a labour force skilled enough for light and undeveloped
industries, and office workers for a huge bureaucracy which continued
to expand with the growth of the American involvement.

Though the American intervention in Vietnam had little in
common with French colonialism in most of its manifestations, the
'fundamental change' which the Americans made such efforts to bring
about in the sphere of education turned out to be more apparent than
real. In the end, objective historical conditions forced them into
a position which was essentially not very different from that of the
French colonialists. The economy was still basically a dependent one, and the education system naturally tended in that direction. The difference in philosophies of education merely changed the form; the content was not really changed as it had no need to change.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the implementation of the comprehensive education programme met with no obstacles. As the idea was imported ready-made from the affluent United States, its implementation in a poor country like Vietnam was plagued with many technical problems which even the US aid programme was unable to solve. One of the more serious problems, for example, was the perennially erratic and short supply of running water and electric power, which "caused difficulty in keeping food in the refrigerator [for cooking classes]" (Tiếu Ban Kinh Tế Gia Đình, 1971: 67).

Nevertheless, the 'spirit' of community education spread far and wide. 'Comprehensivisation' at the secondary level made rapid progress, at least in terms of statistics. By 1967, following the submission of a proposed programme to the RVN government by the OU (Ohio University) team for the promotion of comprehensive secondary education, eleven selected high schools were converted into comprehensive schools. Also, by this time, there already existed some 'demonstration' comprehensive schools, of which the Thủ Đức one was under the close supervision of the OU group (see Đoàn Viết Hoạt, 1971: 279; Dương Thiếu Tông, 1969: 77-82). Furthermore, according to the five-year plan devised by Purdy from USAID, the 'comprehensivisation' of all secondary schools was to be completed by the mid-1970s (VKHGD, 1978: 76). August 15, 1971 saw the promulgation of a presidential decree allowing the establishment of Community Junior Colleges (CJC) throughout the RVN (see Võ Kim Sôn, 1974: 206-9). Again, 'economic development' was an avowed general aim -- "to train middle-level technicians to support the economic development of the community" (op.cit.: 206). By 1975, two CJC's were already in operation: one in the Upper Delta of Tiền Giang, the other on the coast (op.cit.: 92-110).

Thus, by the time the RVN collapsed totally in April 1975, Americanism -- if we can call it that -- had come to pervade the whole
of its education system, at least in terms of organisation. All primary schools were 'communalised' as from 1970. The conversion of all secondary schools into comprehensive institutions was scheduled for completion by the mid-1970s. This meant that the examination-jammed system of education inherited from the French, with its ruthless weeding-out at every stage, finally disappeared. And indeed, by 1972 the pre-university schooling now consisted of an unbroken 12-year programme, ending in a single examination. Added to this was a radical change in the method of examination. From 1974, the combined written and oral examination system was displaced entirely by the American one involving multi-choice questionnaire testing, regulated by US-supplied IBM computers. English had by now replaced French as the most popular foreign language, evidenced by the mushroom growth of schools teaching English. At the same time, while French schools were being Vietnamised and their curricula made to conform with RVN government regulations, English-language primary schools were being set up in Saigon.

At the tertiary level, apart from the CJC establishments, which bore clear signs of American influence, the US hand was visible in the re-organisation and expansion of the existing institutions of higher learning. We have already seen how the Americans managed to control the training of teachers through their moves to restructure both the administration and the curriculum within Normal Schools and Faculties of Pedagogy. We have also noted the US involvement in the training of public servants in the RVN through the NIA as early as 1955. But the list certainly does not end there. Mention must be made of other USAID projects which contributed to the Americanisation of tertiary education in the RVN. There were the University of Florida teams with their agricultural training project. There was also the University of Missouri - Rolla group working in conjunction with the Saigon School of Engineering (see Đoan Việt Hoài, 1971: 280, 281).

Most important of all, however, was another large-scale American project which profoundly shook the education system inherited from French colonialism. This was the establishment of a 1200-student Medical Education Center in Saigon in November 1966.
Under the contracts signed between USAID and the American Medical Association, faculty members of fifteen American universities came to Vietnam on rotating tours to teach and revise the curricula, not only at the Centre, but also at the Medical School in the University of Hue (Vietnam Feature Service, 1968: 12-13).

This event was of great significance because the School of Medicine was one of the first tertiary institutions which the French had allowed to open, and also the only one which managed to survive all the numerous political and economic crises during the period of French rule. Medicine, then, was the field which had absorbed French influence deepest and longest. When the effects of the American move began to make themselves felt within this very conservative institution, it did not take long for a violent power struggle to develop. In 1969 the friction between the two different foreign-oriented groups reached a degree of passion which manifested itself in the murder of two allegedly pro-American professors at the Center (see Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 264).

Though this incident can be seen merely as the climax to a power struggle between two rival elite groups, each having a different cultural orientation, it can also be taken as a manifestation of a general struggle against foreign domination. On the one hand, there is plenty of evidence of inter-elite friction in the RVN. On the other hand, there is even more evidence of resistance to Americanisation as a form of alien domination. Mass demonstrations and student revolts in the 60s and 70s very often denounced the Americans as the ultimate enemy. Violent incidents are recorded as having occurred at many US establishments, including the Abraham Lincoln Library in Saigon and the Consulate in Hue (see Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 26; Fitzgerald, 1972; 276-91).

Americanisation, then, did not go unresisted. But since we are examining this trend, insofar as it was connected with education, not in terms of the American intent but rather in terms of the structural relations which grew up, we can see that as long as the army, the economy and the government of the RVN were dependent on American aid, Americanism was inevitably a continuing feature of the RVN education system.
By 1972, there were eight full-rank universities in existence in the RVN whose development could not have taken place without US funds and resources. This is a remarkably different situation from that which prevailed under the French colonial regime, which saw the creation of but one university, for the whole of Indochina, in the whole period of nearly a hundred years. Even though this contrast can be partially explained by reference to the changing role of the university worldwide during this century (i.e. from an elitist to a mass democratic one), the major factor in Vietnam was the different economic and political interests of the two dominant foreign powers. The French were the ruling elite in their colonies; they had no interest in creating an educated class of Vietnamese who might challenge their political and economic dominance. A single university was sufficient to produce all the 'native auxiliaries' that they needed for their simple administrative and exploitative purposes. The Americans, on the other hand, were in fact attempting a massive re-structuring of the Vietnamese society from outside ("nation-building" was the term very often used) whose key element was the creation of a large, dependent urban middle class, American-oriented in ideology and habits of consumption. Vietnam was not merely a testing ground for the weapons and tactics of counter-revolutionary warfare; it was also the place where the social theories of middle-class American academics were given free rein at a time when American power and American confidence in this kind of social engineering were at their peak. We should also consider that the French university has traditionally been an elitist institution. The modern American university, on the other hand, is often seen as an instrument of mass upward social mobility. This was undoubtedly the view taken by many of those who spent vast amounts of money and effort to establish university education on the American pattern on such a large scale in the RVN.

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (1945-1975)

The DRV had a longer history than the RVN. It came into existence in 1945, after the Japanese defeat in the Pacific War. During its life of thirty years, many momentous historical events took place, leaving a deep impression on its educational system. That system can be divided into three main chronological periods:
the period of resistance against the French; that of independence and
the building of a socialist society; and the last stage in which the
DRV waged all-out war to 'liberate the South' and to defend its
territory against American air attacks.

**Education and the War of Resistance**

The independence of Vietnam proclaimed by Hồ Chí Minh on
September 2, 1945 lasted barely a month. On September 21, French
troops returned to South Vietnam on British warships, re-occupied
Saigon and set about seizing the surrounding areas from the control
of the new Việt Minh administration. The North was occupied by
Nationalist Chinese troops whose purpose was to disarm and re­-
patriate the remaining Japanese. After a great deal of looting,
the Chinese started to withdraw, leaving the Việt Minh government still in
control. The DRV was temporarily recognised by the French at this
stage, and went ahead with elections for a National Assembly in
January, 1946. The subsequent series of negotiations between the
French and the DRV, which lasted six months, finally ended without
agreement being reached on the future status of France in Vietnam.
The French launched the full-scale military assault for which they
had long been preparing. Militarily weak and ill-equipped, the
whole DRV government retreated to the mountains, from there to lead
a long resistance using the strategy and tactics of 'people's war'
well-known in Vietnamese history. The DRV and its educational
system therefore had a distinct wartime orientation almost from the
beginning.

In the first few years of the existence of the DRV, education
was not one of the areas of policy marked down for fundamental
change. Since the DRV education system had its roots in the days
of the Việt Minh's underground struggle, it was fairly easily adapt­
able to harsh wartime conditions. Some reforms had been carried
out in the previous 15 years by the ICP and the Việt Minh in areas
under their control, but generally speaking, because of a severe
lack of resources and the extremely uncertain military and political
situation in Vietnam at the time, the Việt Minh was not in a position
to make radical structural changes in education. However, despite
the extreme material shortages then experienced, important reforms
were made at a more fundamental rather than the merely formal level in that they touched on the basic ideology and subject matter of education in a situation of total opposition to colonial rule. These are illustrated by the two basic principles of Việt Minh education: the insistence on the use of Vietnamese as the means of communication at all levels, and the insistence on mass literacy, achieved through organised campaigns. These principles were interrelated, and together they indicated the intent to build a self-reliant, independent Vietnamese society whose development was to be both based on and for the benefit of the mass of the Vietnamese people. The first, in particular, was aimed at the heart of the French-created myth that the Vietnamese language (and by analogy, the Vietnamese people) was inferior and an inadequate instrument for the reception and expression of complex ideas such as those encountered in 'high-status' education. The second was aimed at destroying the old Confucian belief, which was shared to some extent by the French, that proper literacy was the prerogative of an elite, and was not the concern of the mass of the population, including the peasant class and the majority of women.

These two basic policies were carried on in the education system of the new republic. Only five days after its inauguration, the DRV instituted a Department of Mass Education, which decreed that every Vietnamese citizen had to learn to read and write. Accordingly, cadres were trained and sent to all provinces to conduct literacy courses:

People learned in the countryside as well as in towns, in the mines as well as in the factories, in the plains as well as in the mountains. Communal houses, pagodas and guardhouses became classrooms. Teaching was done on the pavements, in private houses, in clubs, in the offices of social organizations...

(Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959: 21)

The literacy campaign maintained its vigour throughout the war of resistance. The lack of material resources suffered during those years was made up by a variety of human initiatives and substitutes: "Various wild fruit juices replaced ink; bricks, or certain red limestone rocks served as chalk". Also, "Large banana leaves and
various palms were often used as paper, and any piece of sharpened wood or bamboo as pens" (op.cit.: 34).

Of course, literacy is more than the mere technique of reading and writing. Since "each class is a nest of propaganda for the Resistance war", literacy was also aimed at teaching "hygiene, in order to lessen disease, elementary scientific notions in order to fight superstition, the four arithmetical operations in order to give to everyone the habit of well-regulated work, history and geography... to enhance patriotism..." (op.cit.: 35). It was this broadening of the concept of literacy which formed the basis for the complementary education programme, destined to be a permanent characteristic of the DRV education system.

The significance of the insistence on the use of Vietnamese as the sole teaching language in the DRV only became fully apparent when the DRV managed to establish a complete school system of its own, quite separate from the one controlled by the French in the occupied areas. Little else is known, however, about the DRV education system up to the time of its first major structural reform, in 1950, by which a single nine-year programme of pre-university education was introduced.

This new system offered three levels of general education. The first, corresponding to the primary cycle, incorporated grades 1 to 4. The second consisted of three years of secondary study and covered grades 5 to 7. The third was a two-year programme, extending over grades 8 and 9 (VKHGD, 1975: 79-80) (see Fig.3.3). Such a short programme necessarily concentrated on basic knowledge and issues of fundamental practical importance. Its aim was to bring basic education to as many people as possible within the shortest possible time. In a country with a very high rate of illiteracy (between 80 and 90 per cent), in the colonial period, and also in the face of a long and difficult struggle for independence, the DRV leaders had good reason to attach predominant importance to mass rather than to specialisation in education.

Under the new system, it was publicly stated that education was to be 'political' in intent. The concept of a 'neutral' or
'apolitical' education was rejected in favour of one designed to serve political ends such as the denunciation of colonialism, and schools were to be pragmatic, i.e. they had to run programmes of integrated work and study (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 11). No precise information on the curriculum is readily available, even from official DRV sources. However, we have already seen that standard 'modern' subjects introduced into Vietnam by the French formed the core of the curriculum -- there is no doubt that apart from military training, academic subjects such as history, mathematics, science, geography and literature remained as important as ever (Vu Huy Phuc, 1961: 34-5).

Beneath the surface appearance of the new structure, however, was the firm foundation of a new, anti-colonial system of education. First, the abolition by the DRV authorities of all the examinations, which had been fearful obstacles to students from socially deprived backgrounds, had a tremendous symbolic significance. Study no longer appeared as a trap, a hateful, alienating device useful only for climbing the social ladder. The publicly-declared purpose of the abolition of these unnecessary examinations was "to eliminate a degree-conscious mentality and to save the government's money and the students' energy" (Ty Thong Tin, 1950: 4-5).

Second, since technical schools were set up concurrently with the general ones from the first cycle (Fig. 3.3), they served as an outlet for students who found technical education more interesting after having obtained some basic general skills. The non-discriminatory character of the new system lay in the fact that technical students could go straight into the university, like those graduating from general schools, presumably to pursue their technical training at the higher level. Though the lack of detailed information prevents us from commenting on the results of the new system's operation, it can be stated that genuine preparations were made for the further development of an education system based on the promotion of equality.

Apart from the popular education programme, the DRV also had to devote its limited funds and facilities to the training of professional people for wartime exigencies in Vietnam. Considering the difficulties -- financial, military, political and geographical --
faced by the DRV during its infancy, its attempts to lay the groundwork for tertiary education were quite impressive. In October, 1947—little more than a year after the evacuation of the DRV headquarters from Hanoi—a School of Medicine and Pharmacy was set up in the depths of the Việt Bắc mountains. Perhaps deserving of most credit was the painstaking effort that the teaching staff devoted to the task of translating and developing a Vietnamese medical vocabulary suitable for teaching purposes (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 12).

In the 1950s, despite the obvious material difficulties, the development of university-level and technical secondary schools was rapid. Institutions of Communications and Relations, Public Works, Fine Arts, Pedagogy, Forestry and Agriculture, established mostly in the jungle between 1948 and 1954, recorded enrolments of 500 at tertiary level and more than 3000 at lower levels (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 12-13). More remarkable was the fact that the standards of these schools did not seem to be adversely affected by their extremely difficult operating conditions. The Veterinary School, for example, was known to have produced students advanced enough to gain recognition for admission to the French-controlled Hanoi University (Fall, 1954: 89).

'Politicisation' was also an important element in the 1950 reform of higher education. As in the case of lower-level education, 'politicisation' here represented above all an attempt to 'pragmatise' the study programme. Education was to be tailored to meet the demands of the war effort, and should be practical, simple and efficient:

Politicisation of the university means that in every educational field, whether it be in natural science or the social sciences, fine arts or technology or physical training, one must fulfil the duty of serving people in the liberation war, and everyone working in the universities is a soldier on the liberation front of the people. To realise this, all the fields of higher learning must follow the government policy in each period...to commit the greatest effort and energy to the training of cadres needed for that period.  

(Nguyễn Khánh Toản, 1972: 382)
The Building of Socialism

As the struggle to expel the French drew to a close, culminating in the Điện Biên Phủ victory of May, 1954, the DRV wasted no time in 'setting off along the road to socialism'. There is little doubt that education at this time was geared to this intent. The first task in education for the Hanoi government after the war was to unify the two systems of education -- the 'resistance' programme of nine years and the French twelve-year one inherited from the colonial administration. The second, and probably more important task was the creation of political awareness in the young generation. In 1955 the Central Committee of the Vietnam Workers' Party resolved that:

...it is essential to recognise and consolidate general education, unify the two systems of education...To train educational cadres on the ideological and political plane, and look after their material life. To give complementary education to cadres, particularly those in villages having carried out land rent reduction or agrarian reform. To continue to develop popular education...

(Vietnamese Studies, 1971: 177)
This party resolution undoubtedly formed the basis for the second educational reform launched by the Hanoi government in 1956.

First, the French system was abolished. Then the nine-year system from the old days of the resistance was changed into a ten-year programme, with one more year added to Level III (Fig. 3.4). With this major change in the structure, there followed a change in the curriculum. Politics was made a compulsory subject which stressed Marxism-Leninism as the only political philosophy acceptable in the new society. Productive labour became an official subject, taking up two hours per week (VKHGD, 1975: 107).

Soon after the end of the war, Ho's administration ordered the dissolution of private institutions of education and announced the absolute leadership of schools by the Party. Even the Lycée Albert Sarraut, the last remaining outpost of French culture in the North, which was still in operation because of an earlier contract, had to conform strictly to government regulation. Though the school itself was financed by French government funds, only three French teachers -- of mathematics and French -- were allowed to remain (Fall, 1967: 187).

As might be expected, socialist construction in the DRV did not proceed without problems. There were times when group contradictions threatened social stability, and the problem of political conciliation became a priority issue for the government. One of the contradictions whose open manifestation had far-reaching effects on school organization in the North was the Nhân Văn Giai Phạm scandal. This public criticism by a group of liberal intellectuals broke out in Hanoi in 1956-57. When it seemed to have got out of hand, causing much damage to the Party's image and reputation, what had appeared at first as tolerance from the authorities turned into outright repression. Although no rectification campaign was launched against intellectuals as a group, these events did have some impact on the reorganisation of the school system. This political 'crisis', further complicated by the abortive peasant rebellion in November 1956 in protest at the ruthless implementation of the land-reform policy, forced the Party to tighten its grip on education even more firmly than before.
In the summer of 1958, "political rectification" (ohen huấn) meetings were convened for more than 3000 teachers at levels II and III. At the meetings the teachers were repeatedly warned of the continuing need to have a "strict leadership of the Workers' Party" in school, the Party being defined as "the instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat" and also "the fortress of socialism" (VKHGD, 1975: 110). On the other hand, the importance of politics at school for students was further stressed in the Party Central Committee's directive of January 30, 1959. In consequence, the time allotted to politics rose to two or three hours per week. In the 1960s, the government ordered the leading political official in each province -- who was also a high-ranking Party member -- to assume direct responsibility for schools in his and other areas. This official had to see to it that no deviation from the party line took place within schools at levels II and III (VKHGD, 1975: 118). This merely serves to confirm our observation about hegemony in the earlier section dealing with the RVN, i.e. if the aim of a hegemonic power is to obtain popular support through consent, then it first makes sure of its potential coercive strength.

As well as showing their determination to ensure the complete loyalty of the schools, the DRV leaders made strenuous efforts to
improve the quality of education, and continued their efforts to bring education to the masses. By 1958, the Hanoi authorities claimed to have eliminated illiteracy in North Vietnam (Hoàng Từ Đồng, 1971: 27). To avoid a quick reversion to illiteracy, as had often happened before, an elaborate follow-up programme was introduced as part of the official movement of complementary education. Mass, or popular education was a matter of prime concern to the DRV government, which, perhaps more than any other regime in Vietnam, always understood the enormous political asset of mass support. In the report of the Party Central Committee at the Third National Congress, the leaders of the DRV made it clear that complementary education would continue to be "a primary task aimed at laying the groundwork for intensified ideological and political education of the working masses" (Vietnamese Studies, 1971: 179).

However, political education and 'rectification' were not all that was meant by the term "socialist revolution". The DRV regime fully realised that, as well as the construction of political consciousness, they had to "develop the productive forces, and build up the material and technical basis of socialism" (Lê Duan, 1967: 176). When the early political 'crisis' had subsided, and the level of literacy generally improved, the beginning of a 'triple revolution' was announced:

...first, revolution in the relations of productions to liquidate the exploitation of man by man; second, technological revolution, chiefly to develop the productive forces, turn small handicraft production into large socialist production, and transform our backward agricultural country into one with modern industry and agriculture; and third, ideological and cultural revolution to make Marxism-Leninism gain supremacy in our people's intellectual life, and endow our country with advanced culture and science.

(Lê Duan, 1967: 154)

It is important to note that, in this threefold revolution, the technological aspect was given repeated and unmistakable stress as the "keystone" to developments in the 1960s (Hoàng Từ Đồng, 1971: 28). Education immediately took its cue from this new line, and technical knowledge assumed prime importance during this period. Hồ's well-known advice, given years before, that "if we want to build socialism, we must create socialist people first" was apparently superseded by his new priorities in 1962: "if we want to build socialism, we must
increase production...to use the techniques well, one must have education" (in VKHGD, 1975: 139).

Complementary education now extended beyond the limits of the follow-up literacy and political propaganda courses to include "raising the cultural, scientific and technical level of workers, co-op farmers, technicians, economic managerial cadres, and mobilising them to increase productivity" (Hoàng Từ Đông, 1971: 29). Table 3.3 shows that enrolments in complementary classes decreased with time. The falling trend reveals, among other things, that attendance at complementary courses after 1960 was mainly by workers seeking to acquire higher-level technical skills.

It was only natural that the development of technical secondary schools and university-level institutions should have been pushed forward at a rapid rate when the 'technological revolution' was announced in 1961. Technical schools, usually offering three courses of 2, 2½ and 3 years, were opened for graduates of level II schools (Fig. 3.4). Upon completion of a 3-year course, students could be admitted to technical training schools at university level (Smith, 1967b: 143-144; Fig. 3.4). In the academic year 1960-61, there were 30,700 students enrolled in technical secondary schools -- an increase of fully 11 times over the enrolment of five years previously (Table 3.3). Institutions of Economics, Finance, Accounting, Banking and Foreign Trade flourished side by side with those specialising in Medicine, Architecture, Mechanics, Engineering and Food Technology (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 111-117).

The dream of turning Vietnam into a powerful, highly-industrialised nation was given particular expression with the opening of the Hanoi Polytechnic University in 1956. This institution taught the important industrial disciplines of Mechanics and Metallurgy, Electricity and Radio, Building, Civil Engineering, Hydraulics, Mining Geology, Techno-Chemistry, Mechanical Engineering and Economic Engineering (Nguyễn Khắc Viên, 1965: 90). Though geologically better favoured than the South for industrialisation, the North suffered similarly from general backwardness and a severe lack of technological know-how. The ambitious DRV was thus forced to rely on foreign sources of financial and technological aid. The Soviet-built Hanoi
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<td><strong>General</strong></td>
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<td>Level I</td>
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<td>Level II</td>
<td>7,182</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>243,047</td>
<td>608,024</td>
<td>1,208,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>2,009</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>26,102</td>
<td>62,713</td>
<td>156,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>191,650</td>
<td>815,410</td>
<td>1,900,870</td>
<td>2,654,665</td>
<td>4,523,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complementary</strong></td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1,780,615</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>894,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>30,700</td>
<td>42,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>16,700</td>
<td>29,300</td>
<td>75,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 - School enrolments by types of education in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Sources: Bộ Đại Học... (1975: 20, 30, 48); Fall (1967: 184, 185) and Vietnamese Studies (1971: 161-162)

Note: When statistics on the same items conflicted, I chose the Vietnamese sources.
Polytechnic University, in the 1957-58 academic year, for example, arranged for 50 of its 108 teaching staff (46%) to receive advice and assistance from 17 Soviet specialists. The University also sent its students to the Soviet Union\(^{26}\) or China\(^{27}\) for training -- with the intention that many of them should become teachers on their return (Nguyễn Khắc Viên, 1965: 79).

As well as the practically-oriented Polytechnic, North Vietnam had the Comprehensive University where theory-oriented research constituted the core of study. By 1964, there existed altogether 16 institutions of higher learning with an enrolment of 29,300 (Table 3.3), most branches of the study being devoted to technical education.

In contrast to the South, where French and English were generally used as the languages of instruction, universities in the DRV steadfastly stuck to Vietnamese. This was not an easy course to follow, since technical and higher education were still relatively new to Vietnam, and had been taught entirely in French before. But in the firm belief that "love for the national language cannot be separated from love for the fatherland, for independence and for liberty" (Nguyễn Khánh Toản, 1968: 10), the DRV maintained the commitment to the use of the Vietnamese language which it had made in the resistance war against the French.

The complementary education programme was not restricted to the lower levels; it also formed a vital part of higher education. This enabled a large part of the young population to obtain university education -- through correspondence and evening classes -- while working in factories or in agriculture. The first university class held in a factory was attended by 54 workers in Hanoi on July 4, 1960. On-the-spot training proved so popular that in 1964 it was reported that working students (60,000) outnumbered regular students by 3 to 2.3\(^{28}\) (Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 206). Higher education, then, was not the preserve of a minority with wealth and power -- the usual criteria for acceptance at tertiary institutions in colonial Vietnam. Neither was it a mass producer of unemployed young people, as it was in the RVN. In the North, it seems genuinely to have improved the cultural and technical skills of ordinary workers and peasants, and
at the same time produced professionally-trained people of the kind required by a poor society embarking on a course of rapid social and technical change, if the official DRV statistics are to be believed.

**Education and the Air War**

On February 7, 1965, the US began its heavy 'punitive' bombing of North Vietnam. The widespread, continuous and often indiscriminate attacks disrupted normal activities, severely affected economic development and caused great damage to the infrastructure of the education system.

Despite a massive evacuation of schools to the countryside, DRV education suffered great physical loss even in the first year of the bombing. American attacks during that time reportedly destroyed 134 educational institutions in the North. The Teachers' College at Vinh alone received several tons of bombs, had to move three times and hold classes near escape tunnels (In Đoạn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 210). The war drove thousands of regular students and teachers out of school and into emergency production and military service. 'Education for socialism' was forced brutally to revert to 'education for resistance'.

Within a matter of months, all the multi-storey brick schools, laboratories and libraries had been evacuated. Classes were held in peasant-type huts scattered around the country, often in the jungles or mountains. Young people, their studies over, were expected to live up to the "Three Readies", i.e. "ready to fight; ready to join the army; ready to go anywhere and do anything required by the Fatherland" (Bố Đại Học..., 1975: 55). Consequently, the academic year was reduced drastically to six or sometimes only three months (Đoạn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 210). The curriculum was reduced and re-organised to respond to the new circumstances.

In the heat of war, the Hanoi government decided to intensify political education. In its directive of July 3, 1965, the Party Central Committee stressed that political and 'ideological' education "constitutes a prominent task, having a decisive influence on the other activities of the school" (Vietnamese Studies, 1971: 184).
Thus, in addition to the ever-present courses on Marxism-Leninism, on the history and policy of the Party, and on communist morality, students and teachers had to absorb the "revolutionary traditions" and be trained to familiarise themselves with "the reality of psychological war and productive labour, fighting and supporting the struggle" (Bổ Đại Học..., 1975: 42). Teachers' colleges were hailed as "party schools" and teachers were supposed to "train revolutionary soldiers on behalf of the Party" (VKHGD, 1975: 184-5). With the shortening of the academic year, and students' time being given over to production and combat duty, complementary education became "more pressing than before" and remained "a primary task of education" (Vietnamese Studies, 1971: 185).

To meet the demands of the war, the curriculum was extended to cover some new subjects: first aid was incorporated as a regular subject, and all students had two weeks of military training per year. At the same time, all other subjects became 'concentrated' (see Burchett, 1966: 69-73).

The drive for intensified political education was carried on even more vigorously in establishments of higher learning. Perhaps the memory of the 1956 fiasco of the "Hundred Flowers" policy was still haunting the leaders of the DRV. No one could be sure that even after ten years of socialist education another protest by unruly intellectuals could not happen. From another angle, the DRV leadership was always highly conscious of the psychological element in warfare. It would have been surprising indeed, if the country had not undertaken an energetic programme to ensure the political loyalty of its fast-growing professional cadre.

Politics was considered so important that it was not only compulsory to study, but also 'compulsory' to pass. My informants told me that success in examinations about politics was a precondition for university graduation. Then, upon graduation, the successful candidate, in a solemn oath-taking ceremony, vowed to observe the "Three Readies" and to be "loyal to the Party and respectful to the people" (see Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1975: 211).

This overall concern with political control, however, was accompanied by a strenuous effort to maintain academic activities.
The founding of the Ministry of Professional (Technical) and Higher Education during the days of the heaviest bombing attests to this fact. The numbers of institutions at university level continued to rise. During four years of the war, 20 more schools of Building, Mining, Light Industry, Architecture, Agriculture, Medicine and Music were completed. One year after the suspension of the bombing, university enrolments amounted to 75,600 (1969-70) (Table 3.3). The growth in technical schools and student numbers was also impressive: during the same period, 101 schools were set up and student enrolments in 1969 soared to 124,700 (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 48; table 3.3).

Though the sustained bombing campaign was halted in November, 1968, and did not resume until the massive raids of 1972, the DRV remained on constant war alert until 1975. Study programmes were continually shortened, and military training remained compulsory: ten weeks for university students and five for technical secondary students (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 68). From 1968 onward students admitted to universities and secondary schools received 100% financial support from the state (Bộ Đại Học..., 1975: 58). This can be seen as one of the measures taken by the Hanoi government in preparation for post-war reconstruction planning.

CONCLUSION

It has been my purpose to show in this chapter how education relates to the social environment of which it is part. This relationship between education and the wider society has usually been considered in terms of the dominant group's views on the needs of the society. Education serves its purposes and helps consolidate hegemony. This has been illustrated by the fact that, under each regime in Vietnam, there was a different 'pattern' of education corresponding closely to the trends in social development favoured by the governments concerned. War, for example, affected all regimes in Vietnam, but produced different reactions and led to the rise of different educational structures in each. While the promotion of farming and artisanship under the French corresponded closely with the exploitative purpose of colonialism, the emphasis on commerce and industrial-technical skills in the RVN was a response to a more complex colonial situation which
developed there. Education in the DRV reflected that society's principle of total opposition to colonialism and imperialism in both theory and practice. Its curricular emphasis on politics and technology, and its educational structure, reflected and responded to the demands of the objective condition of an anti-imperialist war. To say this, however, is not the same as to claim that every aspect of education in the DRV was diametrically opposed to what took place under the colonial regime. It certainly does not mean that the DRV, in fighting a total war against colonialism, rejected every manifestation of colonial rule in Vietnam. The basic constituents of a modern education system were originally introduced into Vietnam by the French colonialists, and were found to have survived intact in the DRV system. The subjects taught included mathematics, science, history, geography and physical education.

Social conflict was common to all three regimes. Yet the nature of it seems to have been quite different in each case, leaving different marks on each system of education. While the suppression of academic education for the indigenous people was characteristic of the colonial regime, and could only be induced to relax by protests, revolts and outside threats (i.e. Japanese power), the expansion and intensification of American-style education presented a threat to the interests of a number of groups in the RVN, resulting in numerous violent protests. The ever-present threat or reality of war in the DRV seems to have been a major factor in uniting the population against the enemy. Yet social conflict and revolt still broke out from time to time; the official reaction in each case seems to have been an intensification of political education.

The fact that politics was given an important formal position in the DRV school curriculum may appear at first sight to contrast sharply with what occurred under the other regimes in Vietnam. But the difference is only apparent. Politics in one guise or another was an essential component in the curriculum established under all three regimes. We have already seen how the infrastructure of a society determines the shape of the education system which it develops. We have also seen how, in both
the colonial and the RVN periods, fundamental political consider­
ations determined the content of particular educational programmes, leaving aside the question of the systems' structure. The cam­
paign to re-introduce Confucian political teachings in the guise of 'Oriental Humanities', promoted by the French colonial rulers in the wake of the political and economic crises of the 1930s, and the content of the 'community education' programmes launched in the context of an intense 'ideological war' in the RVN are cases in point. Under these regimes, the reality of political education generally appeared under such code words as 'civilisation', 'morality', 'democracy' and 'tradition'. Examination of the ob­
jective social conditions readily reveals the meanings behind code words and euphemisms of this kind.

Politics, then, can be taught in many ways, both direct and oblique, and all three of the regimes dealt with in our study were vitally concerned with the political instruction of schoolchildren. To what extent the same concern extended to the field of Vietnamese historiography, and the methods by which the writing of history was influenced to follow particular paths under different political regimes, will be the subject of the following three chapters.

Notes to Chapter III

1. The first Chinese-style examination was conducted in 1075.

2. Invented by a group of Portuguese and French missionaries, notably Alexandre de Rhodes, who came to Vietnam in the 17th century, quêc nguĩ is a romanised transcript of the spoken Vietnamese language. This romanised Vietnamese was first referred to by Trương Vĩnh Ký, a notable Catholic scholar, as quêc nguĩ in 1875. But it was only later, well into the 20th century, that the term, meaning 'national language' became widely accepted in Vietnam.


4. Indochina or Indochinese Union denotes the five states under French control: Cochinichina (South Vietnam), Tonkin (North Vietnam), Annam (Central Vietnam), Laos and Cambodia.

5. From now on I shall refer to quêc nguĩ as Vietnamese.
6. Also, perhaps as early as 1921, Chinese writing was introduced even into elementary classes (Chương Trình Ba Lớp..., 1936: 7).

7. In 1929, agricultural training became an integral part of elementary schooling, and in 1930 typing and shorthand constituted part of the upper-primary programme (Kelly, 1975: 62, 68).

8. For a discussion on the concept 'functional literacy', see Bee (1980: 47).

9. Figure 3.1 shows that the French programme flowed in continuity, whereas the Franco-Vietnamese one was disrupted by many examinations. It also shows that the French offered more alternatives than the local system. The requirement to learn three languages -- quốc ngữ, Chinese characters and French -- considerably delayed Vietnamese students in their progress.

10. This dilemma has also been observed in the case of India and Africa by Carnoy (1974: 142-3).

11. Kỳ Đồng, a young rebel, was arrested by the French after being defeated in an anti-French revolt. Seeing him as a young (15 years old) and intelligent boy, the French educated while banishing him to Algeria. After graduating from a French high school, he was allowed back to Vietnam only to plot another anti-French conspiracy (see Pham Cao Duong and Nguyễn Khắc Ngư, 1970: 67).

12. Albert Sarraut (in Nguyễn Văn Trung, 1963: 131) said in his own account of colonial Indochina under his governorship that he opened institutions of higher learning "so that Vietnamese...had no reason to escape Indochina to gain lessons in insurgency".

13. In the mid-1950s, when Diệm was the Prime Minister in the Bảo Đại government, he had to fight against the dissident Bình Xuyên and Hòa Hảo sects which opposed his administration.

14. By 1954, the United States was carrying up to 80% of the cost of the war (Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, 1970: 23; FitzGerald, 1972: 67; Kahin and Lewis, 1967: 32).

15. An overview of the US national interests in Southeast Asia is given by Donald E. Nuechterlein (1971).

16. According to Porter (1976: 249), during the period 1955-61, $82.5 million of the total of $186.9 million reserved for development projects "was spent on highway construction, primarily for military purposes, and public administration, most of which went for development of the South Vietnamese police".

17. For example, the subject of Home Economics was described as "preparing pupils most effectively for the three female roles:
   - doing housework
   - working to help the family
   - participation in society".
   (Tiểu Ban Kinh Tế Gia Bình, 1971: 64)
18. Financial problems were serious. One of the teachers voiced her complaint as follows:

"Although Ohio University signed with USAID to provide technology and moral support to the Thu-Duc demonstration school, in reality, aid appears to be loosely organised. Why? It's hard to say. After all, it was the Americans who encouraged the Vietnamese government to establish this institution. But now they do not seem to care. It is quite possible that either they do not really want to help the Vietnamese people ... or the local authorities in this matter are infected with the disease of misinformation."

(Le thi Nguyet Anh, 1971: 96)

19. The Baccalaureate degree was thenceforth called the "IBM Baccalaureate".

20. There were 25 schools teaching English compared with 7 teaching French (Doan Triêu Hân, 1969: 96).

21. It is known that scholars holding US degrees were looked down on by older French-trained professors, and usually (subtly) denied professorial status at the University of Saigon, whose direction was in the hands of French-educated people (Doan Viet Hoat, 1971: 259-61).

22. Among them, 3 were public (Saigon, Huế, Cần Thơ), 2 were Catholic (Dalat, Minh Đức), one Buddhist (Van Hạnh), one Cao Daist (Cao Đài), and one Hòa Hao (H阿姨 Hao).

23. Nhân Văn (Humanism) and Giao Phạm (Literary Pieces) were the two leading magazines in the liberalization movement, modelled on the Chinese "Hundred Flowers" policy, in which many renowned Vietnamese writers and scholars jointly voiced their criticism of what they believed to be the Party's repressive behaviour and its interference in literature and the Press. Among the 'rebels' were Phan Khôi, Trương Tùng, Đào Duy Anh, Trần Đức Thảo (see Fall, 1967: 188-190). According to Elliott (1976: 198-206), the Nhân Văn group also expressed its dissatisfaction to the government about the Party's policy on reunification, another sensitive issue. Some demanded a more active response to the failure of the US and the Saigon regime to abide by the provisions of the Geneva Agreement.

24. The Nhân Văn affair came to an end only in 1960, when harsh penalties were imposed on some intellectuals allegedly involved in espionage (Elliott, 1976: 526).

25. The rebellion broke out in Nghệ An, the birthplace of Hồ Chí Minh, and later spread to other parts of the country. Though it was quickly suppressed by force, it did succeed in stopping the land-reform campaign and disgracing those responsible for it: Trương Chinh, the author of the programme, was dismissed as Party Secretary, and the Minister for Agriculture was also removed (Buttinger, 1967: 913-916; Fall, 1967: 154-158).
26. In 1959, close to 100 graduates (out of 700) were sent to the USSR for higher training (in Đoàn Việt Hoạt, 1971: 208).

27. No statistics are available on the number of students sent to China, but one can assume that it was lower than the number sent to the USSR.

28. Table 3.3 shows that in 1964 regular university students totalled 29,300. If students undergoing on-the-spot training in the same year amounted to 60,000 (as claimed by Đoàn Việt Hoạt), then the ratio should be nearly 2 : 1.
CHAPTER IV

COLONIALISM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF VIETNAMESE HISTORY

The presentation of history, as I have argued earlier, is a highly selective process and is always carried out within the framework of the dominant political ideology of the period when it is written. The dominant group in a society seeks, in its interpretation of the past -- especially in the kind of interpretation imparted to the young through formal education systems -- to provide a rationale for the existing social order. In the final analysis, the purpose of historical study is to explain and justify the present, rather than to provide an 'objective' account of past events, and to contribute to an ongoing hegemonic process by the cultivation of particular conceptual orientations.

It is my intention in this chapter to examine how, and to what extent, the ideology of colonialism under the French colonial regime penetrated and coloured the writing of the Vietnamese histories used in Franco-Vietnamese schools during the colonial period. In pursuit of this aim I shall discuss the role and status of history as a subject in the school curriculum and analyse the colonial interpretation of both ancient and modern Vietnamese history.

HISTORY AS A SUBJECT IN COLONIAL EDUCATION

During the first few decades following the establishment of French colonial rule over all of Vietnam, the position of history in school curricula was as vague and confused as the education system itself. In the colony of 'Cochinchina', history -- more often that of France than of Vietnam -- was an established subject along with other Western-type courses. In the 'protectorates' of the North and Centre, the surviving Confucian system of literary education included a kind of historical study which was, of course, heavily Chinese-oriented. History was not taught in the Colleges of Interpreters, whose sole concern was the formation of an auxiliary administrative cadre, while in the co-existing system of French schools a minority of
wealthy Vietnamese learned with their French classmates about "our ancestors, the Gauls, with flaxen hair and blue eyes" in their weekly history lessons.

In the 1920s, however, the establishment of a unified Franco-Vietnamese system of education brought some order into the teaching of history to Vietnamese students. Though the very limited number of Vietnamese who managed to enter the prestigious French schools still learned about "our ancestors, the Gauls", others attending the Franco-Vietnamese schools now had a fairly uniform and well-defined history syllabus.

This did not mean, however, that history now ranked as a major subject in Franco-Vietnamese schools. Relegated to a mere half-hour per week in the elementary and complementary grades, history even then accounted for only two per cent of the total instruction time. It was allocated only one-third of the time reserved for 'moral education', and one-fourteenth of that devoted to the teaching of French (Fig.4.1a). Although, as Kelly (1975: 114) remarks, the time allotted to each subject in Franco-Vietnamese primary schools did not necessarily reflect curricular emphases because there was a considerable overlap in the material taught, the comparison between history on one hand, and moral education and French on the other is still particularly illuminating. It shows that the relative importance of a subject was determined largely by the directness with which it conveyed its political message. Thus, though both history and moral education dwelt on the 'moral duties' which bound all Vietnamese to the colonial government, the latter was in a position to impart this message in a much more consistent, direct and unambiguous manner. While a history lesson might restrict itself to listing the French achievements in Vietnam, albeit in the most flattering terms, a moral education lesson involved the direct exhortation of Vietnamese children to be "obedient and grateful to the government officials, who are working solely to bring about internal security" (Chương Trình Ba Lớp, 1936: 7).

Language skills being basic to the acquisition of all other knowledge, language teaching always absorbs a great deal of classroom time and effort, so it is not surprising that in the Franco-Vietnamese schools it should have received much more attention than did history.
Figure 4.1

(a) Time allotment in Franco-Vietnamese schools as of 1922: history as compared with French and moral education at elementary and complementary levels

Source: Kelly (1975): Tables 6 and 7 pp. 111, 113
(b) Time allotment in Franco-Vietnamese schools as from 1930: history as compared with French and moral education in the elementary and complementary curricula
What is peculiar about the situation here, though, is that in colonial education, after the first three years, the language of the coloniser -- French -- was used as the medium of instruction in all subjects (except Vietnamese).

This was undoubtedly based on sound practical reasons from the point of view of the colonial authorities responsible for education. For the purpose of furthering the colonialist hegemony -- an important aspect of which was the psychological domination of the Vietnamese -- the practice was a most potent weapon. It meant that Vietnamese students identified the foreign language, rather than their own, as the vehicle for the transmission of academic knowledge. Approaching their studies from a position of linguistic weakness and learning the colonists' language only imperfectly and in the highly artificial, structured environment of school, the students became used to seeing themselves as inferior and inarticulate, especially vis-a-vis any French person. The greater emphasis on French in the upper forms meant that the students' relative linguistic handicap grew worse as time went on; at the end of their school career they might well be barely literate in two languages, and in full command of none at all. They were -- as Memmi remarks (1965: 132) about those colonized people who are 'lucky' enough to go to school -- "saved from illiteracy only to fall into linguistic dualism". This kind of colonial dualism, from the psychological point of view, would have brought more cultural catastrophes than blessings to these 'educated' Vietnamese. They would have lived in two cultural and psychical realms and felt not only alienated from and inferior to the French but at the same time alienated from and contemptuous of the unlettered masses of their fellow Vietnamese.

This phenomenon was reinforced by the fact that in learning the French language, Vietnamese students also learned about French culture in a particularly limited way. As has been shown by Kelly (1975: 137-48), in the French-language curriculum for Franco-Vietnamese primary grades, French life was described most often in terms of food, housing, dress, villages and cities rather than "rituals" or "folkways". The main purpose of teaching these aspects of French life was to demonstrate their incontestable superiority to the Vietnamese equivalents. Thus, the colonialist ideology limited the
extent of what could be taught and, as a result, the understanding which Vietnamese students were able to form of French culture itself was a one-dimensional caricature.

During the 1930s and 1940s, in line with the 'Vietnamisation' of the Franco-Vietnamese curriculum, which in effect meant an increase in the time allotted to the Vietnamese language and the inclusion of Chinese as a subject in elementary classes, the gap between history and moral education narrowed somewhat, but not a great deal. It now accounted for a little more than one-half and nearly one-tenth of the time devoted respectively to moral education and French. But at the complementary level, the relative imbalance between history and French was even greater than before: in the proportion of about 1 : 16 (Fig. 4.1b).

The downgrading of history in the Franco-Vietnamese schools is even more marked when compared with the situation in comparable French schools. While history lessons in the former took up at most 45 minutes of the weekly teaching time, in the latter it was allocated up to two full hours. Moreover, history was an examination subject in the French schools, but in the Franco-Vietnamese system it did not have this status. In the primary certificate examination, for example, candidates from Franco-Vietnamese schools might be asked one question on history during a ten-minute oral test which also covered recitation, hygiene, science, reading and geography. But the students at the French schools at a comparable level were required to write a history essay in their examination, taking from one to two hours (Kelly, 1975: 181).

In the Vietnamese colonial context, not only was the subject of history itself neglected in schools, but the national history of Vietnam received scant attention as well. As a rule, French history was taught concurrently with Vietnamese history; and the further advanced the class, the larger the share of attention devoted to the former. This trend continued to the point where local history quite disappeared from the curriculum in the final year of the primary cycle (Kelly, 1975: 177; Nguyễn Anh, 1967: 30).
In classes where local history constituted part of the curriculum, the modern period was a major focus of study. In the preface to almost every school history book there was a reiteration of the official instruction to teachers to highlight "what the French have brought to Vietnam, their work of pacification, and developments in the fields of economics, health and education" (Chương Trình Ba Lớp, 1936: 17). Accordingly, the colonial history textbook almost always followed a pattern in which thousands of years of Vietnamese history were covered in less than one-third of the book, while developments since the arrival of the French were elaborated upon in detail in the remainder. While it is true that modern history usually receives greater attention than earlier history in almost every curriculum, the special feature of this colonial practice was the degree to which the subject was used for direct political propaganda. The fact that the French used history teaching to justify their actions so explicitly and systematically sprang from the basic situation in which the hegemony of French colonialism was established and maintained. The fact that French power had been imposed on Vietnam by the use of military force meant that the French were walking on thin ice in terms of cultural and political hegemony. They were clearly acutely aware of their insecurity in this regard, as is shown by their approach to the sensitive subject of Vietnamese history in school curricula. The little history which was taught was heavily biased toward the political purpose of extending the colonialist hegemony. Bertrand (1939: 207), a Director of the Indochinese Public Instruction Bureau, gave the following direction to history teachers in Franco-Vietnamese schools:

The reasons for the French intervention will be explained to the children. They are to be shown the legitimacy of this occupation: weak government, anarchy, invasion by foreign pirates, suffering of the people, small number of troops, etc. With regard to the growth in population, it will be shown that, thanks to France, hardships and epidemic diseases have decreased, that three-quarters of the present population of Indochina would not be alive today in the absence of this patient effort, and that they are truly the children of France, to whom they literally owe their lives.

There is evidence that the same approach was expected of those whose task it was to write history books. The extent to which these directions were followed by historiographers is the subject to which we now turn our attention.
THE 'ALIEN ORIGINS' OF THE VIETNAMESE

Though most accounts tend to give a very complicated, even confusing picture of how colonial history writers interpreted the origins of the Vietnamese people, one can take the year 1930 as the approximate date of an important watershed in the historical thinking on this subject. The pre-1930 view tended to be dominated by the Hùng legend, and the post-1930 one by accounts based on the findings of the *Ecole Française d'Extéme-Orient* (EFEO).

Following the example of traditional Vietnamese historiography, the pre-1930 view drew heavily on legendary sources for information on the early history of the Vietnamese people. In this interpretation, Chinese historical records such as *Shih-chí*, *Han-shu* and *Hou Han-shu* provided only occasional references. The post-1930 view relied on a different method, concentrating on selected Chinese historical records as major sources. Legend, in the later period, was generally dismissed as unscientific, and hence unreliable for historical purposes. The two contrasting approaches were reflected in important differences between the various accounts of ancient Vietnamese settlements and migrations.

While traditional accounts portrayed the original Vietnamese territory (the State of Văn Lang) as being centred roughly on the Red River Delta of present North Vietnam, the EFEO-based accounts located the ancient homeland of the Viet in an area which is now part of southern China. Of course, the Hùng legend contains many elements which are open to interpretation and which may be used to serve different, even competing, ideological interests. But in the particular historical conditions of Vietnam -- a country which has lived under the constant threat of Chinese expansionism -- the oral history of the Hùng and the State of Văn Lang has provided a focus for the people's struggle for national identity and independence. By tracing their remotest ancestry to Shen-nung (Than Nông), the traditional legendary forebears of the Chinese themselves (see Note 2), the Vietnamese can be seen as asserting their cultural parity with China and laying claim to independent status. The Hùng legend is widely known among Vietnamese and has a strong patriotic significance for them. But in view of the fact that the dominant feature of French colonialism was to
suppress local nationalism (Chapter III), how can we explain its presence in the history syllabus until 1930 at least, and even later?

First of all, there was a question of priority. Though the French had conquered South Vietnam by 1867, they still faced numerous difficulties in their efforts to bring the rest of the country under their control. 'Pacification' had to take priority over the establishment of a new educational system, let alone the task of rewriting history textbooks for the new colony. Even so, the seed of a new education system had already been planted by the setting up of a small number of Franco-Vietnamese schools. Teaching material had to be written in a new language, if not from a new point of view. This necessitated a Vietnamese history textbook of some sort.

It was against this background that Trường Vĩnh Ký's Cours d'histoire Annamite, the first history textbook to be written for the colonial regime, appeared in 1875. It was a response to the urgent demand of the time. In the absence of extensive research by French scholars, it is natural that the author should have relied on traditional Vietnamese accounts of their origins.

In fact, the truth or otherwise of these legends was a matter of no great concern to the French administrators at this time. It is clear that the Cours d'histoire Annamite, recounting as it did stories with which the Vietnamese pupils were already thoroughly familiar, was not really intended as a history primer. Its main purpose was to provide a further incentive for the pupils to learn French:

In writing the history of our country, I wish to familiarize you [students of Cochinchina] with this rich and beautiful language.

I expect that this exposition of facts already known to you, written in the language you are learning, will help you to grasp easily its refinement and allow you to appreciate its spirit in a most convenient way.

(Triệu Đình Vĩnh Kỳ, 1875: i)

The claim that this history textbook had been written with the major purpose of propagating the "rich and beautiful" language of the
suppress local nationalism (Chapter III), how can we explain its presence in the history syllabus until 1930 at least, and even later?

First of all, there was a question of priority. Though the French had conquered South Vietnam by 1867, they still faced numerous difficulties in their efforts to bring the rest of the country under their control. 'Pacification' had to take priority over the establishment of a new educational system, let alone the task of rewriting history textbooks for the new colony. Even so, the seed of a new education system had already been planted by the setting up of a small number of Franco-Vietnamese schools. Teaching material had to be written in a new language, if not from a new point of view. This necessitated a Vietnamese history textbook of some sort.

It was against this background that Trương Vĩnh Ký's *Cours d'histoire Annamite*, the first history textbook to be written for the colonial regime, appeared in 1875. It was a response to the urgent demand of the time. In the absence of extensive research by French scholars, it is natural that the author should have relied on traditional Vietnamese accounts of their origins.

In fact, the truth or otherwise of these legends was a matter of no great concern to the French administrators at this time. It is clear that the *Cours d'histoire Annamite*, recounting as it did stories with which the Vietnamese pupils were already thoroughly familiar, was not really intended as a history primer. Its main purpose was to provide a further incentive for the pupils to learn French:

In writing the history of our country, I wish to familiarize you [students of Cochinchina] with this rich and beautiful language.

I expect that this expose of facts already known to you, written in the language you are learning, will help you to grasp easily its refinement and allow you to appreciate its spirit in a most convenient way.

(Trương Vĩnh Ký, 1875: i)

The claim that this history textbook had been written with the major purpose of propagating the "rich and beautiful" language of the
colonialism. One of its purposes was to improve the colonisers' knowledge of all aspects of their prized possession in order that they might further consolidate their hold over it:

No nation which desires worthily to fulfil the role of protector to the barbarous races on whom it proposes to confer the benefits of civilisation can afford to remain ignorant of their ways of life and thought. The interchange of ideas is as essential to successful colonization as the exchange of commodities.

(Baudesson, 1919: xi)

It was against this colonial background that the new theories on the origins of Vietnam were formulated. A series of important historical works had begun to appear in public between 1910 and 1920. By the late 1920s, criticisms were being voiced against former textbooks for being "filled with legends which their authors presented as historical facts because of their total lack of critical spirit" (Mus, Introduction to Dương Quang Hạm, 1938: 4). In 1927, Mus (ibid.), former Chief of the Education Service of North Vietnam and Director of the Advanced School of Pedagogy in Indochina, declared that "a truly scientific way of writing the history of Annam has to be created", and that Trương Vĩnh Ký's text "no longer responds, by its methods, to the needs of modern teaching".

The denunciation of the Cours d'histoire Annamite marked a new turn in the colonial interpretation of the origins of Vietnam. The legends were still used in textbooks, but only in order to show how history should not be written; their role seems to have been restricted to a denigration, by example, of the tradition of oral history, so that the new 'scientific' theories formulated by French scholars might appear in a more favourable light. One might still ask: if the colonial authorities were so contemptuous of the legends regarding the Vietnamese ancestry, why did they bother to incorporate any of this material in their history texts? The fact that they did so is of particular significance. It shows that in fact the French remained acutely conscious of the power of these legends in keeping alive the spirit of Vietnamese nationalism and were aware that legends would continue to form part of the cultural tradition regardless of what was taught in schools, and saw no option to the chosen policy:
Stories about events going backwards from the time of the Thuc are only myths, groundless and unproven. But because they were recorded in ancient history books, and also because they are so well-known to the masses, we have to mention them in history. The teacher, however, should explain to the pupils that legends or stories about antiquity are only transmitted orally, and are not true.

(in Hạo Bảo, 1928, vol.10, No.1: 11)

Generally speaking, there were two approaches to the new interpretation of history. The first, usually reserved for the elementary classes, continued to make use of the legendary sources while concluding that "they should not be regarded as true" (Trần Trọng Kim and Đặng Đình Phúc, 1930: 8). The second, often found in advanced textbooks, presented the legends, if at all, in an unfavourable light designed to enhance the lustre of the new theory, according to which the ancestors of the Vietnamese originated in the country of Yüeh (Việt) in the lower delta of the Yangtse (Fig. 4.2):

The ancestors of the Annamese people were called Việt, who formed one of the indigenous tribes of southern China...

In the twelfth century BC they still lived in the country of Ch'ü (Sô), on the Middle Yangtse, in the region of Yi Ch'ang and of Lake Tung Ting ... and in the provinces of Hupeh, Hunan and Hu Kuang...

In the ninth century BC, the dissatisfied Ch'ü descended the Yangtse and founded the kingdom of Yüeh (Việt)... in the province of Chekiang (Chiệc Giang) ... they fought against the Ch'ü and especially the Wu... In the year 333 BC they were defeated by the Ch'ü and had to migrate en masse to the south of Ling Nan and Ta Yu Ling.

This exodus to the South later created a feudal system comprising a hundred groups (Bá or Bạch Việt) in present-day Chekiang, Fukien, Kiangsi, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Hainan and Middle Tonkin as far as the Gate of Annam.

(Nguyễn Văn Quê, 1932: 22-23)

History texts dating from 1930 onward, of which the above is typical, embraced Aurousseau's theory as the foundation on which to base future argument on the question of the origins of the Vietnamese. Leaving aside the question of its scientific value (which is now, incidentally, generally discounted), the significant point is that the new interpretation laid stress on the supposed alien origin of the Vietnamese, reducing them to immigrant status within their own country. Though there were some discrepancies between the textbook versions of
the EFEO findings and the new theories about Vietnamese ancestry, there was a consensus that these ancestors were not indigenous to the present-day territory of Vietnam. They had come from elsewhere, possibly from Tibet, as claimed by Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh (1922: 10) and most probably from the "ancient Chinese kingdom of Việt" as maintained by Dương Quảng Hạnh (1938: 16) and, indeed, by most of the colonial historians (cf. Một Nhóm Giáo Viên, 1951; Trần Văn Thúc and Ngô Văn Minh, 1939; Bùi Đình San, 1939).

From the ethnic point of view, there was much confusion in history books about the interpretation of the EFEO findings. Some, probably themselves confused by modern geographical terms, presented the 'migrant' theory in such a way that it could be interpreted as meaning that the ancient Vietnamese were ethnically indistinguishable from the present-day Chinese. Others considered the Lạc Việt (or Việt, a term commonly used to identify the ancestors of the Vietnamese) as having descended from a mixture of Indonesian and Chinese immigrants who founded Văn Lang toward the end of the third century BC (e.g. Bùi Đình San, 1939: 1). Others put together a slightly different mixture, identifying in les futures Annamites both Indonesian (i.e. Nesiot) and pre-Chinese traits (Châu Kim Dảng, 1930: 13). Despite the superficial confusion, however, there was a consistent underlying theme to the effect that, ethnically, "the ancestors of the present-day Annamites were not the first inhabitants of the land in which their descendants live today" (Patris, 1922: 21).

It is not difficult to see the implications for French colonial hegemony in a theory which attached so much importance to the supposed alien origin and immigrant status of the Việt. The attribution of mere immigrant status to ancient Vietnamese clearly lowered the value of their descendants' claim to the ownership and political control of the land which they occupied. The aim of the French seems to have been the 'scientific' elimination of any indigenous Vietnamese claim to political rights or power within the territory which was based on the argument of original occupancy. They apparently sought to reduce the whole argument to the level of social-Darwinism, basically a question of superior force, where of course they held the advantage. The French administrative authorities were fully aware of the political implications. Governor-General Paul Beau (1902-1908), for example (in Bùi Đình San, 1939: 235), sought to justify French
Figure 4.2 The origins and migration route of the ancestors of the Vietnamese: from the account based on Aurousseau's theory

We came, driven by the same need for expansion which pushed you yourselves to leave your native land to come and take this one from its first occupants.\[11\]

The logical conclusions to be drawn from the adoption by the French of this theory were indeed ominous for the Vietnamese, particularly in the light of statements like the following one, from the teaching journal Học Bào (1922, No.1: 13-14):
Vietnamese people in former times lived in Southern China, but gradually, from generation to generation, they moved South. Wherever they went, they fought and eliminated the indigenous people so thoroughly that no-one now knows anything about these people.

THE 'HISTORY OF SUBMISSION'

The next and most important stage in the history of Vietnam, one which was to last for many centuries and leave an indelible mark on the nation, was the period of Chinese occupation and domination. This episode both transformed the face of Vietnamese society and provoked a fierce resistance among its people, a resistance which in the end was to prove victorious. The history of this struggle, which of course forms a major part of the cultural heritage of practically every Vietnamese, posed special difficulties for the French administrators formulating their education programme. The defence and justification of French colonial rule was, as we have seen, an overriding principle observed in their writing of school histories. Having established the 'alien' origin of the Vietnamese, the next logical step would have been to convince their colonial subjects that foreign domination and colonisation -- first Chinese, then French -- was in fact beneficial to them, since they were basically an untutored, even a barbarous race.

The key to the French approach to the history of the Chinese conquest of Vietnam, at least at the level of public debate, and which applied equally to their own actions in their colonies, lay in the concept of the *mission civilisatrice*. Although the desire to further her military power and prestige in competition with the other European imperialist nations emerged as France's major concern in her Far Eastern colonial policy, the enduring legacy of the 18th Century Enlightenment and the Revolution of 1789 provided many of her functionaries with a unique sense of cultural mission, not immediately apparent in the seemingly cynical, pragmatic "white man's burden" view of their British rivals. While the concept of the *mission civilisatrice* was particularly associated with the earlier 'assimilation' phase of French policy toward the Vietnamese, it continued to exert a strong influence as a justification for colonialism well into the 20th century (see, e.g. Betts, 1976: 20; Cady, 1967: 267-296). Mundane and practical
considerations such as the need for raw materials and overseas markets were of course discussed, but not at the level of public rhetoric. When addressing Vietnamese audiences, the French rulers liked to pontificate at length, and often, about their firm commitment to the causes of progress and humanism, and to the moral and material improvement of their colonial subjects. In the context of the actual situation in Vietnam, of course, concepts such as these concealed from both sides the reality of the economic exploitation which was so basic to the hegemony of colonialism. The parallels which the French perceived between their own role in Vietnam and that of the Chinese in former times would naturally have led them to explain the Chinese domination of Vietnam in similar terms.

It is not my purpose here to draw too close a parallel between Chinese feudal imperialism and French industrial and mercantile capitalism as colonial systems, with regard to their activities in Vietnam. What is important here is the fact that the French colonialist ideology required the use of various means, including and especially formal education, to convey to the Vietnamese the idea that submission to a superior, foreign 'civilising' power was a natural and inevitable result of their backwardness, a major and normal feature of their national history, and ultimately of great benefit to them.

The Experience of Chinese Domination

In order that the Chinese conquest and occupation of Vietnam might be portrayed essentially as a liberating and civilising experience, the French had first to interpret the early history of Vietnam in a way which showed that its people at that time had need of such improvement. In the accounts of this period found in colonial history textbooks, one encounters numerous emotive and pejorative terms such as 'barbarous', 'primitive', 'rudimentary', 'savage', etc. used to describe the early Việt culture.

The alleged backwardness of this culture was presented in different ways according to the level of the class being taught. In textbooks written for junior classes, the usual approach was to
make very little mention of the early Việt society -- the subject was covered in a page or less, and presented in a way which gave the impression that the society was so simple and backward that no more detailed treatment was warranted. Mention was usually made of its agriculture (the use of stone hoes, and irrigation techniques based on tide movements), warfare (bronze arrowheads, dipped in poison), religion (nature worship and animism), folk customs (betel chewing, tattooing, teeth blackening) and broad social organisation (a simple form of clan-feudalism). While it may certainly be true that the sketchiness of this description was due in large part to the paucity of the information then available, the attitude of colonial historians toward that culture is clearly indicated by the supercilious and condescending tone adopted.

In fact, though readers of colonial history textbooks may not have been aware of it, most of the information about the early Việt culture presented there as fact was taken straight from old Chinese dynastic histories, written under the supervision of Chinese court officials. These were government reports, primarily concerned with matters of administration, and prepared for the information of the Imperial authorities, so of course they contained little information about the 'barbarians' except that which was relevant to the key administrative areas of public order, military security and the collection of taxes. Not only were they heavily sinocentric, as might be expected, but they also adopted a markedly contemptuous tone in their accounts of the peoples regarded by the Chinese as their inferiors, especially those, such as the Việt, who inhabited border regions and had been subdued by force. It is significant that the colonial historians not only uncritically accepted as true the 'facts' derived from these sources, but also tended to repeat word for word the derogatory comments accompanying them. Epithets such as 'barbarous', 'primitive', 'immoral' and 'savage' were freely used in the Chinese accounts of the Việt culture, and were faithfully reproduced, as mentioned before, in French colonial histories. Clearly, the two conquerors' regimes -- Chinese and French -- had, despite their important differences, a common attitude toward their subjects which sprang from their similar objective situations as colonisers on an occupied territory.
In the more advanced history classes, particularly at the post-high school (supplementary college) level, colonial textbooks were much more explicit in their denigration of the Viêt culture. Though there was still a lack of reliable information, this was compensated by the exercise of 'vivid imagination', a quality apparently considered something of a virtue among colonial historians. What now emerged was a rather picturesque and fanciful description, larded with digressions and explicit value judgments. Patris (1922), in his 'reconstruction' of the Red River delta civilisation in the Hùng period, in a region described as "offering hardly anything to human use other than unhealthy marshes" (p.28), gives the following account of the military organisation (or lack of it) of the Viêt:

One can imagine what life in the towns was like at that time. In time of war, the recruitment of soldiers was almost automatic, and they assembled under the command of the lord, who deliberated with his relatives and associates on the measures to be taken. He then led this untrained army, ignorant of military science, very poorly disciplined, a strange and colourful horde. For defence, they raised earth ramparts about the village, or carried the offensive into the territory of their neighbours, in very brief raids, not particularly murderous, all inspired by the desire for pillage and the attraction of booty.

(Patris, 1922: 30)

To be sure, the exercise of a vivid imagination is by no means necessarily a serious fault in the writing of history texts. But neither can it be argued, as Patris did (op.cit.: 8), that such a procedure is "purement scolaire". The question at issue here, though, is not whether it was right that historical accounts should have been embroidered and enlivened, but the extent to which the writing of such accounts actually served to further the dominant ideology of colonialism — in this case, by encouraging the reader to share a mocking and contemptuous attitude. To illustrate this point, we only have to compare the above passage with a similar one written about the ancestors of the French themselves, which also appeared in a text studied by Vietnamese pupils:

The Gauls loved war and great feasts. They were brave, and had a gay and adventurous spirit. They feared only one thing, it is said: "that the sky would fall on them". There was a permanent state of war between the various Gallic tribes. But Gallic warriors also went
to fight against their neighbours ... these wars, undertaken in search of wealth, did not create a spirit of nationalism among the Gauls...

(Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vinh, 1922: 79)

The differences in tone and vocabulary are as plain as is the indication that neither Việt nor Gaul was particularly highly 'civilised'. And one would think an account of the Gauls' culture and military skills written by their Roman conquerors would probably not quite reproduce this hearty and affectionate view of them.

In attempting to explain the 'slow progress' of the Việt civilisation, colonial textbooks put forward the theory that its geographical and cultural isolation was to blame. According to this view, the culture had remained in a primitive state for so long because it had met no challenge from outside. The necessary condition for its escape from backwardness, it was implied, was the intervention of a superior, foreign civilisation. In the words of Patris (1922: 316):

The Annamite people must obey the invariable law regarding racial evolution; that is, peoples, or individuals, can only progress when pushed by a necessary mechanism: the need for having contacts with peoples more civilised than themselves.

Such a view was not confined to Patris, whose book was hailed by the Chief Resident of Central Vietnam (Pasquier) as being "indispensable to the young elite of this country, who are far too ignorant of its history, its origins..." (letter-preface to Patris, op.cit.: 6). Typical of the social-Darwinist mentality in its confusion of racial and social evolution, it had widespread influence even among Vietnamese historians, particularly those most notorious for their collaboration with the colonial authorities, such as Hoàng Cao Khải (1971: 11):

...the Hồng Bàng17 ruled for more than two thousand years. During this period there was no record of struggle. When King Thục An Dương conquered Văn Lang and destroyed the Hồng Bàng, a struggle between similar states broke out. When Ch'in Shih-huang-ti invaded our country, struggle and competition with foreigners became sharper. Western philosophers have said: "competition or struggle is the mother of progress".
Considered within the framework of a colonial system already in place, both Patris' "contact with more civilised peoples" and Hoàng Cao Khải's "competition and struggle" can be seen as pointing in the same direction: to encourage the Vietnamese students to accept that foreign occupation could be a normal, even desirable state of affairs, once they assumed the natural inferiority of their own people. The "invariable law" which Patris insisted that the Vietnamese "must obey" was plainly designed to convince the "young elite" that domination by more-civilised foreigners, be they ancient Chinese or modern French, was their only hope of overcoming their deplorable state of backwardness.

This line of thinking was further encouraged by the rather one-sided and idealised picture of the Chinese colonial rule presented in history books, which laid particular stress on its 'civilising' influence. In the view of Hoàng Cao Khải (op.cit: 31), the Chinese occupation was entirely beneficial in this respect:

Han emperors sent their officials to educate our people, who then learned and understood the Chinese language and literature. From Hán Võ Đế [Han Wu-ti] to Hán Hiến Đế [Han Hsien-ti], a period of three hundred years, the Chinese sent their officials to govern our country and civilise our people. So the old race of Giao Chỉ [Chiao-chi] became assimilated and transformed into a Vietnamese people.

The willing surrender of autonomy implied here, the reliance on a foreign deus ex machina to bring the magical gifts of literacy and civilisation, indicates a mentality of dependence and submissiveness ideally suited to the hegemony of French colonialism.

The work by Hoàng Cao Khải, and in particular the above passage, is perhaps among the more extreme cases. But, generally speaking, the spirit which it expresses is typical of its time, and is present in every colonial textbook to a greater or lesser degree. Despite its crudeness of expression and apparent lack of logic, the sentence referring to the transformation of the old race of Giao Chỉ into a "Vietnamese people" through the influence of the Chinese gives an accurate idea of the message which all colonial textbooks sought to convey: that any radical improvement or transformation of Vietnamese society could only come about through the intervention of a foreign
power. The clear implication is that, without the Chinese invasion, the Vietnamese nation would never have emerged at all. This message was conveyed even through the arrangement of the material. It is significant that most colonial history texts, while giving very little space to the Việt culture, devoted their first substantial chapters to descriptions of Chinese civilisation (e.g. Nguyễn Văn Quê, 1932: 7-28; Châu Kim Đăng, 1930: 8-11; Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, 1922: 7-8). They apparently sought to convey the idea that a knowledge of Chinese culture was a prerequisite for understanding the Vietnamese one. In fact, colonial historians referred to Vietnam as a 'spiritual son of China' (Nguyễn Văn Quê, 1932: 4).

In the actual texts, this message was of course much more explicit. As a rule, Chinese domination was made synonymous with improvement and progress. Students were taught that reforms introduced by the Chinese overlords penetrated every aspect of the Viet society. In agriculture, the polished stone hoe was replaced by draught animals and ploughs, and slash-and-burn cultivation methods by settled farming and irrigation. Progress was also recorded in clothing and footwear: formerly naked, or nearly so, the Viet adopted proper Chinese clothes complete with hats and shoes. But the improvement which seems to have won the greatest admiration in colonial history textbooks was that achieved in the spheres of education, philosophy and morality. Textbooks emphasised the benefits of Chinese education and Confucian ethics and dwelt on the consequent refinement which they brought to Vietnamese customs and morals. The "barbaric custom" of levirat (Patris, 1922: 37) by which a widow was remarried to her deceased husband's brother, and the alleged penchant for licentiousness and sexual promiscuity (Maspéro, 1918: 10) displayed by the Vietnamese during their annual fertility rites were said to have been restrained by the introduction of formal Chinese marriage procedures and strict Confucian sexual mores. The Chinese governors and other officials responsible for bringing about these advances in respectability were singled out for special praise; the list included Hsi Kuang (Tích Quang) and Jen Yen (Nhậm Diện).

Even the final defeat of the Chinese occupiers in 939 AD, their expulsion from Vietnamese territory, and the subsequent centuries of successful defence against further Chinese attacks, were presented by colonial historiographers in a way which strove to give a minimum of
credit to the Vietnamese themselves. The colonial view was that
the very national consciousness which had enabled the Vietnamese
to triumph was itself a product of Chinese ideas and institutions,
hence a further and crowning reason for the Vietnamese to feel
gratitude toward their colonisers. This thesis was propounded in
detail by the EFEO scholar Maspéro (1918: 27):

If Annam, after becoming independent, was able for
centuries to resist Chinese aggression, while all
other neighbours -- Yeh-Lang, Tien, Nan Chao --
gradually succumbed, it was because it was the only
one to have been for centuries subjected to perma­
nent Chinese government; this, by breaking the
particularist institutions and local groups, and by
introducing Chinese ideas and social organisation,
gave it a cohesion and a formal structure that
never existed in its neighbours.

Simplistic and inaccurate though this view has now been shown
to be, it soon gained currency in the historians' circle, and was
adopted as the standard one in school textbooks. Some of these
borrowed at length from Maspéro or Aurousseau on this point to sup­
port their view that the Vietnamese owed everything, even their
national identity, to the efforts or example of foreign colonisers.
Diệp Quang Ham (1938: 30), for example, used the following extract
from Aurousseau:

Having at last shed the burden of the past, the Annamites
... became adapted to the Chinese regime. In spite of
some unhappy experiences, the Vietnamese profited from
this salutary and beneficial regime: by having been sub­
jected to it, they were able to draw from it, along with
a taste for order and cohesion, the national spirit and
disciplined force which enabled them to organise them­selves so that, ten centuries later, they could triumph
over their masters who had instructed them at the same
time as they dominated them...

Of course, historical arguments in favour of sinicisation were by
no means an invention of the French. Most of them had first appeared
long before in the Chinese dynastic records, whose rather arrogant tone
and sinocentric bias has already been mentioned. In spite of this
fact, and even though these histories often provide the only written
accounts still extant of the period in question, careful study of them
reveals that they are sometimes open to a very different interpretation
to that provided in the French-oriented colonial history texts.
Jennifer Holmgren (1980: 6-10), for example, in her study of these sources, argues that much of the benefit derived from the process of sinicisation was not in fact intended for the indigenous population at all. In the early stages of the Han domination, 'sinicisation' was merely a response to, and an attempt to accommodate, the influx of Chinese immigrants fleeing southward at the end of the Former Han. The more advanced methods of farming introduced by the Chinese were necessary in order to feed this immigrant population and to supply the Chinese coastal shipping in search of luxury items from Vietnam. In fact, the indigenous people suffered from the consequent drastic changes to their agricultural economy, which resulted in "the best lands being appropriated by new settlers, with increasing numbers of native people conscripted into Chinese reclamation and building projects" (op.cit.: 7). In a similar way, the introduction of Chinese education and the setting up of schools by the Chinese literati in Vietnam at that time may have been intended for the benefit only of the children of their own ethnic group: "the educational activities of Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen were designed primarily to place the Chinese in Tongking on an equal cultural footing with their northern counterparts" (op.cit.: 10).

There is evidence that both Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen made conscious attempts to impose Chinese patrilocal social rules and exogamy on the Việt society, whose approach to sexuality, marriage and family structure was radically different to their own. But to call this an improvement in morality, as colonial textbooks did, is clearly to make a value-judgment in favour of the foreign intervention. Colonial historiographers often laid stress on what they saw as a benevolent Chinese intent when describing their efforts to sinicize the Việt people, but the facts do not seem to support this view. Whatever benefit accrued to the indigenous people as a result of their sinicization in the early period of the occupation was at best an unintended by-product of Chinese attempts to improve the situation of the Chinese settlers themselves. There is no record of systematic Chinese efforts to sinicize the population en masse until after the crushing of the Trũng rebellion in 43 AD (see Holmgren, 1980: 6-10). This indicates that sinicization, when eventually attempted, was conceived as a deliberate remedial policy aimed at limiting the chances of further insurgency, and was certainly not based on benevolent intentions. It may well be that what eventually emerged from this
enforced sinicization worked in general to the advantage of the Việt people. History is replete with examples of people using the ideas and techniques of their enemies as weapons against them. But this should not blind us to the facts of the original intent of the Chinese in the colonisation. Within the existing context of feudal imperialism, sinicization must be seen in terms of its potential for repression and exploitation. It is no accident that the need for 'stability' in the South seems to have followed the increasing prestige of the "Celestial Court" and the consequent demand for a steady supply of luxury items such as ivory, rhinoceros horn, peacocks, parrots, drugs, spices, aromatic woods and coral. 21

In any case, the view generally presented by colonial textbooks, which was that Vietnam in the pre-Chinese period was a primitive and backward society, is not widely supported today. Anthropological, archaeological and demographic evidence (some of which is taken from Han census statistics compiled in AD 2 and 140) shows that Vietnamese society came under Chinese domination when it was already at a relatively high level of economic and cultural development. It enjoyed normal and stable population growth (Taylor, 1980: 148-50, 161), and has been shown to have been a settled and well-stratified society, characterised by wet-field agriculture, trade and the existence of a leisured aristocracy (Holmgren, 1980: 7; Eberhard, 1968: 435; Pearsons, 1962: 30-31). The need to justify foreign intervention seems to have directed the thoughts of colonial historiographers along different lines.

An examination of the colonial treatment of two other historical events lends further support to the thesis that the histories of Vietnam written in the colonial period were tailored to serve the colonial purpose. The first refers to the rule of Chao T'o (207 - 137 BC) and the second to the rebellion of the Trưng sisters (40 - 43 AD). Chao T'o (also known by the Vietnamese version of his name, Triệu Đà) was a Chinese commissioner sent South to fight against the Việt by the Emperor Ch'in. He later became an assistant to Jen Hsiao (Nhâm Ngao), Governor of the military region of Nan-hai (then capital of present-day Kwangtung). On the latter's death, and following his suggestion, Chao T'o set out to conquer the neighbouring lands, seizing the opportunity provided by political disorder in the North and the decline of the
Ch'in. In 207 BC, after completing his conquest of other Chinese military regions and Âu Lạc (the land of the ancient Việt under the Thục, who at this time recognised the nominal authority of the Ch'in), he declared independence from China and proclaimed himself king of the state of Nan-yűeh (Nam Việt), a large territory covering the present area of Kwangsi, Kwangtung and Northern Vietnam. In colonial history books, Chao T'o enjoys an exceptional reputation. He is consistently portrayed as the first real king of Vietnam and a champion of national independence.

Chinese records indeed show that under Chao T'o's rule there was generally peaceful coexistence between his officials and the Việt people. The administration of large areas of Âu Lạc, though nominally in the hands of his Chinese governors, was generally left to local Việt chieftains. Sinicization, where it occurred, was a comparatively painless and gradual process of cultural accommodation (de Crespigny, 1966: 52). Even Chao T'o himself was known to have become 'barbarized' to a degree. It was reported that, in 196 BC, when receiving a Han envoy, he appeared "with hair in a chignon and squatting" in the manner of the indigenous people (Taylor, 1976: 45-6).

In spite of all this, however, Chao T'o's reputation in colonial textbooks as "the pioneer of Vietnamese national independence" (Hoàng Cao Khải, 1971: 58) seems ill-deserved in view of the inescapable fact that he came to Âu Lạc as an alien conqueror. It is, after all, in these same textbooks that we are informed that Chao T'o had to fight hard to overcome the resistance of Âu Lạc, only succeeding in the end through recourse to trickery.\(^{22}\) The story of Chao T'o's bringing civilisation to a savage race\(^{23}\) must have appealed to modern colonial historians seeking to justify in retrospect their military conquest of Vietnam; in other words, it was a justification for imperialism. Objectively, perhaps, Chao T'o may indeed be seen as a great Vietnamese national figure, but only in the narrow sense that William, Duke of Normandy, for example, was a great English one. Furthermore, the implication that 'real' Vietnamese history only began with the Chao (Bùi Đình San, 1939: 14) neatly consigns all earlier events to the realm of legend and myth, labelled 'unreliable: not to be taken seriously'. It is of interest to note that this view is seriously challenged by recent archaeological discoveries.\(^{24}\) In its time,
however, it rendered good service to the cause of colonialist hegemony.

A similar line of argument can be detected in the colonial account of the Trưng rebellion of 40 AD. Since the consequences of colonial occupation had to be shown as essentially beneficial to the Việt, any act of revolt by them had to be attributed to a relatively trivial cause such as the personal misdeeds of an isolated and over-zealous colonial administrator:

The cruel and tyrannical administration of Chinese governors was the principal cause of all patriotic uprisings which occurred during the period of Chinese domination.

(Bùi Đình San, 1939: 26)

According to this view, the Trưng uprising could be traced to the cruelty and avarice of the Chinese governor Su Ting, who ruled Giao Chỉ probably from 37 to 40 AD. More specifically, it was often stressed in textbooks that the direct cause of Trưng Trắc's revolt was the death of her husband, Thi Sách, on Su Ting's orders. It is interesting to note that, while Chinese histories showed that Su Ting was indeed unusually cruel and greedy, information on his alleged killing of Thi Sách is conspicuous by its absence. The 'Account of the Southern Barbarians' in Hou Han-shu (vol.3: 1227a) says of Trưng Trắc's background that she was:

a daughter of the chieftain of Mê Linh (Mi-ling) province. She was married to Thi Sách, a native of Chu Dien (Chu yüan). Trưng Trắc was a woman of courageous and warlike nature. After Su Ting, governor of Giao-Chí, had restrained her by legal means, Trưng Trắc became very angry, and rebelled. After that, the barbarians in the provinces of Giao Châu (Chiu-chen), Cửu Nam (Jih-nan) and Họp Phố (Ho p'u) all joined them and they captured sixty-five towns.

The account by Li Tao-yuan (527: vol.6, Fascicle 37, p.62) in Shui-ching Chu even suggests that Trưng Trắc herself had persuaded her husband to take part in the organisation of the insurrection, and that both of them had actually fought in the battle and finally been captured by Chinese soldiers.

It appears that the information on Su Ting's killing of Thi Sách comes from some early Vietnamese sources, traceable as far back
as the *DVSK* which was written during the Lê Dynasty of the 15th century, when Sung Confucianism enjoyed major influence in intellectual and administrative circles. A connection can easily be seen between this form of neo-Confucianism and the interpretation of the Trưng episode in the *DVSK* in its inability to accept that a woman might be a leader in her own right. The idea that Trưng Trắc's initial revolt was the result of her husband's mistreatment at the hands of a Chinese official also attributed an orthodox Confucian motive (loyalty to, and dependence on, her husband) to her action, and must have appealed to neo-Confucian historians. Their attitude is clearly indicated by the author of *DVSK*, who right at the beginning of his account of this event remarked that Trưng Trắc "as a female monarch, was destined to fail finally in regaining permanent independence for the country" (Ngô Sĩ Liên, 1964: 129).

Colonial historians readily embraced this interpretation, apparently without feeling any need to question it. The tendency to characterise armed revolt as the expression of a mere personal grievance rather than as serious resistance to colonisation as such would have been as natural to them as it was to Confucian historians. Insofar as the facts of colonial exploitation and repression were ignored, and thus consigned to irrelevancy, in any interpretation of local revolt, the French would doubtless have welcomed it. In the case of the Trưng rebellion, it would have been all the easier for the French to accept the *DVSK* version since it was the one which had been written by Vietnamese themselves and passed down over centuries.

However, the explanation for the cause of the Trưng rebellion which was adopted in the colonial textbooks now appears to have been somewhat simplistic, if not completely wrong. Recent historical work shows that there was probably little connection between Su Ting and the revolt, whose causes stemmed from earlier events, such as the problem which arose with the arrival of large numbers of Chinese immigrants toward the end of the Wang Mang period. Local Chinese officials like Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen also contributed to the rebellion by attempting to force sinicisation on the indigenous population of the North (Holmgren, 1980: 5; Taylor, 1976: 54-5).

Thus, through the selection and interpretation of sources and facts, colonial historians once again were able to find historical
support for modern imperialism. This is not to suggest that these historians indulged in the deliberate falsification of history. Their bias was most often expressed through the simple adoption of a condescending, sometimes apparently even contemptuous, attitude toward the Vietnamese people and their alleged national traits. Patris (1922: 116-7), for example, in his *manuel scolaire* (for use in colleges of higher education) elaborated thus on the reported defection of some indigenous chieftains in the final defeat of the Trưng rebellion:

The cowardice of such men may be judged as severely as it deserves, but their attitude shows us that the unfortunate Trưng Trắc could only count on her soldiers for as long as fortune continued to smile on her. Annamite history has too many examples of such a mentality as we see here, imposing respect for the law of the strongest, while in other circumstances appearing as the triumph of trickery and duplicity.

It is, as I have already argued in Chapter I, unrealistic to expect those who engage in making reconstructions of history to refrain from making moral judgments. The above statement, written as it was within a particular colonial context, shows how completely historical thinking in that period was dominated by the ideology of colonialism: the clear implication was that the military subjugation of the Vietnamese was the result of their own moral defects, which, being inherent characteristics, were responsible for their loss of independence in the modern age as well.

Although colonial textbooks acknowledged, or rather made no attempt to discourage, the traditional popular veneration for the Vietnamese heroines, the Trưng rebellion was portrayed by them not as a struggle against foreign oppression, but as a confrontation between certain disgruntled high-ranking individuals, or at best a minority group, and a person named Su Ting who happened to be abusing his official powers. The defeat of the Trưng revolt, therefore, according to the textbooks, was inevitable: as a personal and isolated event, it would have had no support from the masses of the Vietnamese people and would have met with early defeat. While it may well be true that this rebellion was in no way a 'national' uprising since Vietnam at that time was not yet a strong and unified 'nation', it would be a mistake to ignore the fact that there was a
power struggle between the local elites and those who ruled on behalf of an imposed colonial structure (Holmgren, 1980: 15-6). It is within the context of this structural relationship characteristic of Vietnamese society at that time that the Trương episode can be interpreted as a resistance to foreign domination.

Looked at from the colonialist point of view of these textbooks, the eventual victory of the Chinese general Ma Yüan (Mã Viên) over the Trương Sisters thus represented the victory of civilisation over anarchy, of power, technique and order over a weak and lawless rabble. The moral message, reinforcing earlier interpretations, seems that no matter how much the Vietnamese might try, their own inadequacies would always defeat them when confronted with more powerful and civilised opponents. The consolation was that their sufferings at the hands of the occasional over-zealous or greedy official would be more than compensated by the overall benefit to be gained from foreign tutelage, if only they could be wise and patient enough to submit to it.

The above analysis has shown how the historical interpretations adopted by the writers of colonial textbooks had in fact been drawn from earlier sources, particularly the Chinese dynastic histories. I have explained why this was so in terms of the similar colonial interests of feudal China and capitalist France. The Chinese histories, however, were not the only sources of historiography. In many cases, French interpretations also echoed the views expressed centuries before by Vietnamese Confucian scholars. The cause and the defeat of the Trương rebellion, and the institutionalised veneration of Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen are good examples of this (see Ngô Sĩ Liên, 1964: 124; 129-30 and VSTG, 1967, II: 173-5; 179-83). In terms of historiography, then, the French did not have to conduct their hegemonic campaign unaided by precedent. They were able to write histories of Vietnam while finding support for their ideology in many existing texts which had a pro-Chinese or Confucian slant. Although there were some serious doubts about the literal accuracy of many of these texts, this was of less importance to the French than the confirmation they provided that their own view of the nature of Vietnamese society, and the methods by which they sought to establish dominance over the population, were supported by earlier events and opinions.
This is not, however, to say that historians of the pre-colonial and colonial periods with common attitudes of deference toward and admiration for Chinese culture were operating within a similar ideological framework, since plainly the historical circumstances were quite different. The scholarly Vietnamese elite of the pre-French period commonly used both the Chinese language and the Chinese philosophical framework to distinguish themselves from the unlettered masses, in the interest of maintaining their social distance, prestige and power. But also, in a subtle way, they sought to demonstrate to the rulers of China that they had reached cultural parity with them, and were therefore worthy of the independence which their country then enjoyed. In the quite different circumstances of French colonial rule in the 19th and 20th centuries, however, the Chinese-oriented, pro-Confucian histories written in the period of independence now lent themselves to an entirely different interpretation -- as a justification, however oblique, of the French conquest, by indicating the 'benefits' which the earlier period of Chinese domination had brought to Vietnam.

The Experience of French Colonialism

When Paul Bert arrived in Vietnam on April 2, 1886 to occupy the position of Chief Resident of Central and Northern Vietnam, he announced the French 'mission' to the Vietnamese in the following terms:

Just as the Chinese came yesterday to improve your society by bringing you their civilisation, by introducing you to the work of their legislators, philosophers and writers, the French come today to improve your agriculture, industry and economy, and also to raise your intellectual level through education.

(in Chassigneux, 1929: 455)

An official declaration of this nature (also quoted in Dương Quang Hạnh, 1938: 172) clearly demonstrates that the history of Vietnam -- and Vietnamese historiography carried out in the colonial period -- was used quite consciously to further the hegemony of French colonialism. It is again apparent from Paul Bert's statement that the
French were prepared to identify themselves with the ancient Chinese in the role of 'civilizer', and tried to convince the Vietnamese that France was a legitimate successor to China in this regard, thereby reinforcing what they saw as the 'traditional' history of Vietnamese submission.

Before this could be done, however, the French had to dispose of an awkward logical contradiction. If the Chinese had indeed fulfilled their 'civilising mission' in Vietnam, then why were the French needed in this role at all, when the country was already self-governing and independent? The colonial education system was expected to provide an explanation, particularly in view of the instructions given to teachers to 'seek to inspire love and respect for great, generous and magnificent France, to give to the young generations 'pride in being French'' in the words of Bertrand, the Director of Indochinese Public Education (in Học Báo, 1937, vol.18, no.5: 222).

A number of superficially contradictory views of Chinese civilisation were expressed in colonial histories. These seem to reflect quite accurately the dilemma which the French faced at that time. On one hand, the need to defend the concept of colonialism in general required a sympathetic treatment of the Chinese occupation. But on the other, the need to reduce the residual, though still strong, Chinese influence, which appeared as a rival to their own, called for a determined effort to discredit Chinese elements in Vietnamese life. A partial solution to the problem was found in the concept of cultural decay over a long period. History lessons tended to portray Chinese civilisation as having reached a peak of brilliance in the past, but become degenerate in modern times. Stagnancy and regression were said to be the characteristics of modern Chinese society, either as a result of its refusal to accept European influence (Châu Văn Đăng, 1930: 9-10) or as the cause of its inability to resist the expanding power of European arms and commerce:

China...had a unique and very highly advanced early civilisation -- like the Egyptian civilisation, the Chinese was one of the most ancient in the world... [but] it has remained stationary, without change or progress. This is because of the hot and humid climate, its customs and religions, the political, family and social structure and the exaggerated respect paid to the past and to tradition, etc.
The coming of the Westerners...brought great changes, turning China from one extreme to the other, submerging it in a constant state of disorder and anarchy for nearly a century.

(Nguyễn Văn Quê, 1932: 13)

If China now seemed too weak even to protect herself, she was of course no longer suitable to play the role of 'civiliser' of Vietnam. To drive home this point, colonial history textbooks went to the extent of branding Chinese influence as the direct cause of Vietnamese stagnation and degeneracy. Confucianism, for example, was accused in modern history lessons of having produced a ruling class steeped in conservatism and incapable of leading Vietnam into the modern era:

Educated in the Chinese tradition, and half imbued with the humane and positive teaching of Confucius, they [the mandarins] remained traditionalist to an extreme degree. They knew nothing of what was happening abroad and stubbornly refused all contact or anything new, urging our kings to reject all Western ideas, methods, and inventions and to make our country into a completely closed kingdom, leading a purely literary and contemplative existence. Our kings, themselves content to lead completely inward-looking lives, eventually succumbed to the pernicious influence of these proud, egoistic and hidebound mandarins with whom they were unfortunately surrounded.

(Bùi Đình San, 1939: 138-9)

Generally, this attack on Chinese culture and its influence became stronger and more pointed in the later sections of colonial history books, at the stage where the period of French domination was about to be introduced. Where the history of ancient Chinese civilisation had earlier served as a preamble to that of ancient Vietnam, lessons on the subsequent enfeeblement of China and its consequent injurious effect on Vietnam were now used to emphasize the decay which 'justified' the French takeover and rendered it irresistible.

The decree of January 18, 1938 gave instructions on the teaching of the social history of Vietnam in the early 19th century period, with emphasis on the mandarin system, urban life, peasant life, catastrophes such as floods, plagues, famines, brigandage and wars, and finally the French occupation, its causes and 'happy' results (in
Diễn Quang Ham, 1938: 8). Accordingly, after describing the conservatism of the mandarins, history books stressed the hardships suffered by the Vietnamese people. While the town dwellers "gave up everything to the Chinese, who were thus able to monopolise all the major commerce and exploit all the mineral resources", the "hard-working peasants ... still suffered from annual floods which destroyed their harvests, from terrible epidemics (smallpox, cholera, plague ...) which decimated their families, and from cruel famines which shattered their already wretched lives" (Bùi Đình San, 1939: 140). Added to these hardships were "piracy [mostly Chinese], fires, extortions, murders and kidnapping raids for women and girls" (ibid.; cf. Diễn Quang Ham, op.cit.: 134-77). Colonial historians were also eager to show the causal connection between Vietnamese stagnancy and its people's imitation of China in every respect, including literature and art (op.cit.; 142-3). French administrators and writers such as Pasquier, Marquet, Boissière, Dumoutier, Chaigneau and Luro were quoted as witnesses to these scenes of misery and to the impotence of the Chinese legacy to ward them off.

There is little doubt about the basic truth of many of these observations, especially those concerning the failings of the mandarin system. The same problems had long been extensively discussed among progressive Vietnamese who were opposed to both colonialism and Confucian traditionalism. It is important, however, to bear in mind that the French had a key ideological interest in painting as black a picture as possible of conditions prevailing in Vietnam before their arrival. Acting on official instructions, the authors of colonial history texts did just this, arranging their material so that the immediately following sections, those dealing with the beginning of French colonisation, could create the impression of the Vietnamese society having been providentially saved at the eleventh hour from its own stagnation and misery. The intervention of a magnanimous, altruistic and benevolent foreign power -- this time in the form of a French, rather than a Chinese deux ex machina -- was again made to appear as the essential condition for the deliverance of a people too corrupt, backward and tradition-bound to help themselves.

The colonial historians did not hesitate to attribute virtuous, even noble motives to some of the early policies and actions of the French in Vietnam. Thus, they claimed the French were 'forced' to
intervene 'to stop the mass murder of Christians', to 'punish the stubbornness and insincerity of the Vietnamese kings' (who had shown a certain reluctance to cede territory to them), and 'to pacify, organise and put Vietnam to productive use' (see, e.g. Bùi Đình San, 1939: 150-3, 204; Châu Kim Dảng, 1930: 153, 157; Hố báo, 1923, vol.4, no.31: 819-20). The use of euphemism was common in these texts. The use of euphemism was common in these texts. 'Pacification', for example, a term freely used in colonial histories, then meant, as it has in more recent times, the violent suppression of popular resistance. Much space was also devoted to accounts of the development by the French of Vietnamese industries and exports. Not mentioned was the fact that, while the area of riceland quadrupled in the first fifty years of the colonial era, turning Vietnam into the third largest rice exporter in the world, the domestic annual average consumption of rice decreased steadily from 262kg in 1900 to 182kg in 1937 (Buttinger, 1972: 66; Chesneaux, 1961: 242).

The use of misleading language and statistics was also evident in colonial accounts of French achievements in infrastructural developments such as railways, canals, roads, bridges and harbours. The impression given in history texts was that these were gifts to the Vietnamese nation for its own use and benefit. The exploitation of the country's material and human resources in the interests of French shareholders was not mentioned. Neither was the fact that much of the building was carried out by the forced labour of local peasants and workers and paid for in part by profits and taxes extracted from them. Essential items like salt -- widely used in the manufacture of fish sauce, a staple of the Vietnamese diet -- were heavily taxed. Alcohol production and sale was greatly increased and, being a state monopoly, made a major contribution both to revenue and to social disintegration (see Williams, 1976: 150).

From the point of view of the ordinary Vietnamese, French claims about medical care and education seem equally dubious. It is generally estimated that under the colonial regime there was an average of two doctors for every 100,000 people. Educational planning, as shown in Chapter III, was directed mainly at persuading the mass of the indigenous people to acquiesce in their own exploitation, and at providing them with the basic skills necessary for
serving the colonial economic machine. 'Happiness' and a 'taste of freedom' were often claimed in textbooks as the results of French intervention, yet the precise definition of such abstract terms was avoided.

The question of whether or not French colonial rule was beneficial to Vietnam in the longer term cannot be answered or examined in depth within the framework of a discussion of this kind. Broad value judgments are seldom appropriate or even possible in connection with such vast and complex events, dependent as they are on varying historical and philosophical standpoints and individual experience. My purpose here is to demonstrate how the selection, arrangement and presentation of the material in Vietnamese colonial history books served the immediate purposes of French colonialism. Whether or not it was intentional in all cases, this bias must be seen above all in terms of the structural relationship between colonialist hegemony and the conduct of historiographic activity. It is in this context that we must now examine the colonialists' interpretation of the continuing phenomenon of Vietnamese nationalism, and their response to it.

We have seen how ancient historical accounts, seen through the prism of the colonialist ideology, were interpreted to make Vietnamese national heroes out of such plainly Chinese individuals as Hsi Kuang, Jen Yen and Chao T'o. In the same way, modern colonialism sought to create its own version of Vietnamese history by honouring the memory of people like Pigneau de Behaine, Henri Rivière, Francis Garnier, Paul Bert, Albert Sarraut etc., whose names and effigies adorned streets, parks, city squares, bridges and schools throughout Vietnam. The degree of service rendered to the colonial government became the standard for measuring the personal worth of Vietnamese in historical accounts. Gia Long, who succeeded to the throne with French assistance in 1802, was characterised as "the greatest Emperor of Annam, by his virtue, his skill and his intelligence" (Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, 1922: 41), and Dũng Kháng, who collaborated with the French after the flight of the rebellious King Ham Nghi, as "intelligent and gentle", and "genuinely loyal to the policy of the Protectorate" (Học Bảo, 1923, vol.4, no.36: 964). By contrast, Minh Mạng -- well known for his hostility toward the French -- was described as "cold and severe" (Nguyễn Văn Quế, 1932:
"bloodthirsty and ungrateful" (Học Báo, 1923, vol.4, no.39: 1047). Not surprisingly, anti-French nationalists were summarily dismissed as 'enemies' or 'pirates'. Within this category, the bold rebel leader Hoàng Hoa Thám, who defied the French for 26 years, was "the most redoubtable of the pirates" (Stern, 1944: 202).

The ideology of colonialism not only determined the selection and interpretation of historical events; it also remoulded the very concept of nationalism through its historiography. Thus, within the framework of the colonialist ideology, the idea of nationalism was expressed by a 'dual loyalty' directed toward both France and Vietnam: "For an Indochinese, love for France is inseparable from the love of his own country" (Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, 1922: 75). The effect, if not the intention, of this broadened definition of nationalism was to confuse and neutralise the concept of Vietnamese independence. The principle of impartiality, so important in serious historical research, itself took on a different meaning within the colonial framework:

Studied with impartiality, it [history] will finally teach the young Annamite pupil to love his ancestors and his country as well as the great Protector Nation, thanks to whom new and important progress has been achieved in Indochina.

(Lafferranderie, 1928: 105)

The colonialist ideology often led its adherents to explain to the colonised peoples that their situation of dual allegiance should be seen, not as a master-slave relationship, but in terms of metaphors drawn from traditional domestic life. One of the most popular of these used the example of an arranged marriage:

The cession of provinces by the King of Annam to the Emperor of France is like a marriage, where the girl, handed over to her fiance, and owing allegiance to him, nevertheless does not renounce her father. The wife, well-treated by him who protects her and provides for her needs, soon loses all anxiety, and, without forgetting her parents, comes to love her husband. The same thing will happen to the Annamite people ...

(Bonard, in Bùi Đình San, 1939: 156)
When the book in which this excerpt appears was first used in history lessons in Vietnam, the 'back to traditions' campaign launched by the colonial authorities was already well under way (see Chapter III). Within the context of a revived Confucianism, the metaphor of a traditional arranged marriage of this kind, based on sexual inequality, might have seemed particularly apt. Within an existing colonial system, however, with the 'marriage' already thoroughly consumated, the penalties for the non-acquiescing 'wife' did not have to be spelt out. The relationship may have been protective in a sense, but, being based on such a profound inequality, it was of course subject to enforcement by violence, i.e. punitive military action, if the subordinate (Vietnamese) 'partner' should have decided not to continue with it or to seek to modify its terms in any important respect. The equation of the colonial relationship with a traditional marriage of the Confucian (or French) type meant that the military action which was frequently and ruthlessly used to put down popular resistance could be justified in terms of a proper chastisement being meted out to a wayward spouse or child.

The 'Confucian marriage' metaphor also implied that the relationship was to be a permanent one. This was indeed what the French intended, and they made a conscious effort to convince their colonial subjects that it was necessary and inevitable. For example, at the end of each chapter in colonial history books, students were given lists of questions to answer, often of a leading nature. The chapters dealing with French achievements were followed by questions and essay topics such as: "What are the material interests, as well as the moral and intellectual links, which will attach the Indochinese Union to France forever?" (Bùi Đình San, 1939: 232).

Though the Confucian and colonialist ideologies were by no means similar in other respects, one can see from the foregoing that the French were easily able to select some of the more rigid, oppressive and paternalist features of the Confucian doctrine and use them to serve the purposes of colonial hegemony.

The 'back to traditions' campaign, which found its way into the school curriculum in the 1930s in the "Oriental Humanities" courses, also included a revival of the teaching of Taoism and Buddhism to
Vietnamese students to complement the renewed emphasis on rigid Confucianism. Together with Albert Sarraut's systematic application of the *politique d'association*, the fatalism and passivity advocated by these doctrines reinforced the basic Confucian principles of piety, loyalty and deference to established authority. It is of great significance in this regard that Phăm Quỳnh (1941: 88), a close associate of the French administration, urged his compatriots to return to the "timeless" Confucian and Buddhist virtues, to "eliminate the feeling of opposition" and to "love everyone", at the same time as the School Inspector, educator and historian Trần Trọng Kim (1923: 21-32) was promoting the Taoist principles of meditation and non-action. Clearly, any Vietnamese, already imprisoned within the Confucian 'marriage' of colonialism, who accepted the idea that he or she should also retreat into passive fatalism, would have been seen by the colonial administration as an ally in the struggle to consolidate its hegemony.

CONCLUSION

I have demonstrated in this chapter how the interpretation of history during the French colonial period in Vietnam helped to legitimise that colonial rule. Vietnamese students were taught in history lessons of their 'alien' origins, and to regard themselves, as an ethnic group, as immigrants from outside their own country and therefore not necessarily its legitimate owners. History lessons also taught them of their 'good fortune' in having been subjected in the past to foreign rule, which had greatly benefited their culture. Subjugation by the French, in this context, was portrayed as another historic stroke of good luck, in the pattern of the first, 'civilising' occupation by the Chinese, and hence both familiar and welcome to the Vietnamese.

In their interpretation of Vietnamese history, colonial writers found themselves in the position of having to explain a basic contradiction. The inclination to write approvingly of the early Chinese occupation of Vietnam, as a harbinger of their own, conflicted with their need to denigrate the Chinese systems of thought and government whose continuing influence was a threat to their own occupation, especially in its early stages. The solution, it seems, was to level especially harsh criticism at modern China, which was depicted in
history texts as weak, degenerate and chaotic. In general, contemporary history as treated by colonial writers functioned in the most direct and straightforward way as an instrument of French colonial hegemony. Through interpretations based on social Darwinism, neo-Confucianism and a determined attempt to redefine the concept of nationalism, the French sought to convince their colonised subjects that their dominion over them was historically necessary, inevitable, benevolent in intent and advantageous in effect.

What I have presented in this chapter is, of course, only one aspect, albeit an important one, of the operation of French colonialism in Vietnam, based on a rather limited examination of colonialist historiography. Further discussion of this complex issue requires consideration of other rival ideologies at work in the same colonial period of Vietnam. This will be my task in Chapter VII, following discussion of the dominant features of the ideological systems of post-colonial Vietnam.

Notes to Chapter IV

1. It should be recalled that the French government divided the Franco-Vietnamese system at pre-University level into four cycles: Elementary (3 years), Complementary (3 years), Upper Primary (4 years) and Secondary (3 years) (Fig. 3.1).

2. Ancient legend has it that a king named Đế Minh, a third-generation descendant of Thần Nông (Shen-nung) -- traditionally regarded as a Chinese ancestor -- went South and met a nymph, or fairy, at Mount Ngo Lành. From their union a son was born, who they named Lộc Túc. On the death of Đế Minh, Đế Nghi -- an elder son of his wife -- took over the throne and ruled the North, while Lộc Túc became king of the South.

Under Lộc Túc's rule, the country was named Xích Quí, now thought to have covered present-day South China and North Vietnam. Lộc Túc, whose dynastic title was Kinh Düng Vượng, then married Long Nư, the daughter of Đồng Đình Quân ('King of the Lake'). She bore him a son called Sưng Lâm, who later became Lạc Long Quân ('Dragon King Lạc'). The latter married Au Cơ, who subsequently was delivered of a bag containing 100 eggs. 100 sons hatched from these eggs; fifty of them later followed their father to the sea, and the other fifty went to the mountains with their mother. The eldest son became King of Văn Lang, which is now North Vietnam. Văn Lang's capital was at Phong Châu, now called Vinh Yên. This was the first king of the Hùng dynasty, said to be the direct ancestor of the Vietnamese people.
3. Legend also indicates that under the rule of Lạc Long Quân
(the father of the first Hùng king), the state of Xích Quốchad a very large territory covering present-day South China
and North Vietnam. I refer here only to the Văn Lang of the
Hùng, because of the great significance in Vietnamese folk-
lore of the Hùng as direct ancestors of the Viet people.

4. Finot, the Director of the EFEO, said that this school was
established for the purpose of "restoring and preserving the
ancient honour of Vietnam" (reported in Nam Phong, 1918, vol.2,
No.11: 283).

5. Another, allegedly legendary, dynasty which succeeded the Hùng
and ruled over Âu Lạc (Au Viet and Lạc Viet) from about 258 to
211 BC.

6. Though 'Annam' referred specifically to Central Vietnam during
the colonial period, the French also referred to the Vietnamese
people in general as Annamites (le peuple annamite). Hence,
the whole of Vietnam was often called 'the Annamite countries'
(les pays annamites or les pays d'Annam) comprising Tonkin,
Annam and Cochinchina, or Annam for short. It is significant
that the French chose to use the old name Annam instead of the
later, official ones such as Việt Nam or Đại Nam. Annam,
meaning "pacified South", was the name introduced by the
Chinese in 679AD under the T'ang dynasty (603-939AD) to design-
nate their Southern dominions, and subsequently used by
other Chinese regimes, and also by Vietnamese court when communicat-
g with the Middle Kingdom.

7. This theory had originally been put forward by Chavannes,
before being developed by Aurousseau.

8. The commonly accepted view today is that the Vietnamese, as a
distinct people, originated in the Red River Valley as the
result of a complex racial and cultural fusion (see, e.g.
Buttinger, 1972: 22-5; Coedes, 1966: 41-2). Generally, this
was also the view held by DRV historians (and present-day
Vietnamese historians). In Chapter VI, I shall discuss this
point in detail.

9. For example, Môt Nhóm Giáo Viên (1951: 11) wrote:

It is a fair certainty that our people originated
in China. But thanks to their patience and deter-
mination, our ancestors were able to found a sep-
arate country, now recognised by the world.

Perhaps the most confused (and confusing) were Bouvard and
Nguyễn Văn Vinh, who seemed certain about the Chinese origins
of the ancestors of the Vietnamese. They identified the latter
through the three 'dynasties', the Hồng Bàng, the Thục and the
Triệu "whose origins ... are acknowledged as Chinese" (Bouvard
and Nguyễn Văn Vinh, 1922: 10).

10. The term 'Indonesian', translated from the French indonésien,
does not refer to the citizens of the Republic of Indonesia.
To avoid confusion, anthropologists now tend to avoid the
archaic term "Indonesian", preferring 'proto-Malay' or 'Nesiot'.
11. It is significant that in addressing the Vietnamese on this occasion, this Governor-General used the familiar personal pronoun 'toi' which is condescending in this context.

12. See, e.g., Sarrut's *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises* (1923) in which the author explains colonial policies to his compatriots while he was the Minister for Colonies.

13. Even though France as a whole, on balance may not have derived great financial profit from her Indochinese possessions, the economic exploitation of Vietnam resulting from a colonial policy which favoured private French interests and Chinese intermediaries was intense, and the effects on the local population often very severe. For a more profound analysis of this complicated situation see Porter (1976: 6-64).

14. See Một Nhóm Giáo Viên (1951); Dương Quảng Hắm (1938); Châu Kim Đặng (1930); Trần Trọng Kim (1958); Hoàng Cao Khải (1971); Cải Diễr và (1911); Trần Văn Thức and Ngô Văn Minh (1939); Trương Vĩnh Ký (1875).

15. For example, according to Hsüeh Tung, a Chinese official in Vietnam in the third century, it was useless to civilise the Vietnamese because "the people are like birds and beasts... on the same level as bugs" (in Taylor, 1980: 13).

16. "One cannot be an historian without imagination" wrote Pasquier, the Chief Resident of Central Vietnam, in his laudatory preface to Patris' history book.

17. The Hồng Bàng is used here to indicate the period of the Hùng kings.

18. Though in colonial history textbooks there was no apparent attempt to explain the inherent backwardness of the Vietnamese, there is evidence that colonial historians would have supported the view that it was determined by the physical environment. In his essay on civilisation, the colonial writer Phạm Quỳnh (1920), following the British historian Buckle, contended that soil, climate and food supply were the determining factors for civilisation. Thus, he concluded that the heat in tropical countries (such as Vietnam) stimulated the imagination, and so encouraged superstition and mental regression, whereas the moderate, cool climate of Europe (including France), which was suitable for hard labour, stimulated sober reflection, encouraged study and aroused the desire to conquer nature. The former resulted in static, regressive, "false" civilisation; the latter to dynamic, progressive, "genuine" civilisation (op. cit.: 445).

In a similar way, Đào Duy Anh (1951: 13-4) argued that geography was a dominant factor in a people's activity, which in turn revealed the quality of their culture. In describing the Vietnamese personality, he wrote:

... the Vietnamese are generally intelligent, though very few have outstanding mental ability. They have good memories, and are inclined to art rather than to science, to intuition rather than to logic. Most of them like to study, but prefer literary to practical study,
pomposity and formalism to thinking and activism.

(op.cit.: 22)

This kind of remark was based on Trần Trọng Kim's argument in his history book, and was later repeated in RVN history texts (see Chapter V).

19. The exposition of the claim which follows is based on the text mentioned in Note 14 and also those by Phạm Văn Sơn (1956), Patris (1922) and Nguyễn Văn Quê (1932).

20. For a detailed expose of the inaccuracies in Maspero's remark, as well as criticism of his pro-colonial bias, see Taylor (1980).


22. The conquest of Âu Lạc by Chao T'o was not recorded in detail in historical documents but legend, which apparently entered both Chinese and Vietnamese sources (see Taylor, 1976: 87-8), has it that the secret of King An Dương (or Thực Phán) in successfully defending Âu Lạc lay in his turtle-claw-triggered crossbow. After unsuccessful efforts on the battlefield, Chao T'o sent his son Shih Chiang (Trong Thuy) to Âu Lạc where he managed to impress both King An Dương and his daughter, My Châu. As My Châu's husband, Shih Chiang later gained access to the sacred and secret armoury, replacing the claw with a false one and thus destroying its supernatural power. Chao T'o then renewed the attack and overran Âu Lạc.

23. Patris (1922: 37) wrote that "it was only after the conquest by Triệu Đà in 111 BC that the evolution of the Annamites made rapid progress, from the very fact of Chinese culture introduced into their country. At that moment, and despite the progress made until then, they were still ruled by numerous barbaric customs which were handed down through many generations without noticeable change". As we have noted earlier, however, this view is not supported by recent archaeological, anthropological and demographic evidence.

24. This will be discussed in Chapter VI.


27. This particular information also appeared in Việt Điện U Linh possibly written at the beginning of the 14th century by Lý Thế Xuyên (see Bình Gia Khánh, Introduction to Lý Thế Xuyên, 1972: 5). But because this book has been revised and extended by so many people since Lý Thế Xuyên, it is almost impossible
to distinguish the original parts from the additions (op.cit.: 6-16). It is therefore very likely that the interpretation of the Trưng episode as it appears in Việt D endian U Linh in its present form was a version with a neo-Confucian slant.

28. In some textbooks, the Trưng sisters even received the appellation of "Tonkinese (or Annamite) Joans of Arc" (Patris, 1922: 120; Trần Văn Thuộc and Ngô Văn Minh, 1939: 10).

29. Ngô Sĩ Liên (1964: 13), who wrote DVSK in the 15th century, declared in the preface to his book that:

   The country of Great Việt is situated South of Mount Ngũ Lĩnh [Five Passes]: this is where Heaven has fixed the limits of South and North. Our ancestors came from Thần Nông [Shen-nung]: Heaven has decreed for us a great sovereign; therefore we can have an emperor on a level with the one in China.

30. The discussion of French achievements in colonial textbooks is based on most of the works mentioned so far, in particular Bùi Đình San (1939), Bouvard and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh (1922), Châu Kim Đăng (1930) and lessons from the journal Học Báo.


32. This effect was most noticeable among members of the collaborating class, which -- best represented by Phạm Quỳnh, as seen in many of his writings -- showed its belief in such a concept of dual loyalty. This matter will be taken up again and further explored in Chapter VII.

33. For example, Governor-General Sarraut (1911-1913; 1917-1919) was responsible for a reorganisation of the educational system in Vietnam which involved, among other things, the establishment in Hanoi of a university of somewhat less than first-class standard; its effect was to keep Vietnamese students at home and to prevent them from reaching a standard where they could compete on equal terms for places in French universities (see Chapter III).

34. In an essay on Taoism, he urged that "we should be content with our lot and let fate rule our lives" (1923: 32).
FOREIGNISM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF VIETNAMESE HISTORY

As indicated in Chapter III, education in the RVN absorbed a great deal of American influence. This shows that any serious attempt to understand the complicated political and social development of the RVN must take account of its heavy dependence on the United States for its survival. This dependent relationship naturally has a direct relevance to the present study, since it deals with the key issue of the RVN's own interpretation of Vietnamese national history. I intend to show in this chapter how the dominant ideology of 'foreignism' (as I shall call it) permeated RVN school history teaching. The question of what is meant by 'foreignism' will constitute a major part of this analysis, which I shall introduce by giving a brief general survey of the place allotted to the study of history in the RVN.

HISTORY IN THE RVN

In purely statistical terms, history as a school subject seems to have received more attention in the RVN than it did in the French colonial period. While the share of total classroom time allotted to history in the Franco-Vietnamese schools never rose above 2.4 per cent (Fig. 4.1), in RVN secondary schools it was never below 3.5 per cent (Fig. 5.1). Figure 5.1 further shows that, while this share declined marginally in the second-cycle secondary schools between 1965 and 1974 (from 5.6 per cent to 5.4 per cent), in the first cycle schools it increased over the same period from 3.5 per cent to 5.2 per cent, resulting in an overall slight increase. The same trend was apparent in the American-sponsored comprehensive education schools. Increasing Americanisation of the education system, then, did not result in any notable change in the relative emphasis placed on history as a classroom subject.
Although the RVN maintained a dual system of Vietnamese and French schools until the 1970s, the history syllabus changed in only one important respect from the time of the colonial regime. This involved the abolition of French history as a subject in the Vietnamese school system and its replacement by Vietnamese history taught in the national language, thus effectively closing a final door on French colonialism in one of its aspects.

However, in much the same way as the education system in general, which was inherited wholesale from the French, the history syllabus in the RVN continued to show marked colonial characteristics in many respects. Long after the departure of the French, the history textbooks which they had introduced were still influential in RVN schools. The study of history in the RVN throughout its existence was dominated by Trần Trọng Kim's *VNSL*, while Hoàng Cao Khải's *Việt Sử Yếu* and Phạm Văn Sơn's *Việt Sử Tận Biên* were also reprinted and officially recommended as history books for teachers. Now printed in a new and glossy American style, RVN history texts contained basically the same arguments and descriptions as had been used in the colonial ones many years before. In a way typical of the RVN, the study of history and related activities received much rhetorical attention, but the many grandiose plans and programmes seldom progressed beyond the stage of imaginative bombast. The Bureau for the Preservation of Historical Relics, set up in the days of the Bảo Đại regime to handle the formal transfer of artifacts and records from French to Vietnamese control, still remained in formal existence but was mostly idle in operation (see Nghiem Thâm, 1971). The Institute of Archaeology was officially established in 1956, but produced little worthy of mention. Its organ, *Việt Nam Khảo Cổ Tạp San* (Vietnamese Journal of Archaeology) carried regular reports of minor field excursions, and articles filled with sterile speculation and 'spiritual' meanderings (see, e.g., Nguyễn Đăng Thức, 1971 and Nguyễn Khắc Khâm, 1971). The so-called National Museum was in effect no different to the old Blanchard de la Brosse museum, founded in Saigon in 1927 by the French Governor of the same name. Hardly anything but the name was changed or added, and the place gained the reputation of being "very poor in Vietnamese historical displays (Nghiem Thâm, 1971: 54)." The same was true of other places in Huế and Đà Nẵng established as museums by the French (op.cit.: 55). There was no particular official institution
devoted to historical research in the RVN, perhaps because the French had not left behind anything of this nature in the South to be carried on.

The 1957 cultural convention provided the platform for a complaint that, for students, history had become "the most frustrating and boring of subjects" and a call for a change in the curriculum to "elevate history ... to the position it deserves" (Nguyễn Thiệu, 1957: 288). There is little doubt that this plaintive demand could have been repeated with equal justification at any time during the subsequent 18-year existence of the RVN.
In view of the pervasive residual influence of the colonial past, then, how can it be argued that there was such a thing as a foreignist ideology dominating the RVN interpretation of Vietnamese history? This question will be dealt with in the remainder of this chapter.

THE ORIGINS OF THE VIETNAMESE

On the surface, one can detect little difference between RVN and colonial-era textbooks in their account of the earliest stages of Vietnamese social development: both traditional legendary sources and the EFEO-based theories were used in the attempt to explain the origins of the Vietnamese people. At a somewhat deeper level, however, some subtle differences emerge. The picture presented by the RVN historians appears rather more complicated and at times confusing though ultimately it tends to support what had originally been 'confirmed' by the French: that the Việt people were originally immigrants to the land now known as Vietnam:

About the origins of the Vietnamese, there are many theories. One of them maintains that the Vietnamese came from Tibet, moved down the Red River to settle in the middle delta region of North and Northern Central Vietnam, from where they gradually migrated South.

Another is that the ancient Vietnamese belonged to the old Indonesian race, driven out of India by the Aryans... In the North, the Indonesians mixed with the Mongoloid people to form the Vietnamese race.

Still another theory is that the ancient Vietnamese originated in the lower reaches of the Yangtse, where they were defeated by the Ch'ü and had to migrate to Kwangtung and Kwangsi, where they divided into the Hundred Việts. Most of these were assimilated into China; only the'Lạc Việt moved into North Vietnam to settle, where they split into two branches: one dwelling in the mountains, with little outside contact, clinging to traditional customs and making slow progress. The Montagnards [Thùng] are descended from this group. The other group took up farming in the deltas of the Red and Black [Mã] Rivers, were influenced by Chinese culture, developed rapidly and gave rise to the present-day Vietnamese.

(Phạm Văn Trọng and Phạm Thị Ngọc Dung, 1965: 11)

Although RVN sources listed various theories (as the above passage shows), most maintained that only one -- the last of these -- approached the truth (Cao Văn Thái, 1961: 3-4; Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thành,
Based on the theory first propounded by Chavannes and Aurousseau, it was the one which gained the widest general acceptance in the RVN, though compared with the version accepted for colonial textbooks, it was somewhat more subtle and complicated.

According to RVN textbooks, all the ethnic components of the Việt people came from outside sources. Nguyễn Quý Bình (1963: 12-3) claimed that the Melanesoids were the first inhabitants of Vietnam during the Palaeolithic, followed by the proto-Malays (or Nesiots) from India and Sumatra in the Neolithic, then the Việt (from Southern China) in the Metal Age. Though RVN writers seem to have produced somewhat different versions of the Vietnamese racial mixture—a fact which reflects the inherent difficulty of arriving at a solution to this complicated question—the distinct common factor in all their interpretations was that of the outside origin of all the ancestors of the Vietnamese. Another significant point of agreement on this question in all RVN textbooks was their continuing reliance on a neo-Darwinist theory of social evolution, based on the principle of the inevitable triumph of the strongest:

Vietnam, lying in the Indochinese Peninsula, with the Asian continent on one side and the sea on the other, is in a position attractive to all migrations, either from the continent or from the sea. Here, different races confronted one another, always in competition for land to occupy. The result was that the weak had to submit to gradual assimilation by the strong. Present-day Vietnam accommodates a people of mixed origins, marked most strongly by the Việt characteristics.

(Nguyễn Quý Bình, 1963: 12)

Although some writers did lay emphasis on the mixed origins of the Vietnamese, most agreed that the Lạc Việt strain (with predominantly Mongoloid characteristics) was the dominant one. Other commonly mentioned racial components included the Melanesoid and the Nesiots. The Han Chinese element was also recognised by some RVN writers, though to a much smaller extent (Cao Văn Thái, 1961: 5). The common element in all accounts, however, was the view that the Lạc Việt, as the strongest and most highly developed of the immigrant ethnic groups, emerged in a position of dominance in the eventual formation of the Vietnamese people.
It is interesting to note that while RVN accounts, in adhering to Aurousseau's theory of Vietnamese racial origins, necessarily attributed immigrant status to the ancient Viet, they at the same time did not question, as the French had implicitly done, the absolute right of the Việt people to the ownership of the national territory. The ambivalence in this view of early Vietnamese society can be explained in terms of the basic situation of internal contradiction within the RVN. It is true that, in the absence of any further serious research work in the South after the departure of the French, RVN historians were obliged to fall back on what was available, i.e. the French publications, even though these began to appear less and less plausible in the light of fresh archaeological and historical discoveries in the North. But the fact that the account based on Aurousseau's theory continued to prevail in the RVN throughout its history indicates that it must have served the interests of the dominant ideology there, which I call foreignism.

Foreignism, simply stated, is the ideology which defines nationalism in terms of the necessity for deliberate and active collaboration, possibly to the point of subservience, with a stronger foreign power in pursuit of what are seen as genuine national objectives, such as independence. The contradiction in this ideology as it was practised in the RVN soon became obvious, however, because of the patently unequal, neo-colonial nature of the relationship which developed between the RVN and its American sponsors. The RVN constantly sought to maintain its claim to political independence while apparently willing to surrender control over its fate to a foreign power. The belief that there was no insuperable contradiction in this situation constituted the core of the foreignist ideology. In terms of our present discussion, adherence to this ideology in the treatment of ancient history by RVN historians led to their reliance on Aurousseau's theory concerning the ethnic origins of the Vietnamese. This was probably for no better reason than that the theory had been formulated in the first place by foreign 'experts' and provided the minimum possible support for the anti-foreign sentiment, always present in Vietnam, which was a focus for rival nationalist ideas. The events of the 1950s in Vietnam presented the opportunity for the foreignist ideology to assume a concrete political dimension. This followed the collapse of French colonialism and its replacement in the South by an American influence which sought to portray itself
in terms of a friendly partnership between equals.

In the light of the foreignist ideology, then, the RVN accounts of early Vietnamese history had a certain logical consistency. The Lạc Việt may have emerged as the strongest ethnic group and imposed their rule over a 'national' territory, but they still lived under the constant threat of attack and subjugation by their Chinese neighbours. In the foreignist view, physical resistance and an attitude of defiance would have been provocative and counter-productive; the only feasible strategy for preserving national independence in such a hostile world for the Lạc Việt was to establish a dependent, teacher-pupil relationship with the Chinese. This would eventually enable the Lạc Việt to 'civilise' themselves to the point where they could successfully lay claim to 'real' national independence. In the context of the RVN, this view can easily be interpreted as providing justification for their near-total dependence on American military and economic aid in the name of a struggle for freedom.

This interpretation becomes clearer when we see that lessons on early Vietnamese history often attributed the dominance of the Việt over their ethnic rivals within Vietnam to their closer contact with foreigners:

The mixture of the Lạc Việt and this tribe [the indigenous Nesiot] formed the ancient Vietnamese race ... one branch lived in the mountains, keeping to old customs; the other [mainly the Việt] dwelt in the plains, where they had plenty of opportunity to contact foreign cultures and make gradual progress.

(Bùi Văn Bão and Bùi Văn Thân, 1963: 11)

The authors' final remark in the same lesson leaves no doubt about the foreignist view of dependence as a precondition for 'progress':

Our people have many praiseworthy characteristics, as well as many bad ones which we must get rid of. If guided properly, and carefully, we will certainly be able to make progress like other civilised peoples.

(op.cit.: 11-2)

Seen in the light of the earlier passage, and especially in the context of the situation in South Vietnam in the 1960s, advice of
this kind, it is clear, had an unmistakable message for the Vietnamese people: they were expected to support the concepts of foreign aid and foreign political guidance, and to forget any qualms they might have had about the dependence of their leaders on American power.

So far, we have not touched on the role of legend in RVN scholars' accounts of ancient Vietnamese history. But on the basis of what has been seen so far, it would be reasonable to assume that their views would not have differed in essence from those put forward by colonial writers. Indeed, though generally dismissed as patently untrue, and therefore devoid of historical value, the Hùng legend still secured a place in the RVN history textbooks. It is possible that this was done, just as it had been in colonial texts, in order to show the 'scientific' theory (by Aurousseau) in a better light. However, legend seems to have assumed another role as well; one which it had performed in colonial textbooks, but at that time in a much less explicit way. Complemented by details extracted from Chinese histories, legend now helped in reconstructing the social life of the ancient Vietnamese in the Metal Age (Trần Hữu Quang, 1963a: 11; Nguyễn Quy Bình, 1963: 8). This meant that, in any case, the Hùng legend was now regarded as irrelevant to the question of ethnic origins. Again, the fact that legendary accounts were mentioned only after the question of origins had been thoroughly discussed seems to indicate that their inclusion was a reluctant step, taken only because of the necessity to acknowledge their widespread popular currency. This was as much a concession to popular feeling under the foreignist RVN regime as it had been under the French.

THE HISTORY OF FOREIGN DEPENDENCE

Throughout the RVN period, historical consciousness was marked by severe contradictions. The condemnation of one form of foreign domination -- defunct French colonialism -- stood in contrast to the continuing welcome given to the cultural influences stemming from this domination. This contradiction can only be understood properly within the overall context of the foreignist ideology. Foreignism in the South was an ideology riddled with contradictory values: the foreignist embraced foreign aid, often deriving his or her entire living, status and social authority from it, yet believed simultaneously that
this aid was the only way to ensure eventual personal and national independence, freedom and progress. The theme of foreignist historiography reflected the same notion: that progress and national independence (under foreignist leadership) could result from dependence on foreigners. Simultaneously, however, the feeling was encouraged that foreign powers could be legitimate targets for criticism. Democracy, freedom, anti-colonialism and anti-communism, as we shall see, were all defined within the foreignist framework. On the surface, one sees only apparently insoluble conflict and tension in the RVN interpretation of history. At bottom, however, this was an integral and essential part of the foreignist ideology which sustained the RVN during its 20 years of survival as a US client state.

The Ancient Past

Two quite different views of ancient Vietnamese civilisation can be found in the material taught in RVN schools. The first, in lessons designed for use in junior classes, is a fairly close copy of the version current in the French colonial period. Chinese texts were the major source for this interpretation, which emphasised the primitive nature of Việt society, yet which, in a type of contradiction typical of RVN writing, managed at the same time to characterise it as "well-organised" and "rather advanced" (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 6; Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958: vol.1: 28; Nguyễn Quy Bình, 1963: 17). Agriculture was "undeveloped" (Nguyễn Quy Bình, ibid.; Cao Văn Thành, 1961: 6), and the Lạc Việt were "simple-minded, relying on physical strength and speed to catch fish and molluscs" and "lived in constant fear of danger" (Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thành, 1963: 15, 16). Clothing and shelter were subjects on which RVN writers tended to disagree. Some claimed the Việt had long hair, and wore turbans and loincloths or sarongs (e.g. Nguyễn Quy Bình, 1913: 17), while others asserted that they "had no knowledge of clothing, covered their bodies with tree bark and lived in caves" (Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thành, 1963: 15) and "cut their hair short for ease in walking through forests" (Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958: 29).

This confusion probably stemmed from the uncritical repetition of different French sources, which, however, probably served the
purpose of foreignist ideology by showing old traditions in a poor light. Though the RVN writers did not show such open contempt for the early Việt culture as had colonial historians, they clearly took a rather unfavourable view of it. The word 'primitive' was rarely mentioned, but it was strongly implied in descriptions and commentaries. The ambivalence of the foreignists is best reflected in the remarks of RVN scholars on the character traits of the Việt: on one hand, there was praise for their "stubbornness, courage and wisdom" (Cao Văn Thái, 1961: 5) and their "industriousness, politeness, consideration and moral sense" (Bùi Văn Bạo and Bùi Văn Thân, 1963: 11); on the other, it was alleged that they were "timorous, boastful, pleasure-seeking, superstitious and fond of gambling (ibid.) and "irreligious, quarrelsome, sly and cunning" (Phạm Văn Sơn, 1956: 26). This ambivalence, characteristic of foreignism, also appeared in RVN interpretations of other historical events and situations.

The other, rather more complicated view, which often appeared in the teaching of senior classes, seems to have resulted from RVN historians' capitalisation on the results of archaeological work carried out under the French. The history of Vietnamese civilisation, in this view, was divided into several stages: The Hoa Bình in the Palaeolithic, marked by the use of simple stone tools; the Bắc Sơn in the Mesolithic-Neolithic with its polished stone axes, bone artifacts and corded pottery; the Đông Sơn in the Metal Age, characterised by bronze and iron artifacts, including the famous Đông Sơn bronze drums unearthed in Thanh Hóa (North Vietnam) and elsewhere in Southeast Asia; and the post-Dong Sơn period, when Vietnam came under strong outside influences and her civilisation absorbed Chinese, Indian and European characteristics (Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngụ, 1970: 3-10).

Although at first glance such a view seems to recognise the continuity of Vietnamese culture in the pre-Chinese period, and, as such, reflects the current view of the subject, closer examination shows that this was not the case. RVN writers basically saw early Vietnamese culture as a series of isolated episodes, in much the same way as they considered the ethnic ancestry of the Vietnamese in terms of a series of separate migrations, conquests and exterminations. Each cultural period was associated with a distinct race: the Hoa Bình with the Melanesoid, the Bắc Sơn with the Australoid and the Đông Sơn
with the Nesiot (e.g. Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970) or the Mongoloid (e.g. Bằng Phong, 1972: 78). Early Vietnamese culture, in the RVN view, was not a continuous development within and between each stage, but instead was a static, layered structure, dominated by each successive wave of immigrants. This view, as it was expressed in textbooks, inevitably led to the attribution of excessive importance to foreign intervention as an agent of cultural change. According to RVN historians, the Hoabinhian culture of the Melanesoids experienced a breakthrough only with the arrival of the Australoids; the same occurred following the appearance on the scene of the Nesiots (proto-Malays). Most significantly, some sources quite inaccurately traced the origins of the Đông Sơn culture to China (Bằng Phong, 1972: 78). One can thus see that "foreign intervention" consistently appeared as a key factor in RVN explanations of the development of Vietnamese civilisation.

In line with the foreignist principle that each successive cultural wave overwhelmed the previous one and established its dominance by force, the RVN naturally tended to the view that modern Vietnamese culture owed both its existence and its character to foreign influences. This is illustrated by the following passage from Lê Kim Ngân (1973: 110):

Present day Vietnamese civilisation is marked by three distinct regions:
- the Northern region of Vietnam ... bears distinct marks of Chinese civilisation;
- the Central region ... was influenced by Indian civilisation;
- the Southern region ... bears the stamp of Western influence, with a few signs of Khmer culture.

The need to provide historical justification for their heavy dependence on the United States led the dominant groups in the RVN to lay heavy emphasis on the foreign elements in Vietnamese culture. Their history textbooks make it clear that the need to lean on foreign power was central to the survival and growth of Vietnam. Foreign influence was so important to national development that the history of Vietnamese civilisation, in their view, was inseparable from that of foreign intervention in Vietnam.
Within this foreignist ideological framework, RVN historians had an ambivalent attitude toward the question of Chinese domination of Vietnam. On the one hand, their liberation from the French colonialist straitjacket allowed them to attack Chinese imperialism in general terms. On the other, their total dependence on the US for their own survival, and that of the RVN generally, required them to see the Chinese takeover of Vietnam as an opening to national progress. The result was that the Chinese subjugation of Vietnam in the ancient past was seen as an unfortunate but ultimately necessary and beneficial episode. This line of thinking provided justification for the adoption of many traditional and French interpretations of the Chinese period which had already served the French well. Just as colonialism shared certain attitudes with neo-Confucianism, as we have seen, foreignism could easily accommodate different versions of colonialism.

It is not surprising, therefore, that what emerged as the important features of the experience of Chinese occupation and domination of Vietnam in the eyes of the RVN can be summarised in one word: improvement. And in much the same way as did colonial textbooks, RVN histories went to considerable length to underline this point. On the economic level, Chinese agricultural innovations such as weeding, the use of draught animals, dyke-building and irrigation were seen as having established the conditions for an increase in Vietnamese food production. Chinese colonists also received grateful recognition in RVN textbooks for having introduced trades such as metallurgy, textiles, paper, mat-weaving, painting, jewellery, pottery and embroidery. Altogether, students were reminded that this improvement in the local economy "pushed the Vietnamese to a higher and higher level of civilisation" (Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958: 79). On the political and administrative side, RVN writers also maintained that Chinese conquest brought great benefits to the local system. Echoing French colonial sources, they argued that the Chinese model of centralised monarchy which replaced the local clan-chieftain system contributed much to the development of national identity, which inspired constant uprisings and ultimately led to the restoration of Vietnamese independence in AD 939.13

Another alleged benefit derived from Chinese rule, and one which gained the widest approval among RVN historians, lay in the introduct-
the greatest influence of the Chinese period [on Vietnam] was apparent in cultural affairs. Our society began to get organised; we received the rituals of China: Hsi Kuang taught our people the rites of marriage; Shih Hsieh improved education, and Confucianism was brought into our country.

Without presenting any evidence, some authors claimed that the new Chinese ways of living, particularly the educational reforms, had been "enthusiastically welcomed" by the ancient Vietnamese (Cao Văn Thái, 1961: 24; Bùi Văn Bão and Bùi Văn Thân, 1963: 58).

Religion and 'morality' emerged as important elements in the interpretation of the past by RVN writers. Almost every textbook devoted long discussions to this topic, detailing the lives of Buddha, Confucius and Lao Tzu, and giving expositions of their teachings (see, e.g. Trần Hữu Quảng, 1963a: 98-101; Nguyễn Quý Bình, 1963: 101-3). One cannot, however, find anywhere a single comment on why the Chinese should have wished to impart this aspect of their culture to their colonial subjects, who had long been dismissed by them as 'barbarians'. Neither is it possible to find any explanation of how Chinese religious teachings affected people at different levels of traditional Vietnamese society. History lessons at this point had become, essentially, lectures on religion and morality, not history. This reflects perfectly the idealist philosophy of the RVN: foreignism requires that religion be treated as if it were beyond the range of political or economic scrutiny: "every social organisation is built on a religious foundation and the great mechanism binding all humankind together is also religion" (Nguyễn Đăng Thúc, 1971: 10). Religion, it can be seen, was used as a pretext for the justification of colonial occupation. This approach, like that taken earlier by the French, inevitably led to the conclusion that the Chinese had imparted their religions to the Vietnamese solely for 'civilising' reasons, i.e. to deliver them from backwardness, ignorance and vice:

The Vietnamese people had worshipped animism...before. But this practice was purely supplicatory, not aimed at self-improvement or character training. In the Chinese period, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were introduced into our country. Confucianism teaches us humanism [nhân] and righteousness [nghĩa] and the way to behave
in accordance with social norms and morality. Taoism teaches people to live in harmony with nature ... Buddhism instructs us to annihilate cupidity and lust, to avoid committing sin.

(Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 58)

As a result, it was the Vietnamese people themselves who were to blame if the progress they made failed to meet the standards of the RVN foreignist:

In conclusion, the impact of the Chinese period on us is still felt to this day. Our people, though intelligent and highly imitative, have lacked initiative and [the spirit of] competition, and thus have made only slow progress.

(ibid.)

Of course, not all the people of Vietnam bore an equal share of this blame: according to RVN textbooks, Confucianism and Taoism were not absorbed by the common people as thoroughly as they were by the upper class and the scholar-gentry because "the Lạc Việt [that is, the mass of the Lạc Việt] were but semi-civilised, incapable of taking in the rational philosophy of Confucius or the idealist-individualist philosophy of Taoism" (Trần Hữu Quang, 1963a: 101).

Elitism of this kind played an important part in RVN foreignist ideology. In the final analysis, this is not really surprising. Neo-colonialism can only establish and operate its hegemony through its contact with a tiny fraction of a colonised society. By its own logic, foreignism must include not only the denigration of local culture, but also the oppression of most of the people under its ideological sway. In attacking the mass of ordinary people, foreignist leaders highlight their own superior roles, and thus legitimise their authority. I shall return to this point later in my discussion of the foreignist interpretation of modern history.

Despite their praise for all the above mentioned benefits derived from Chinese occupation, RVN textbooks condemned the Chinese system as "exploitative" and "aimed at crushing our people's will to resist in order to assimilate us" (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 15). As I
have mentioned, this is the important point which distinguishes foreignism from colonialism, and the precise location of its basic internal contradiction. While in the French period, historians were required to defend the whole system of colonialism, both ancient and modern, in all its forms, as a legitimate principle in international relations, foreignists could, and in fact had to, attack the colonial systems of China and France once they had become defunct and were no longer able to support the foreignist elite class. The foreignist emphasis on imported techniques and goods, national strength and independence, and particularly on religion and morality as the advantages which had been gained from Chinese domination reflected, not their attachment to the colonialist ideology, but their essentially parasitic relationship with colonial power.

The contradiction between the condemnation of colonialism by foreignists and their defence of the benefits supposedly derived from it was disguised by their adoption of the concept of 'apolitical culturalism'. Using this concept, by which politics and culture were treated separately, RVN writers were able to speak about such things as a 'timeless' moral code, the 'pure essence' of cultural policy and the 'universal' value of a technological innovation or import. The idea of 'pure' culture outside any political context was plainly what the RVN required to sustain itself in a situation of total American domination. If the foreignists could argue that, even though Vietnam had been cruelly exploited and oppressed by the Chinese, "our people still looked to China, considering her a most brilliant torch lighting the way for our national culture" (Đỗ Văn Rơ, 1971: 23), they could also persuade themselves that total dependence on the US was really 'cultural co-operation'. Apologists for RVN foreignism consistently sought to justify attitudes of this kind, even portraying foreignists as modern-day patriots and heroes. It was they, according to this view, who had stood up to rescue the Vietnamese 'national culture' from destruction, by uniting with a powerful foreign (American) culture:

The policy of the Republic of Vietnam is to liberate the Vietnamese nation and our Vietnamese people through a complete revolution ...

The need for survival requires a national policy of culture based on a national foundation which is also flexible and adaptable to the requirements of foreign cultures.

(Đỗ Văn Rơ, 1971: 30-1)
The ideas that "culture comes first, the nation is built later" and "the loss of culture leads to the loss of the nation" (op.cit.: 28) seem essentially idealist and ultimately illogical, yet had a strong appeal to the foreigners and formed an essential part of RVN ideology. Only from such ideas could come the argument that "the final end of culture is the True, the Good and the Beautiful, which transmit sympathy across the Universe" (ibid.) or the conclusion that American help was necessary for the defence of national culture against communism:

... the Marxist culture does not stop at the 17th parallel. It moves persistently South, assimilating the only remaining part of the country still steeped in Vietnamese civilisation. In the process of resisting this Marxist culture, the Republic of Vietnam receives many new cultural influences from both East and West, of which the most special and powerful is the American. 

(Bo Văn Rô, 1971: 24)

But what in fact did the foreigners see as the 'national culture' which was so precious that they had to rely on American 'culture' to preserve it? Within the framework of 'apolitical culturalism', the foreigners clearly chose to define 'national tradition' solely in terms of foreign influence. Since Vietnam, they argued, was only "a small country which has had a long history in the Indochinese peninsula, but ... never had the opportunity to create any great traditional philosophical system as in India or China ... [and] only received and assimilated the philosophical thought of those two cultural areas" (Nguyễn Đảng Thức, 1965: 125), the Vietnamese national tradition had to be a synthesis of the three religious-philosophical strands, namely Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. With regard to Confucianism, for example, Nguyễn Khắc Khánh (1971: 156), a scholar, writer and cultural representative of the RVN said:

Such Confucian virtues as the love for learning, reverence for old age, filial piety, conjugal fidelity, respect for authority, the fear of extremes and the love for peace have always been underlying Vietnamese customs and manners.

No-one, of course, can ignore the 'Vietnamisation' of outside cultural influences or deny that these influences have become part of Vietnamese tradition. But the foreignist tendency to embrace
these influences to the point of denying the worth of anything purely or originally Vietnamese can only be explained in their own ideological terms. Stepping into the shoes of the French colonialists, the RVN foreignists urged their people to return to tradition clearly because, for them, "the Communists have denied tradition and attempted to break with the past" (Nguyễn Đăng Thúc, 1965: 20). The anti-communist aspect of this definition of tradition was useful for foreignism even though it basically contradicted the concept of apolitical culturalism. The idea that culture is separate from politics was invoked only when it suited the foreignist ideology; it was not applied to any culture identified as 'communist'.

The foreignists devoted much effort to the task of distinguishing 'culture' from 'communism'. The people living under the RVN regime were repeatedly reminded, by all possible means, of the difference between 'universal culture' and 'Marxist culture':

...the monist Marxist philosophy, based on materialism, is not the ally of the traditional morality of Asia: the former is anti-traditional, the latter basically traditional; one is materialist, the other supernatural; one is based on the notion of change, the other on the eternity of the existence of Reason.

( Nguyễn Đăng Thúc, 1961: 26)

In this case, it seems, praise for the civilising work of Chinese rulers was geared to a specific aim: the fight against the so-called communist invasion, which was the overriding concern of RVN foreignism. The idea that the Vietnamese learnt and borrowed from the Chinese civilisation, but never became Chinese themselves, had a special attraction for the foreignists, who tried to convince the Vietnamese people that dependence on the US could never really Americanise them, but only enhance the 'national essence' of Vietnam.

Within the concept of apolitical culturalism, Chinese notables such as Chao T'o, Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen continued to enjoy favourable treatment in RVN history manuals. The RVN ruling elite and the French colonial government agreed on this point, despite their different historical perspectives and socio-political situations.

Where the colonialists had seen in Chao T'o a magnanimous, benevolent conqueror, the foreignists now tried to build up the image of a
kind of ideal foreign-aid expert, a conqueror who later turned into an ardent nationalist and developer of Vietnam. In his person he symbolically combined foreign expertise and national independence -- a "hero whose achievement was the advance of Vietnam"\(^{16}\) (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 14). The examples set by the Chinese governors Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen were also useful to the foreignists: they too could be portrayed as trustworthy benefactors of the local people. Praise for Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen can be seen as an implicit assurance to the Vietnamese people that ultimately they had nothing to fear from a plethora of American experts and advisors and would-be reformers invading many aspects of their daily lives. Thus, seen first as effective agents of Chinese colonialism (in the eyes of the French) then merely as a group of wayward envoys of imperialism (by the RVN), the reputations of these personalities weathered the change from colonialism to foreignism without apparent damage.

The forthright denunciation of colonialism as a general system was another RVN departure from the French legacy in historical thinking. In contrast to the colonial interpretation of the Trưng rebellion, according to which this uprising had its roots in mere personal grievances, the RVN view was that it could be traced directly to the repressive nature of the Chinese colonial system. The cruelty of Su Ting, in particular his alleged killing of Trưng Trắc's husband, though still causally linked with the rebellion in RVN textbooks, was now generally classified as secondary (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958: 53-4; Nguyễn Quy Bình, 1963: 47; Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thành, 1963: 33; Trần Hữu Quảng, 1963a: 52-3).\(^{17}\) In this way, the Trưng revolt could be characterised as a general uprising which involved the bulk of the Việt society. Thus, massive support from the people -- "millions of them, with a single heart and mind, from the aristocracy down to the popular masses" (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958: 54) -- was quoted as the reason for the uprising's initial success after only a few months of fighting.

While Chinese records indeed provide evidence of the widespread nature of the support attracted by the two sisters,\(^{18}\) whether the Trưng revolt was in fact a general uprising to the end has been a matter of dispute among historians.\(^{19}\) Whatever the facts might be, the issue of more significance to us here lies in the foreignist implications of the RVN view of this event. Foreignism, as we have seen, is not mere dependence on, or loyalty to foreign sponsorship. As an expression of a hegemonic ideology, it must seek to include and incorporate virtues
such as self-respect, independence, patriotism and a general idea of preserving the so-called 'national essence'. In their fight against what they called the 'communist invasion from the North', the foreignists became increasingly obsessive about showing their concern for national independence. This may explain their emphasis on encouraging traditional popular veneration for the Trưng sisters, which even the French had not thought it prudent to ignore or suppress.  

Veneration for the memory of the Trưng revolt can also be seen as a subtle warning to the sponsors of the foreignists. As a true ideology, foreignism did indeed claim to foresee the possibility of a future in which the foreignists, once free of the necessity for foreign control, could become genuine national leaders. Continued recognition of the ancient struggle against foreign oppression served to nurture hopes of this sort entertained by foreignist groups.

It is not surprising, then, that the final defeat of the Trưng sisters in AD 43 also received sympathetic treatment in RVN textbooks. Once again, RVN sources conflicted with French ones in their interpretation of history. Instead of seizing on this defeat as an opportunity to humiliate and threaten would-be opponents of colonialism, as the previous regime had done, foreignist historians appear to have used it as further demonstration of their nationalist concern. The reasons suggested for the Trưng sisters' defeat therefore ranged from the "conspiracy and treachery" of the Chinese general Ma Yuan (Pham Văn Trọng and Phạm thị Ngọc Dung, 1965: 32; Cao Văn Thại, 1961: 20) to the sisters' "untrained and inexperienced [people's] army" (Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Than, 1963: 35) and to the "geographical disadvantages" of Vietnamese garrisons (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 19).  

In summary, then, the consistent theme underlying the RVN interpretation of the ancient past was that the national development, and even the independence of Vietnam, had always been conditional on the extent of its co-operation with, and deference to, foreign powers. Histories were designed to show that foreign dependence was necessary, if not inevitable, if progress was to be made. 'Independence within the context of foreign power' was clearly the principle adopted by the RVN in its presentation of ancient history. This theme also ran through its interpretation of the recent past. To what extent this was the case remains to be considered in the following section.
In their presentation of modern Vietnamese history, RVN writers launched direct attacks on the system of French colonialism. Unlike the lessons on the ancient past, which dealt quite lightly with Chinese colonialism, those concerned with French colonialism were prepared to make detailed accusations against the colonial system, based on its exploitative nature. Acts of exploitation by the French were meticulously scrutinised and thoroughly exposed by the South Vietnamese in their history teaching materials. In the RVN view, the French subjugation of Vietnam was deprived of its colonial-era justification as a liberating and civilising mission. Reasons cited for the French intervention were concentrated on the "imperialist" policy of "exploiting natural resources and [securing a] market for [their] products" (Bằng Phong, 1967: 6, see Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.III: 196; Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 9; Trương Ngọc Phú and Nguyễn Hữu Châu Phan, 1970: 76). And what the French had claimed as their achievements for Vietnam was now given as evidence of French exploitation.

In political matters, the colonial government was accused by RVN writers of using the divide-and-rule tactic:

The French maintained it [colonial rule] by multifarious means: using Vietnamese to suppress Vietnamese, dividing people by religious and administrative quarters to create internal conflict, transforming the Vietnamese Court into their puppet, turning a blind eye to mandarinal corruption and bullying in order to defame the Vietnamese authorities...

(Bằng Phong, 1967: 6)

The French policy of divide-and-rule was also reported to have been responsible for the polarisation of the Vietnamese along racial lines -- between ethnic Vietnamese and people of minority groups:

Under previous administrations, minority groups enjoyed a special code of statutes but within Vietnamese law. After establishing colonial rule, the French managed to reduce the influence of the Huế Court by placing the Northern mountain areas and Southern highlands under local administrators.

(Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 23)

The theme of French "exploitation to the bone" (ibid.: 27) was certainly given much attention in lessons dealing with economic
development. The quantitative progress made in agriculture, industry, commerce, transport and telecommunications under the French were presented side by side with accounts of the human miseries inflicted by the iniquitous tax system, the brutal treatment of workers and other outrageous practices, including the compulsion of people to purchase state-produced alcohol. All these, while fattening the metropolitan economy, as argued in the RVN textbooks, led to the impoverishment of colonised Vietnamese (Tăng Xuân An, 1962: 38-48; 1963a: 27-31, 45-47; Bằng Phong, 1967:7; Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 34-47; Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thân, 1962: 101; Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 21-2).

Consistent with its view of the exploitative nature of colonialism, the RVN declared that the French policy of cultural and educational 'development' was mere deception. It was claimed that the French organised a new education system for Vietnam with the aim of producing "a group of lackeys working for the French ruling class rather than advancing people's intellectual life or training them in practical trades" (Bùi Văn Bào and Bùi Văn Thân, 1962: 102). Such an educational network was bound to be full of weaknesses which RVN historians were always quick to point out: "brain stuffing", shortage of schools, a rigid examination system, "decadent" cultural orientation. These characteristics were believed to be part of the "stupefying" policy of the French (Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 35-8; Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 48-50; Bằng Phong, 1967: 7; Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 24). Measures taken by the French in the fields of medical care and social welfare also received harsh criticism. They were dismissed as being "very insufficient" and "almost nothing" (Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 37, 38) or "unworthy of what the Vietnamese were forced to contribute" (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 24). And the vaunted "pacification" by the French was now branded as "robbery and murder" (Trần Hữu Quốc, 1936c: 10). Anti-French nationalists such as Nguyễn Thiên Thuật, Phan Đình Phùng, Hoàng Hoa Thâm, Phan Bội Châu, Phan Chu Trinh took the places of Paul Bert, Francis Garnier, Henri Rivière in the RVN list of heroes in school histories, as well as for public place names.

There is no doubt that the above interpretations of colonial history in RVN textbooks reflected the widespread anti-colonial sentiment of the modern era in much of the world. This does not mean, however, that anti-colonialism in the South was alien to the pervasive ideology of foreignism there. As I have shown, anti-colonialism, on the
surface, accords well with this ideology. It is in fact an inherent part of foreignism. It is only within the context of foreignism that we can understand fully the RVN account of the recent past.

The ahistorical and idealist concept of apolitical culturalism, again, continued to play an important part in the hegemonic operation of foreignism. Translated into the French colonial setting, this idea would indicate two things. The first is that, despite the exploitative nature of colonialism, cultural activities directed by the French regime could still benefit the colony, and the degree of this benefit would vary according to the personal character of each governor. Secondly, it implies that local Vietnamese who collaborated with the French in cultural matters were able to offer something of value to Vietnam. This line of reasoning served as the backbone of RVN historical arguments concerning the cultural history of Vietnam under the French colonial government.

In spite of their open and well-documented accusations of French exploitation, RVN textbooks still showed a tendency toward approval for what the French had brought to Vietnam. In their lengthy treatment of this subject, the authors pointed out that "European influence brought radical change to Vietnam, both spiritually and materially" (Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 105-6). Notions of freedom, equality, democracy, human rights and Christianity were imported, together with the new Romanized script, styles of writing, dress and housing, entertainment and dietary habits. The social structure was also claimed to have undergone a complete change brought about by the new education system, industrial development and urbanisation (op.cit: 107-111).

Again, though there is no doubt about the literal truth of these changes, the fact that the RVN singled them out for special emphasis indicates a foreignist orientation. Praise for French culture regardless of its colonial context, and saluting it as "a new consciousness, a new language, a new religion, a new life-style, a new way of thinking -- all blowing a new wind of revolution through the traditional national culture" (Bỗ Văn Rõ, 1971: 23) can be seen as a preparation for the justification of the new colonial relationship. It certainly matched with the broader cultural trend which the foreignists were trying to promote in South Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. Nguyễn
Đặng Thúc, an RVN expert on history, philosophy and cultural matters, devoted much of his writing to the search for "the equilibrium of Vietnamese culture" which he said had been lost since the Vietnamese contact with the West:

In Vietnam today we are witnessing a disorder of culture and of society, and individual moral depression ... Since the meeting of East and West on the soil of this country, Vietnamese society has experienced a crisis; the culture has lost its equilibrium, and the individual has lost his peace of mind, like a boat losing its direction in a vast sea.

(Nguyễn Đặng Thúc, 1962b: 34)

Apparently, with the rising wave of anti-Americanism, demonstrated by the increasing strength of the communist-led NLF, the search for 'equilibrium' had become an urgent task. Foreignists found it had become more important to defend the American intervention. The RVN people were assured that "there is no essential contradiction between the rural agricultural society of Asia and the industrial and urban society of the West" (Nguyễn Đặng Thúc, 1962b: 53), and that between the East and the West "there is only one universal heart and one eternal reason" (Nguyễn Đặng Thúc, 1965: 23). The Vietnamese people living under the foreignist regime were also urged "to believe in the Absolute, in the Universal Person" (Nguyễn Đặng Thúc, 1962b: 52); that is, "the culture of independent Vietnam today must be assimilated with the Western urban culture" (op. cit.: 54).

One of the more singular expressions of this search for equilibrium took the form of an attempt to establish historical precedents for a co-operative relationship between Vietnam and the United States. This enterprise, naturally enough, had little in the way of factual evidence to work on, and gives the impression that those who pursued it were grasping at rather insubstantial straws. In 1961, Thái Văn Kiệm, the RVN Deputy Director of Cultural Affairs, published a thin booklet entitled *The Twain Did Meet*, which attempted to show that Vietnam had recognised the United States as a potential friend and ally as far back as the early part of the 19th century. He gave the examples of the American merchant John White and the diplomat Edmund Roberts, who apparently visited Vietnam at that time, though for what official purpose one cannot clearly discern, and of the Vietnamese diplomat Bùi Viên, who some years later went to the United States
without formal accreditation in a vain attempt to secure American assistance against the French invaders of his country. What this account lacked in solid evidence of US-Vietnamese friendship it made up for in rhetorical flourishes, as the following passage indicates:

Bùi Văn (Bùi Vien) had a vision that looked far beyond seas and continents. He was probably the first Vietnamese who ventured to cross the vast Pacific seeking in the New World the help that would enable his beloved country to safeguard her independence. Bùi Văn's name, along with the names of John White and Edmund Roberts, shared a place of honour in the list of those who have sought to bring together East and West, Vietnam and the United States of America, in peace and friendship.

(Thai Văn Kiêm, 1961: 40)

In soliciting popular support for the fact of their sponsorship by foreigners, the RVN foreignists once again used the concept of apolitical culturalism to divert attention: the whole process became 'cultural', therefore acceptable, since the national culture could only be further enriched by foreign influence. It was within this frame of reasoning that the RVN tended to treat the envoys of a colonial regime as somehow detached from the system which they represented. As we have already seen in their version of ancient history RVN writers condemned the Chinese system itself, while praising the sinicisation which took place under the rule of what they called "good, clement and benevolent" governors.

This pattern was repeated in modern history. On one hand, RVN textbooks attacked the system of French colonialism and its generally exploitative policies (as already discussed), while on the other they differentiated between a "totalitarian" Doumer, a "repressive" Merlin, a "strict" Pasquier and a "generous" Sarraut or an "open-minded" Varenne, and judged the results of the colonial system on the basis of each governor's personal achievement (Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 16-8). As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, this line of argument is difficult to sustain, since it would engender contradiction. Furthermore, in this particular case, it would be very naive and erroneous to commend Sarraut and Varenne for their contributions to the development of education, medical care, social welfare and so on without examining their activities in the total context of French colonialism. Evidence can be obtained to show that these 'generous' and
'open' policies were fully in line with the overall aim of exploitation within colonialism, contrary to what RVN history books implied. Sarraut himself explained to his compatriots the question of French colonialism with respect to health care and education in the following terms:

Above all, medical care means the conservation of race. It is our duty ... to preserve the populations under our governance ... It is our most immediate and practical interest, since all the work of colonisation, the whole task of creating wealth in the colonies is dominated by the question of 'man-power': this is the key to the arch of the economic edifice which we must build.

(Sarraut, 1923: 94)

and:

Education, in effect, is above all a matter of multiplying the value of colonial production, and improving the quality of technical knowledge and the skills of the indigenous workers. Among the labouring masses, it must select and train an elite of collaborators, such as technicians, foremen, surveyors, managers' assistants or clerks, who will replace -- in sufficient numbers -- the Europeans, and satisfy the growing demands of our colonial enterprises in agriculture, industry and commerce.

(op.cit.: 95)

In line with the theme of apolitical culturalism, Vietnamese collaborators in French cultural activities were also given credit in the RVN interpretation of modern history. Thus, while such military collaborators as Trần Bá Lộc, Nguyễn Thân, Hoàng Cao Khải and Lê Hoan -- who actually commanded colonial troops in the suppression of local revolts -- were dismissed as "henchmen of France", "traitors" or "sellers of the country" (Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 42; Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 62; Bằng Phong, 1967: 13), cultural collaborators such as Trường Vĩnh Ký, Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, Phạm Quỳnh -- who produced a multitude of writings in defence of French colonialism -- were treated favourably as "pioneers of national literature" (Trần Hữu Quang, 1963c: 54). Trường Vĩnh Ký, described as a "deeply learned scholar", had an entire lesson in a third-grade book devoted to him (see Cao Văn Thái, 1959: 84-5), while the achievements of Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh and Phạm Quỳnh were recounted in texts as well as in the additional reading prescribed for secondary-school courses (see Tăng Xuân An, 1962: 198, 199, 211-2).
The contradiction inherent in the RVN conception of an apolitical culture is most apparent in its judgment of Hoàng Cao Khải. The distinction drawn between culture and politics in the RVN was so sharp that the 'crime' of Hoàng Cao Khải in his role as an officer in the colonial army and as a keen participant in many 'pacification' campaigns did not discredit him in his other role as a writer -- and a history writer for the French at that. Thus, while he was denounced in history school books, his own (Chinese-language) Việt Nam Sử Yếu (Short History of Vietnam) was ordered to be translated into Vietnamese. This was for two reasons. The first was to "preserve old literature"; the second, to show that the RVN "never dismiss[ed] a true statement by any person simply because of his general conduct" (Lê Xuân Giáo, Introduction to Hoàng Cao Khải: 1971: 476). However, it should be added here that the 'statements' made by Hoàng Cao Khải were not apolitical; in fact, they served the French regime very well, as I have indicated in the last chapter.

Praise for the activities of Vietnamese collaborators in the French period was, of course, well-suited to the foreignist ideology, because it was these people who themselves represented foreignism in the later, US-dominated period of the RVN. Since there is a direct link between the local bureaucracy established by the French and that which served the Americans, and also between French-educated people and those working for the American system, praise for the collaborators under the French by the foreignists was in fact indirect praise for themselves. Not surprisingly, this was closely linked with the reluctance among the RVN leadership to attack the cultural influence of the French, which I have mentioned earlier. These two aspects went together, contributing largely to the formation of foreignism as an ideology. The foreignist elite used them to justify its own position as well as protect its interests. To illustrate this point, we should examine the foundations of the Saigon establishment.

Let us consider education first. I have shown in Chapter III that a dual system of French and Vietnamese schools continued intact in the RVN long after the French had left. For more than a decade after the demise of French colonialism in Indochina, French schools continued to serve and to replenish the elite of South Vietnam. No statistics are available, but one can safely say that virtually all upper-strata families -- those of top civil servants, professional
people and business people -- sent their children to prestigious French schools. Since Vietnamese higher education used mainly the French language as the medium of instruction, attendance at a French school was a great advantage to those pursuing higher studies. French-school graduates were also better qualified and better prepared psychologically for overseas study: it was common for socially privileged children to be sent abroad to avoid the unpleasant effects of the war. In 1966, as few as 0.57 per cent of primary students, and 4.3 per cent of secondary students attended French institutions (Nguyễn Trọng Văn, 1966: 29). Yet this tiny minority lived in a world of its own and assumed airs of cultural superiority:

Students at French schools read French journals. They talk in French, and regard Vietnamese as a local language which they use only when forced to. They are proud to be heard and seen speaking French ... At times, when in conflict with [other] Vietnamese people and students, they talk back in French with contempt and arrogance. In their subconscious, they consider themselves French in this country.

(op.cit.: 20)

One should not, therefore, be surprised at the RVN attitude of refraining from severe criticism of the influence of French culture and education in Vietnam, or at least showing ambiguity about it. These areas were intimately connected with the power base of the RVN foreignist elite. It was from this source that the elite sprang, and it was through these channels that its members ensured that their power was passed on.

Another important fact is that many members of the new post-French regimes in the RVN had been functionaries under the colonial regime. Wurfel (1967: 539) shows that more than two-thirds of the members of RVN cabinets, from Diệm to Kỳ, had had a career history of service under either the French-supported Bảo Đại or the French themselves, in civil or military positions. More significant still is the fact that all the military officers in post-Diệm cabinets had served the French (often in putting down Vietnamese nationalist uprisings) before 1954 (ibid.: 534). The obvious contradiction between the well-known facts of these officers' activities in the French forces and the official RVN attitude of posthumous hostility toward French colonialism was never resolved, and contributed heavily to the
fatal political weakness of all RVN governments.

From the foreignist point of view, however, the contradiction was not a major problem. For the ideology of foreignism identified as the ultimate enemies of the State those who actively resisted foreign domination in any given period. In the RVN, these people were labelled as 'communists' and singled out for attack in modern history texts. But since the RVN felt it necessary to take a strong anti-colonialist stand at the same time, its apologists were caught in a position of being unable to attack the communists for having fought against the French. They therefore sought to focus attention on particular alleged crimes committed by the Việt Minh and on the misery of life in the DRV.

According to the RVN writers, the Việt Minh were guilty of two serious political crimes: these were their alleged illegal seizure of power in 1945, and their subsequent "collaboration" with the French when they negotiated settlements with them in 1946 and 1954. The first of these indictments referred to the takeover by the Việt Minh from the Japanese at the end of World War II, when the latter were in a fatal military situation in the Pacific and the French garrison was in internment. This event is of course open to various interpretations. For the Việt Minh, and Vietnamese who opposed colonialism in any form, the August 1945 event represented the seizing of a golden opportunity to regain independence for Vietnam. The Japanese, and certainly the French, would have seen it as a cunning and premeditated coup d'état designed to take advantage of their temporary weakness. What appeared in the RVN textbooks with regard to August 1945 undoubtedly reflected the latter point of view: the Việt Minh were accused of having "plundered" state power (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 66; Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958, vol.IV: 79; Băng Phong, 1967: 34; Phạm Cao Dương and Nguyễn Khắc Ngữ, 1970: 134, 135, 137).

There was a deliberate and inevitable obscurity, though, about exactly whom it was that the Việt Minh had 'robbed' of power. Clearly the answer to this question must be related to the definition of who had been the 'possessors' of Vietnam immediately before the August event. If one looks at the question from a purely legal point of view (of course, one can still ask: on what grounds was it 'legal'?), then the Japanese-installed Bảo Đại regime is the answer. But if one
makes a distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* power, both the Japanese and the French must be considered. In any case, the Vietnamese people as such did not then exercise any internationally recognised State power over their country. If the Việt Minh had indeed stolen this power, as alleged in the RVN textbooks, the victims of this robbery were not any legally-definable group of Vietnamese. On this point, the RVN and the colonialists saw eye to eye. RVN denunciations of Bảo Đại (as a puppet) and the colonial power (as an exploiter) thus presented contradictions similar to those which I have discussed already.

There was, however, at least one attempt to face the problem of the transfer of power in the 1945 vacuum. In the work by Phan Xuân Hôa, the August event was portrayed as an uprising in which "the people seized power but the communist Việt Minh robbed them of the leadership" (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV: 79). This argument, however, raised more questions than it answered: who were 'the people'? And in this particular case, how did 'power' differ from 'leadership'?

RVN writers also accused the Việt Minh of having 'collaborated' with the French in signing an accord on March 6, 1946 to allow the French to re-occupy North Vietnam. This agreement, according to RVN history books, was proof of the Việt Minh's readiness to sell out the country's interests so that they could concentrate their forces on the liquidation of their rivals in non-communist nationalist groups (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 67; Bùi Văn Bão and Bùi Văn Thần, 1962: 167; Tăng Xuân An, 1962: 234-246). This charge is difficult to accept. When one considers the context in which the agreement was concluded, the picture changes somewhat: the Chinese-French agreement on February 28 which had already given the French legal rights over North Vietnam, the fact of French re-occupation of half of Vietnam at the same time, the weak and poorly-armed state of the Việt Minh forces, and the possibility of achieving independence for Vietnam through peaceful means—all encouraged Hồ to come to the conference table in March. Buttlinger (1958: 450) described the situation in Vietnam before the signing of the agreement:

> Conclusion of the Chinese-French agreement through which France, at the heavy price of giving up all her possessions and prerogatives in China, prepared the way for the withdrawal of the Chinese troops from Vietnam and for eventual Chinese acceptance of France's return to Vietnam.
Ho Chi Minh was now faced with the prospect of losing China's wavering but for Vietnam still crucial support against the French, for which he had spent much gold that went into the pockets of the Chinese generals in Vietnam. This prospect led Ho Chi Minh to consider temporary concessions to France. In order to avoid an armed French intervention, for which Vietnam was unprepared, the Hanoi government was now willing to let the French station small forces in Central and North Vietnam while negotiations for French recognition of Vietnamese independence continued.

As it happened, through the 'preliminary agreement' the Hanoi government obtained French recognition of Vietnam as a 'free' state (belonging to an Indochinese Federation within the French Union) and a promise to consider the unification of Vietnam, and other matters, including eventual complete independence for Vietnam, in a future series of negotiations. What happened after this only served to reinforce Việt Minh concern about the chances for Vietnam's eventual independence: the failure to achieve agreement at successive meetings in Dalat and Fontainebleau finally led to their being forced into the armed struggle now known as the 'First Indochina War', which was to last for nine years.

It is interesting to consider how the RVN judged this war, in view of its hostility to both the French and the Việt Minh. How were they to give an accurate account of the struggle against the French without contradicting their charges of collaboration between the French and the Việt Minh? They could not, in fact, avoid the contradiction, and in the attempt to bypass it, RVN writers had to resort to some complicated verbal manoeuvres. It appears that, when the situation could be exploited to project an unfavourable image of the Việt Minh, the terms 'communist Việt Minh', or 'Hô Chí Minh' were used directly. And whenever it seemed more appropriate to emphasise the anti-colonial nature of the struggle, the term 'Việt Minh' was replaced by reference to an unspecified 'resistance force', 'resistance government' or, for maximum effect, 'Vietnam' or 'our people'. A good example of this tendency can be seen in the text by Bằng Phong (1967: 39, 40):

...on March 6, 1946, a preliminary agreement was signed between Hô Chí Minh, Vũ Hồng Khanh and the French representative Sainteny ... Thanks to this agreement, the French had an opportunity to bring their troops to North Vietnam to prepare for later invasion.

(p.39)
After a year of frantic activity, the French had achieved to a large extent their objective of returning to Vietnam. For Vietnam, the French had controlled the South, established autonomous zones, stationed troops in the North and caused problems for the government of Vietnam. All this was aimed at putting the country back under French rule.

However, if the evil French intent of invading Vietnam was strong, the anti-French spirit of our people was thousands of times stronger. In the face of the furtive French conspiracy, the Vietnamese people were fully alert and prepared for a long and arduous struggle to rid our land permanently of the French.

(p.40)

and from Tằng Xuân An (1962: 375, 382):

Confronted with the modern weapons of the French, the Việt Minh ordered their regular forces to retreat to the Việt Bắc and brought forward the militia and the people to serve as targets for the French guns.

... after sunset, tens of thousands of people made roads and carried weapons. They crossed high mountains, took artillery pieces to the tops of hills in dismantled form and reassembled them. The French could never imagine the immeasurable sacrifice made by our people in the fight against colonialism.

The RVN's other serious charge against the Việt Minh was that they had again co-operated with the French in signing the agreement which brought about the partition of Vietnam (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV: 137-139; Bùi Văn Bão and Bùi Văn Thành, 1962: 169; Tằng Xuân An, 1962: 286; see also Nha Tác Đặng Tâm Lý, 1965: 12). This argument is highly controversial, since it can be argued that it was not the 1954 Geneva agreement which permanently divided Vietnam and led to a "long internal war" (Bằng Phong, 1967: 47), but precisely the refusal by the RVN regime to participate in the re-unification elections planned for 1956 under the Geneva agreement.26

Anti-communism continued to dominate the history texts in their accounts of later events. One of the most commonly used tactics for attacking the North was to brand it as a 'communist, totalitarian state', where the 'Three Noes' policy (no family, no religion, no country) had overridden the traditional moral values of Vietnam (Tằng Xuân An, 1962: 284; 1963a: 150; Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV: 163).27 The DRV's family-law reforms, some of which reflect liberal attitudes now common in the West, were attacked in the RVN in the early 1960s as being part of the communist 'no family' policy:
Marriage is not determined by parents any more. It only requires the agreement of a couple and the approval of the units to which they belong.

Divorce, for any reason, can be obtained once the unit has been informed ... Marriage is possible for couples related by blood; for example, a widow can marry her dead husband’s brother.

Marital relations are undermined: husbands and wives work for themselves, needing no support from each other. The communist government has planned to build nurseries for rounding up children from all families. Parental love will thus be extinguished.

(Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958, vol.V: 175-6)

One of the most frequently used illustrations of the totalitarianism of the North Vietnamese system was related to its alleged suppression of religion:

Ceremonies in temples, pagodas, churches and private homes ... are to be simplified and gradually abolished. Those who disobey this rule are indicted for 'extravagance', subjected to 'criticism', and then, if necessary, sent to a re-education camp.

(op.cit.: 175)

Though my recent observation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (the successor to the DRV) indicates some degree of 'simplification' of religious ceremonies (possibly for economic reasons), there was no outward sign of oppression with regard to religious practices: people were free to go to church or temple, or to practice their religion at home. Of course, my impression of present-day Vietnam, though undoubtedly providing some indication of the earlier situation in the DRV, is not necessarily an accurate reflection of what happened in the past under different conditions. Nevertheless, the foregoing charge cannot be supported even by the RVN's own accounts: the evidence of religious persecution provided in RVN textbooks is either vague or simply distorted. Long quotations from general Marxist philosophical writings on religion or life and death by an individual -- even an influential individual such as Trần Văn Giàu, a high-ranking official in the DRV -- do not constitute proof of actual suppression, though this was claimed (see Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958, vol.V: 159-163). Nor was a picture of a damaged statue of the Virgin Mary proof that "the communists stabbed it and flung it to the ground" (Phan Xuân Hòa, 1958, vol.IV: 144; vol.V: 160).
The most unscrupulous use of false evidence in this regard was made in another picture appearing in the same book. The note under the picture of the famous 'One-Pillar Pagoda' stated that it had been "destroyed by mines on the night of October 9, 1954" (op.cit., vol. IV: 145; vol.V: 161). Put in the context of a lesson on the alleged suppression of religion in the North as it was, this plainly implied that the DRV authorities had committed the outrage. In fact, it has been well documented that the French blew up the pagoda, as well as carrying out other acts of sabotage, before they evacuated Hanoi, and it was precisely the DRV government which set out to rebuild it afterwards. It is still standing in Hanoi (see Whitfield, 1976: 178-9).

Another common allegation made against the North in RVN history textbooks was that the DRV regime, having adopted a 'no-country' policy, turned the state into a mere "colony of the USSR and China" (Bùi Văn Bảo and Bùi Văn Thân, 1962: 169):

To show gratitude to its masters, the northern pseudo-government regards itself as a satellite of the USSR and Communist China. National boundaries are abolished, the Chinese pour freely into Vietnam for permanent settlement; Chinese advisers have wide authority, directly orchestrating the administrative and economic affairs of the North.

(Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 150)

In contrast to the "red Hell" (Tăng Xuân An, 1963a: 150) in North Vietnam, the RVN was depicted as a land which promised "a bright future for the Vietnamese people, who have demolished, and will demolish, falsehood, deception and oppression" (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.V: 246). It was also claimed that, while a form of colonialism had been re-imposed in the DRV, self-determination and independence reigned in the RVN. RVN history books gave various 'proofs' of this independence: "independence of spirit" was demonstrated by the change in names and flags (from French to Vietnamese) adorning the Presidential Palace; "independence of currency" by the change of title from "Bank of Indochina" to "National Bank"; "independence of culture" by the introduction of Vietnamese as a teaching language in three University faculties (Law, Letters and Pedagogy); not to mention "independence of the army" and "independence of diplomacy" (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.V: 236-8).
The above claims are drawn from a book published under the Diệm regime and seem dubious to anyone familiar with the infrastructure of the RVN at that time. As it has been remarked by FitzGerald (1972: 92):

In Saigon the same ministries filled the same colonial office buildings. The civil servants shuffled the same papers their predecessors had filed before them. Many of the civil servants themselves remained the same ... What was most strange was that Diem, this proud nationalist, did not even symbolically disassociate his regime from the government he so despised as a "French puppet". The Republic of Vietnam had the same flag and the same anthem as the Bao Dai government, and Diem himself lived in the governor's palace.

History textbooks in this period also exalted Diệm by calling him the "great man of strong will" (chỉ sỹ) and the "Saviour of the Vietnamese". When referred to in the third person, Diem was called "He", with a capital H (Bùi Quang Ly, 1960: 73, 74; Bùi Văn Bão and Bùi Văn Thân, 1962: 173, 174; Tăng Xuân An, 1962: 292). This idolisation of Diệm, however, had a reverse side which soon revealed itself: after being assassinated in a CIA-supported coup in 1963, Diem became the target of savage official RVN criticism. He was accused of having shown "greed for power, totalitarianism, nepotism, abuse of power, rigging of the economy, suppression of political parties, students and Buddhism" (Bằng Phong, 1967: 48), among other things.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing analysis I have attempted to show how the whole enterprise of writing history for use in RVN schools was replete with contradictions. I have shown how an attempt was made to resolve some of these contradictions through the use of the concept of apolitical culturalism, which I have identified as the major element in the structure of the foreignist ideology, particularly as it affected the interpretation of history in the RVN.

Briefly stated, the ideology of foreignism, as I have described it, rests on the following principles and beliefs:

a) A foreign country which is powerful enough to dominate one's own nation and to influence the course of its
history must necessarily have a superior culture.

b) This superior foreign culture should be welcomed and, if possible, adopted, since it must contain universally desirable values, the absorption of which can positively influence the lives of the people subject to foreign domination.

c) The process of absorbing a foreign culture is not intended to turn the people of one's own country into copies of foreigners, but rather at allowing them greater freedom to develop. The adoption of elements of a foreign culture is necessarily a highly selective process. The aim is to discern what can be useful in a foreign culture and to blend these elements with native cultural traditions.

d) Only an enlightened, modern intellectual elite is able to achieve such a synthesis. To qualify for membership of this leading group, one must be able to understand the foreign culture. This understanding is reached through active collaboration with foreigners.

e) In the interests of national survival and development, the whole population should help its leaders to carry out their mission by supporting their policy of collaboration.

Two questions now remain: a) What were the origins of foreignism in the RVN? and b) How did foreignism come to develop into the dominant ideology in the RVN? I shall attempt to answer these questions in Chapter VII, where I shall conclude the case study of Vietnam.

Notes to Chapter V

1. This comparison, it should be noted, is based on somewhat different levels of education, i.e. the colonial primary curriculum vs. the RVN secondary. Since no exactly comparable figures can be found, the assumption that the history curriculum followed the same pattern at both levels is open to revision.
2. It is interesting to note that in this 'National Museum' there were many rooms displaying the fine arts of many countries, ancient as well as modern, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Cham, Funan and Japan. There was a distinction made between Sino-Vietnamese and Vietnamese fine arts. In the room reserved for the displays of the latter, one finds most exhibits were dated from the Nguyễn period. These included royal beds and couches, tea sets, ornamental plates and perhaps most interestingly of all, a spice jar which had belonged to Bishop Pigneau de Behaine, the French missionary who played a large part in the enthronement of Gia Long and the intervention of the French military force to that end. (For information on the displays in the National Museum, see Thái Văn Kiểm and Trương Bá Phát, 1974).

3. The term 'Indonesian', as I noted in the last chapter, does not refer to the people of the present-day Republic of Indonesia. To avoid confusion, anthropologists now prefer to use the modern terms 'proto-Malay' or 'Nesiot'.

4. According to Trần Huu Quảng (1963a: 15-6) for example, the order in which different racial groups migrated to Vietnam was as follows: Melanesoid — Nesiot — Australoid — Austronesian (including an admixture of Nesiot and Mongoloid) from Tibet and Yunnan — T'ai (Mongoloid from Tibet). The La cà Việt were a mixture of T'ai and Austronesian, the last two groups to arrive in Vietnam in prehistoric times.

5. See, e.g., Buttinger (1972: 22-3) and Buchanan (1967: 26-36) for comparison.


7. This does not, however, seem to be the case in history taught at tertiary level. While Nguyễn Phương (1965a,b,c) of Huế University argued that the modern Vietnamese are actually Chinese, Nghệm Thâm (1962) of Saigon University claimed to have determined that the Vietnamese were of proto-Malay (or Nesiot) origin. Meanwhile, the professor-politician Nguyễn Đặng Thúc (1962) asserted the European origin of the proto-Malay race from which the Vietnamese were supposed to have originated. It would be inappropriate not to mention here a laborious work of research done by Bình Nguyễn Lộc (1971) who claimed to be able to prove the proto-Malay origin of the Vietnamese.


9. In Grade 2 textbooks designed for very young children who were taught history in the form of stories, legend was recounted but clearly seen as entertainment only (see, e.g. Phạm Văn Trọng and Huỳnh Văn Bồ, 1965: 24-5).

10. For a discussion of the origins of the Đồng Sơn culture, see Chapter VI.


14. Contradicting the common assumption in the RVN that Buddhism only came to Vietnam via China, Taylor (1980: 14) shows that there were times, e.g. the Shih Hsieh (Si Nhiếp) period, in which Buddhism was introduced to China from Vietnam. He wrote: "...Vietnam was...a center for the diffusion of Buddhism into China. Far from being a time of ascending Chinese influence in Vietnam, the era of Shih Hsieh saw Vietnam transmitting foreign cultural currents into China".


16. A Saigon (or more precisely, Chợ Lớn) street was named after Chao T'o.

17. Some authors, presumably in a minority, such as Phạm Văn Trọng and Phạm Thị Ngọc Dung (1965: 32), Cao Văn Thái (1961: 20-1), and Bùi Quang Ly (1960: 18) still clung to the erroneous traditional/colonial explanation which attributed the cause of the rebellion to the cruelty of Su Ting.

18. In both the Biography of Ma Yüan (in Hou Han-shu, Vol.2: 506a) and the Account of the Southern Barbarians (op.cit.: Vol.3: 1227a), it was recorded that the people in the prefectures of Cưu Chân (Chiu-chen), Nhật Nam (Jih-nan) and Hợp Phố (Ho-p’u) joined the uprising, and they eventually overran sixty-five strongholds.

19. Holmgren (1980: 15-6), for instance, contends that what may have happened was only "a series of uncoordinated uprisings led by native feudal leaders who were being slowly deprived of their traditional wealth and power". This view contradicts the DRV view, which will be examined in Chapter VI.

20. The traditional national holiday on the sixth of the second lunar month to commemorate the Trưng sisters was observed in the RVN.

21. Trần Hữu Quang (1963a: 53) referred to Vietnamese "weakness" as the cause of the defeat, but also maintained that this weakness had resulted from the Chinese policy and practice of assimilation.

22. Nguyễn Đăng Thúc was the Chairman of the Vietnamese Association for Asian Cultural Relations, an official body representing the RVN in discussions on cultural affairs with other Asian countries. In his youth, he attended a French school,
the Lycée Albert Sarraut in Hanoi, and later continued his studies in France and Belgium. On his return to Vietnam, he practised journalism and later taught Eastern philosophy at Hanoi University in the French period. From 1954 he lectured at the Faculty of Letters in Saigon University, and also at the University of Huế. He also represented the RVN at many international conferences (see note in Nguyễn Đăng Thúc, 1962a: 55). In many ways, he can be seen as an official spokesman for the RVN on cultural and political matters. Some of what he wrote directly attacked and denigrated the DRV (see Nguyễn Đăng Thúc, 1962a; 1965: particularly 92-108), and most of it was devoted to denunciations of Marxism and communism.

23. Contradictions resulting from the concept of apolitical culturalism sometimes occasionally took an ironic twist: RVN students learned of Hoàng Cao Khải's betrayal in their history manuals, only to encounter a quite different picture of the man in their lessons on literature: "When France established the Protectorate, the country was still in disorder; he [Hoàng Cao Khải] commanded troops in the pacification of many areas, destroyed numerous groups of enemies and was awarded promotions and medals" (Dương Quang Hạm, 1961: 168). This was due to the fact that literature textbooks of the French period were wholly re-adapted for teaching in the RVN.

24. Here, the 'Việt Minh' (the League for the Independence of Vietnam) should be understood within the framework of South Vietnam's historical perception. The term was used in a pejorative sense to denote the communist-oriented group under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh. In fact, the Việt Minh organisation was broadly representative of Vietnamese society, including nationalist and religious groups. Though it was formed in 1941 and absorbed by the Lao Động (Labour) Party of the DRV in 1951, the term 'Việt Minh' has been generally used to refer to the movement of the anti-French war which ended in 1954.

25. In the DRV, this event was called the August Revolution.

26. Among all the RVN textbooks which I have used for this analysis, I found that only one (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV: 137-142) confronted the problem of the refusal by the RVN to hold the planned re-unification election. The author argued that the RVN could not participate in the election for two reasons: first, that it was not among the signatories to the Geneva agreement of 1954; second, the disproportion in population (12 million in the North vs. 10 million in the South) was unfavourable to the South. The second of these excuses, however, was negated by the later claim that close to 1 million people had fled the DRV for the 'Free South' after 1954 (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV: 150).

27. This allegation was discussed at length in only one text (Phan Xuân Hôa, 1958, vol.IV and V). My ensuing analysis naturally relies most heavily on one source.
AUTONOMISM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF VIETNAMESE HISTORY

The birth of the DRV in 1945 can be seen as the culmination of the whole Vietnamese anti-colonial movement in the 20th century, and its dominant ideology can be summed up in the term 'autonomism', the direct antithesis of the colonialist ideology. Autonomism can be described as representing every tendency opposed to foreign domination and at the same time every aspiration toward national independence and self-reliance.

In this chapter I shall look at the interpretation of history in the DRV in relation to this ideology. It is my contention that our understanding of historiographic activity in the DRV, particularly that aspect of it reflected in school textbooks, would be incomplete if considered outside this ideological framework. It is intended that the nature of autonomism will be progressively revealed as my analysis proceeds. Before starting on this analysis I shall present an overview of history as it was taught in schools in the DRV.

HISTORY AS A SUBJECT IN THE DRV

Although information on the relative amount of teaching time devoted to history in the DRV school curriculum is scarce, it is beyond doubt that history was considered one of the most important of subjects in the DRV educational system. This view is supported by the strong evidence which shows that the study of history in general was always given great emphasis during the 30-year life of the DRV.

In the year 1945, several months after the foundation of the DRV, the Institute of Archaeology was established. Though the difficulties imposed by war prevented this Institute from carrying out any substantial work, the mere fact of its formal existence at such an early stage symbolised the determination of the DRV to give the highest priority to historical research. In 1948, in the midst of
the war of resistance against the French, a resolution of the Central Party Committee entrusted the Minister of Education with the task of "compiling a general history of our country and beginning work immediately on a history of the anti-French revolution and a history of the Resistance" (in Bùi Đình Thanh, 1966: 31). Though the work of writing an official general history did not begin until more than a decade later, this resolution was almost certainly the chief motive force behind the publication, between 1957 and 1961, of a significant three-volume work on the anti-French struggle (*Lịch Sử Tầm Mới Năm Chống Pháp*, by Trần Huy Liệu). It also gave impetus to the foundation in 1953 of the Commission for Literature, History and Geography, whose official organ, the Journal Văn Sử Địa (*VSD*; Studies in Literature, History and Geography), first appeared in June, 1954. In pursuit of its stated purpose, which was "to reinforce the patriotism and fighting spirit of the Vietnamese people by exalting our land and its men, its history and its culture" (Phạm Huy Thống, 1981: 2-3), it did valuable work in the study of the origins of the Vietnamese culture and in historical methodology in its early stages.

The Institute of History came into formal existence in 1959, followed by the journal Nghiên Cứu Lịch Sử (*NCLS*; Studies in History). By 1966, the Institute, combined with the Committee for Research into the Party's History, and the Departments of History at the Teachers' College and the Comprehensive University, organised a convention at which historical methodology was discussed. The convention was attended not only by academics and professional historians, but also by army officers and worker delegates (Viện Sử Học, 1967: 9).

Historical study in the DRV was always closely allied with a conscious attempt "to explain and reform the present, which is itself made up of elements from the past" (Minh Tranh, 1959: 1). In general, what Nguyễn Hồng Phong (1967: 14) claimed in the 1966 Convention seems true enough:

> Our Marxist historiography — like our Party, our nation — was born in storms and grew up through storms. It has never been academic, and among all the growing pains which have afflicted it, none was the result of ivory-tower considerations, i.e. the disease of science for the sake of science itself.
Such consciousness and determination in the direction of historical research did not, however, guarantee that the development of this study in the DRV was automatic, smooth or easy, particularly for those who were concerned with education. It is known, for example, that during a good part of the nine-year resistance war, the standard colonial textbook -- Trần Trọng Kim's *VNSL* -- continued in use in the DRV-controlled areas (Văn Tấn, 1958: 71). But there seems to be evidence to show that this practice was due to 'technical' problems stemming from wartime shortage rather than ideological confusion. As early as 1942, Hồ's 236-line poem entitled *Lịch Sử Nước Та* (Our Country's History) had been incorporated into the literacy programme (Phan Ngọc Liên, 1973). In view of the fact that it was re-published in 1948 and 1949, and in view of the significance of the literacy campaign within the broadened scope of complementary education characteristic of the DRV education system (Chapter III), Hồ's poem must be taken seriously as indicating a new way of looking at history in Vietnam: history must serve the nation, concern itself with practical problems and show a clear political orientation:

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Let us look at the history of Vietnam  
And see the glorious heroism of our people  
Many times they have fought in the North and pacified the East  
They are illustrious and worthy descendants of Dragon and Nymph

(Xét trong lịch sử Việt Nam,  
Đàn ta vẫn cùng vể vang anh hùng.  
Nhieu phen đánh Bắc, đẹp Đông,  
Oanh oanh, liệt liệt, con Rồng cháu Tiên.)

(in Phan Ngọc Liên, 1973: 16)

In the same way that the DRV literacy classes in fact did much more than impart the mere techniques of reading and writing, Hồ's history book was more than a mere description of past events. It was also aimed at imparting the Vietnamese political strategy in a direct and unambiguous way:

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The French have now lost our country  
They lack the strength and men to rule us  
The Japanese enemy has just arrived  
The whole administration is in chaos  
Also with China, America, Holland, England  
War breaks out everywhere  
There is a good opportunity for us  
To arise and restore our nation's independence.
The kind of historiography pioneered by Hồ was the model for the writing of Vietnamese history as it developed in the official view of the Democratic Republic. In the early 1960s, the Institute of History, in collaboration with the Department of History in the Hanoi Comprehensive University and Teachers' College, set out plans for the project of writing a complete general history of Vietnam. Its aims, in the words of Trần Huy Liệu (1960a: 1), the Director of the Institute, was "to deepen patriotism, love for the people, the spirit of national pride and the will to struggle". With this aim in mind, history was expected "to show the characteristics of the development of our nation as a perennial struggle against foreign aggression ... [which] ignited and fuelled in very early times a spirit of strong patriotism, of recalcitrance and independence" (ibid.). Hồ's poem, written as early as 1941, already met these criteria in a general sense.

Although Lịch Sử Quê Ta, being widely used in literacy classes, was probably well known among the population, the colonial VNSL by Trần Trọng Kim -- as already noted -- still played an important role in the official DRV history curriculum during the Resistance. By 1954, however, VNSL had begun to lose ground in DRV schools; it becomes a target for vigorous criticism in Sử Địa Văn (see Trần Huy Liệu, 1954a; 1955a; Trần Đức Thạo, 1954). At the same time, a new reference book for history teachers appeared: the Sổ Thảo Lịch Sử Việt Nam (STLS; Brief History of Vietnam) by Minh Tranh (1954a) which, it was claimed, had been written "from a completely new point of view: it is for the working class and is based on the doctrine of historical materialism" (Văn Tấn, 1958: 71). STLS, though no doubt blowing fresh air into the Vietnamese school history curriculum, was not without its problems. Its mechanical application of Marxist historical materialism was exposed and attacked by Đào Duy Anh in 1955 -- the year in which his own two-volume Lịch Sử Việt Nam (History of Vietnam) made its appearance.4
However, in the wake of the political crisis associated with the Nhâm Văn Giai Phận affair between 1956 and 1958, Đào's book was severely criticised for its 'incorrect' approach, standpoint and methodology, though it was recognised as being rich in material (see Văn Tấn, 1958). With the recommendation that Đào's book be dropped from the curriculum, STLS naturally emerged as the most acceptable textbook for DRV schools. Although this book was attacked for the paucity of its documentation, it was nevertheless praised for its "correct approach and class standpoint" (ibid.).

More textbooks appeared in the 1960s, and volume I of a new general history in 1971. By this time, an air of certainty, clarity and stability had appeared in the choice of materials for history teaching: a decade of intensive research and archaeological activity -- combined with a strong element of patriotic sentiment -- was responsible for this development.

Historical study in the North was taken very seriously. Although there were periods of confusion about the approach to be taken, the importance of history as a subject was never in dispute: it served practical ends and -- partly because of the nature of the complementary education system characteristic of the DRV, and partly because of the great importance placed on the study of history there -- it concerned not only school-age students, but also workers, peasants, cadres, soldiers; i.e. practically everyone. Even in the most difficult days of the underground resistance, DRV cadres had to undergo a course in history as part of their essential training. This practical view of the subject of history was radically different to that which we know existed in colonial Vietnam and the RVN. One would expect to find similar radical differences between the interpretations of Vietnamese history formulated by the DRV and by other regimes. In the following section of this chapter I intend to show whether this was in fact the case.

THE INDIGENOUS ORIGINS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE

Official DRV interpretations of the very early period of Vietnamese history underwent a quite radical change about the year 1960:
the pre-1960 period was characterised by the heavy residual influence of the colonial-era view; that in the following years by a completely new interpretation based on a rejection of the EFEO-based views and a fundamental re-interpretation of archaeological evidence. However, the two historical views shared common ground in that they both sought to demonstrate that the Vietnamese people originated within their existing national borders.

In 1945, Minh Tranh (1954a: 8-9) wrote:

In the present land of Vietnam there are many ethnic communities [tổ]: Kinh’, Muông, T’ai, Tây, Mêo, Rhadé etc. We do not yet know fully the origin of each group. Some believe that the Muông were the first to have lived in our country, then the Kinh of the Việt group came from South China, intermingling with the Mêo... Others maintain that the Kinh and the T’ai both came from Tibet... Still, some anthropologists think that the Môi, Chăm, Bahnar, Sedang of the Indonesians [proto-Malays] and Melanesoids were the first to arrive in Vietnam.

The origin of each ethnic group in Vietnam is a subject requiring more study and research. Whatever we may find, we know that all these groups contributed to the building and development of our motherland, and that Vietnam is owned by all.

Despite his confusion over the names of the ethnic groups (see notes 7 and 8), the author presents here a picture which by now has become quite familiar to us: the residual colonial view of the possible southern Chinese and Tibetan origins of the Việt. Just as did South Vietnamese scholars, those in the DRV in the 1950s had no choice but to rely on the limited and rather confusing information then available, gleaned from the previous decades of research conducted mainly by French workers through the EFEO. However, the fact that both RVN and DRV scholars used a common source of information certainly did not result in their reaching similar conclusions. The above passage shows that DRV historians' interpretation of the EFEO accounts differed radically from that reached by RVN scholars. The latter, as we have seen in Chapter V, inclined to a pseudo-scientific Social Darwinist explanation, involving intra-group extermination, in order to assert the right of the Vietnamese people to ownership of Vietnam. DRV writers, on the other hand, seem to have based their argument in support of this same right on the concept of a peaceful fusion of races. If the idea of the division of the nation and intra-group fighting was necessary to support the legitimacy of the RVN (and to reinforce its identity),
then the unity of the Vietnamese and the unification of the nation were the prime concerns of the DRV. The theme of national unity was the basis of DRV policy from its earliest days. It was antagonistic to the French tactic of divide-and-rule and later to the attempt, initiated by the French and taken to an extreme degree by the Americans, to create a separate nation in South Vietnam. Judged by the volume of literature devoted to the subject, and the speeches and slogans of DRV leaders (see, e.g. Viễn Sư Học, 1976), the question of unity was clearly inseparable from that of the existence of the DRV itself, and was indeed the whole *raison d'être* of the State. It is therefore not surprising that the theme of national unity should have permeated DRV historical studies.

DRV scholars' views on the origins of the Vietnamese served not only to promote the issue of unification -- so important during the period when the DRV was preparing for the national elections stipulated in the Geneva Accords -- but also to counter the colonial idea that the Vietnamese had been immigrants into their country. This emerges plainly from a different account of the origins of the Vietnamese by X.H. (1955: 3):

> The History of Vietnam goes back approximately 3000 years. In the period before the Ch'in unified China in 300 BC, the history of Vietnam was still largely mythical or legendary... However, historians now recognise that the ancestors of the modern Vietnamese were the Lạc Việt amongst the Hundred Viets, a large racial group which spread from present-day North Vietnam to South China on the southern side of the Yangtse.

This account, which appears to be based on a combination of legend and Aurousseau's theory, gives rise to a new and interesting interpretation: that the Lạc Việt had been indigenous to present-day (North) Vietnam and any relation to South China had been purely incidental. The fact that DRV historians placed emphasis on their ancestors' *settlement* rather than their migration is the point of political significance. We have seen how the colonialist ideology had led the French in the opposite direction; the new importance placed on settlement and possession is indicative of the growth of the 'autonomist' ideology.

The term 'autonomism' is used here to denote the ideology based on the central desire for action aimed at the achievement of independence in the sense of both self-determination and national sovereignty.
We have seen that autonomism in the DRV was expressed through the ideas of national unity and the right of the Vietnamese to ownership of the national territory. Significantly, this was done by attempting to re-interpret the colonial-era theories concerning Vietnamese ethnic origins. If autonomism was the dominant and constant ideology of the DRV, as I contend it was, it must also have left marks on the theories which emerged after 1960.

Toward the end of 1959, there appeared in NCLS a series of articles criticising the archaeological work done previously in Vietnam by French scholars and the EFEO. In these discussions, the colonial approach, methodology and interpretation were critically assessed (Nguyễn Lương Bích, 1959, 1960; Long Diên and Văn Thành, 1959; Bảo Tür Khải, 1960). This vigorous attack on what had once been seen as a significant French achievement was the signal for the awakening of the Institute of Archaeology, which had lain dormant since its foundation in 1945. In November 1960 an excavation in Thiệu Dương (province of Thanh Hóa) yielded a find which was, so it was claimed, to revolutionise the understanding of Vietnamese prehistory: evidence of a Palaeolithic age of Vietnam. DRV scholars claimed that this discovery bridged a gap in knowledge which colonial archaeologists had not explained. In conjunction with other discoveries unearthed regularly after 1960, the Thiệu Dương find made a decisive contribution to the re-interpretation of Vietnamese prehistory in the 1970s. Naturally, corresponding changes followed in the writing on this subject.

To be sure, archaeological discoveries alone were not responsible for these changes. The Marxist concept of historical materialism—though in a form adapted to Vietnamese conditions—also played an important part. In the light of the new developments, the question of the Vietnamese origins lost a good deal of its immediacy. The new history was not concerned with the origins of the Việt, or, for that matter, any other of the racial groups believed to have lived in ancient Vietnam, but rather with questions of the development of civilisation itself. Its major concern was now to demonstrate that Vietnam had been "one of the cradles of humankind" (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1966: 9).

Very, very long ago, as far back as one million years, the level of the East Sea was much lower than it is today. Our country of Vietnam was geographically linked with the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Borneo via the Malayan
peninsula. Alternating with periods of drought were monsoons, making the climate cooler and more humid than it is now. Deep in the jungles and up in the highlands were elephants, rhinoceros ... In the midst of that natural wilderness there occurred a stupendous event in the history of the world: the appearance of humans. Apes with human-like form no longer used their hands when walking, but gradually began to walk erect: their hands were now free to concentrate on work. So tools were made. With labour and through labour, then, ape-humans changed into primitive humans.

(Bộ Giáo Dục, 1966: 10).

Although the question of the Vietnamese origins was not raised, it is nevertheless clear that DRV writers had committed themselves to a concept of Vietnamese internal evolution. The implication of this was that the ancestors of the modern Vietnamese had always lived in Vietnam, and this was the point which the DRV historians were trying to stress:

There is no need to argue about the origins of our people. The main thing we should know is that our people have always lived and grown up in our country, with a long history developing according to our country's own internal laws.

(Trần Huy Liệu, 1966a: 1).

What the Director of the Institute of History and Editor of NCLS declared in 1966 to be the desired aim of the new general history was certainly reflected in the history textbooks written from the 1960s onward. But if, in the 1960s, this aim was not clearly spelt out, in the 1970s, with the publication of Volume I of the new general history, it became explicit:

... the natural and original owners of Vietnam are the Vietnamese people. These include various groups, including the majority, the minority, the Montagnards, the plain-dwellers etc. Although their levels of economic, cultural, social development vary -- due to historical and geographical conditions -- they have always been united in protecting one another and building and safeguarding their motherland.

(UBKHXH, 1971: 26).

The argument that the 'natural and original' owners of Vietnam had always been the Vietnamese people led to an attempt to trace the history of Vietnam back as far as 400,000 years ago, when, according to archaeological evidence, primitive humans already existed:
Artifacts showing evidence of human labor uncovered on the sides of the mountain Mount Đô in tens of thousands revealed that the techniques of the Vietnamese Early Palaeolithic had been in existence about 400,000 years ago...

With the discovery of Mount Đô, the history of Vietnam takes a giant step back into the past, demonstrating that primitive people had lived on the soil of Vietnam from the very beginning of the Early Palaeolithic, and that Vietnam is one of the cradles of humankind.

(Bố Giáo Đức, 1978: 3, 6)

It is interesting to note that although the concept of Vietnamese nationhood had been a subject of serious debate among DRV historians since 1960 with the most widely accepted hypothesis placing the formation of the Vietnamese nation-state no earlier than the Hùng period (1000-300 BC), DRV textbooks still presented a simplistic and ambiguous account of early Vietnamese history which suggested, and often stated explicitly, that the 'Vietnamese people' had a history extending over 400,000 years. This 'official', though not widely publicised attitude expressed in school history books, shows that the role played by school history -- very much like that of the school itself (see Chapter III) -- was regarded as important in political education. In the crisis of the renewed war against imperialism in the 1960s, 'political education' through school history taught in this way was a vehicle for the denunciation of the American enemy and was aimed at stiffening the Vietnamese people's will to resist:

...While Christopher Columbus only discovered America in 1492, Vietnam, as its Early Palaeolithic relics show, had been a birthplace of humankind hundreds of thousands of years earlier, ... and while the United States only came into official existence in 1793, 1776?, Vietnam ... already had a 2223-year history.

(Trần Huy Liệu, 1966b: 1)

And:

A people which has survived and developed for hundreds of thousands of years will not succumb to the American/Diệm clique which has divided and enslaved our people. Looking at the history of our nation, we have good reason to believe that the American/Diệm strategy will fail.

(Văn Tân, 1961a: 24)

Another politically significant point in the DRV view of the origins of the Vietnamese is to be found in their attempt to describe
Vietnam as a multi-ethnic society. In this view, 'Vietnamese' did not refer only to the majority Việt group (as it did in both colonial Vietnam and the RVN, supporting the theory of the migrant origins of the Việt), but included other 'nationalities', such as the Tay, Muong, T'ai, Nung, Meo, Lolo, Sedang, Cham etc. (see Bô Giáo Đức, 1966: 8). Although this view quite accurately described the present multi-ethnic nature of Vietnamese society, it seems nevertheless to have been deliberately chosen in order to play down the historical conflict between Vietnam and the other two kingdoms (Champa and Funan) which had earlier coexisted with the early Vietnamese state. Autonomism required a continuing emphasis on racial unity, undoubtedly seen in the DRV as necessary for success in the pursuit of the political aim of national unification:

Today in the South all nationalities, the Việt, Thương, Cham, Khmer, unite under the National Liberation Front with the aim of defeating the invading American imperialists and their lackeys, and of liberating the South. In the North, the Party and Government carry out a policy of national equality, establishing Autonomous Zones for the minority groups in Việt Bắc and Tây Bắc, writing languages for the Tay, Nùng and Mèo, reforming the T'ai script, preserving and developing the culture of each nationality. The aim is to raise the mountain peoples to the level of the lowlanders in every respect.

(Bô Giáo Đức, 1966: 8-9)

While it may be true that there was a certain increase in the degree of integration between the Việt and the minority ethnic groups, the above account, presented in the first lesson of a history textbook, clearly reveals the authorities' political concerns: it supports the formation of a united front of the various racial groups.

THE 'HISTORY OF AUTONOMY'

The DRV interpretation of ancient Vietnamese history and civilisation resembled its treatment of questions relating to the prehistoric origins of Vietnam in that two separate stages can be detected in official thinking on the subject. The first of these stages can be seen as a transitional one in which colonial-era ideas, though considerably diluted, still had some influence in history books. The second stage in DRV historiography was one in which the legacy of colonialism disappeared and
was replaced by the new consciousness of autonomism. The first stage (ending in about 1960) was characterised by the re-interpretation by scholars of the colonial and traditional sources within a somewhat rigidly- and mechanically-applied Marxist framework. It gave way, particularly in the 1970s, to the period in which histories written in the DRV were heavily influenced by new archaeological findings, using a conceptual framework which, though still a Marxist one, had been considerably modified to accord with the concrete conditions prevailing in Vietnam. Autonomism as an ideology was important in both periods, though it achieved complete dominance only in the second of them. The autonomist ideology has three characteristics, all of which are to be found in DRV history books: an insistence on Vietnamese independence, a marked Vietnamese ethnocentrism, and a heavy promotion of the ideas of self-reliance and self-development at a national level.

**Vietnamese Civilisation and Resistance to Chinese Domination**

The interpretation of Vietnamese ancient history which gained most favour in the period ending in about 1960, a good example being Minh Tranh's *STLS* (1954a), described it as having developed continuously from the stage of primitive communism (from the earliest times) through that of slavery (257-111 BC) and into feudalism following the Trưng rebellion of 43 AD. The main features of Vietnamese society according to this early interpretation can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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| Primitive communism | . hunting, gathering, cave-dwelling  
. no private property  
. no exploitation  
. no class division |
| Toward the end of primitive communism and the beginning of slavery (equivalent to the Hùng Kings period) | . emergence of agriculture  
. domestication of fowls and buffaloes  
. possession of bronze and iron tools |
Slavery (from the Âu Lac period of 257-207 BC to the Trưng rebellion of 39-43 AD)

- surplus of food and goods
- development of handicrafts
- division of labour
- inter-tribal trade
- class division:
  a) King (i.e. tribal chief-tain)
  b) civilian and military chiefs
  c) subordinate officials
  d) general populace
  e) slaves (domestic)

- development of warfare (between Thục and Văn Lang)
- the foundation of the first state (Âu Lạc)
- heightened exploitation and repression
- emergence of slavery based on the tribute system
- a predominantly class society
- slaves completely lacking rights and freedoms.

With the domination of the early Han:

- increase in inter-tribal trade
- iron hoes and draught animals introduced by Hsi-Kuang and Jen Yen
- further repression and land appropriation
- the Trưng rebellion.

Early Feudalism
(43-543 AD)

- systematic exploitation under the Chinese feudal system
- stricter policy of assimilation
- abolition of local political organisations
- feudal administration under Chinese dominion
- continuing patriarchal slavery
- tribute system replaced by land-rent system.
The above presentation, though clearly based on nothing better than speculation with regard to the period before 257 BC, shows that the DRV understood Vietnamese history in a radically different way from either the colonial administration or the rival regime in the South. For the first time, the history of Vietnam was interpreted in terms of its own social and economic evolution. Although the theoretical Marxist framework undoubtedly contributed to this restructuring of views on Vietnamese history, autonomism was already an important factor in the DRV at this time. A consistent theme of Vietnamese internal evolutionism, from independence to eventual subjugation by foreign intervention, runs through the whole account of the development from primitive communism to feudalism.

Although STLS enjoyed an official recommendation for some time, it aroused controversy on many issues in the circle of DRV historians. There was heated debate on the questions of slavery and class division in Vietnamese history, especially in the late 1950s and the 1960s. By the mid-1960s, and particularly in the 1970s, the Marxist framework of historical study in the North had been greatly modified to give more emphasis to the theme of autonomism, which had emerged under the pressure of all-out warfare as the dominant ideology. Although historical research projects at an advanced level continued in professional circles (see HVDN), official school history texts published in the mid-to-late 1960s made less and less mention of class exploitation and slavery. The themes of national independence, unity, self-reliance and struggle against invasion came into sharper focus. In Lịch Sử Lớp Năm (History for Grade 5), for example, we find lessons with the following titles: The Country and People of Vietnam; Life of Primitive Humans in Vietnam; Vietnam as a Cradle of Humankind; The Primitive Clan System; The Founding of the First Vietnamese State: Âu Lạc and its Economic and Cultural Life; followed by lessons on the period of Chinese feudal rule (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1966).

The hegemony of autonomism in the DRV was plainly demonstrated in the teaching materials published in the 1970s. Vietnam, its independence and internal development were the overriding concerns of DRV historians. The period of Chinese domination seems to have been relegated to a mere interlude in Vietnamese history. The textbooks of this late period concentrated their attention on "the dawn of the history of Vietnam" (from the earliest stages to the Hùng), followed by the
period of "building and defending the nation", covering practically
the whole period from the Hùng to the eventual expulsion of the

The archaeological findings published in the four-volume HVDN
played a crucial part in establishing the idea of an autonomist Vietnam.
The whole edifice of ancient Vietnamese history from its origins to the
period of the Chinese intervention now rested on a basis of claimed
archaeological evidence, reinforced by studies in anthropology and oral
traditions. This post-1960 interpretation showed Vietnam to have had
its own roots, independent of the Chinese and going back much further
than their arrival. Its history was said to have begun with the
Palaeolithic cultures of Mount Đò (400,000 BC) and Đồn Vi (10,000 BC)
and proceeded to the Mesolithic culture of Hỏa Bình (10,000-8000 BC).
During this long period, the Vietnamese civilisation was shown as
having progressed from a pebble-tool and hunter-gatherer subsistence
level to one where flake tools were used and sporadic, primitive
agriculture had begun. The Neolithic cultures of Bắc Sân (6000-5000
BC) and Bả Bút (3000-2000 BC), which followed, were characterised by
a more clearly developed agriculture and the use of polished stone
tools, dugout canoes, rafts, and ornaments of stone, bone and shell.
The metal-based cultures which eventually developed, from the Phùng
Nguyên (2000-1500 BC), the Đồng Đậu (1500-1000 BC) and the Gồ Mun
(1000-500 BC) to the Đồng Sơn (500 BC) represented the apex of ancient
Vietnamese civilisation: an advanced level of pottery, ornament and
arms technology; rice cultivation and the domestication of animals;
and metallurgy applied to agriculture (bronze and iron hoes and sickle
blades), weaponry (arrow and spear heads, knives and swords, battle
axes and armour) and musical instruments (drums, bells, flutes etc.).
(Hoàng Trọng Hanh, et al., 1973: 39-44; Bộ Giáo Dục, 1978: 3-6;
UBKHXH, 1971: 31-60).20

Of course, there are many claims in the above which might
arouse controversy among specialists: the problem of archaeological
interpretation is as old as archaeology itself. The point of sig-
nificance to us, however, lies in the fact that from the DRV perspec-
tive, the history of ancient Vietnamese civilisation was one of steady
development -- from simple subsistence to agriculture, from stone
tools to metal technology, from simple tribal groupings to a complex
socio-political organisation culminating in the founding of Văn Lang
under the Hùng. Socio-spiritual life also developed in a linear
fashion, from cave dwellings to houses built on stilts, from a primitive state of nakedness to the wearing of clothes and head-dress of cotton and silk, from a "precarious" life with "extremely low productive capacity" (Bô Giáo Đức, 1973: 36) to a rather leisured existence with "singing and dancing in ceremonial masks or military dress to the powerful bass beat of bronze drums, mingled with the romantic sound of pan pipes against a backdrop of animated boat races" (UBKHXH, 1971: 48).

The Hùng period, formerly dismissed as mythical or semi-mythical, took on the aspect of historical fact in the view of DRV historians. They believed it to have coincided with the Vietnamese bronze-age civilisation, culminating in the development of the famous Đặng Sơn, which was described as a "rich culture which spread beyond our country to exert a strong influence on its neighbours" (Trương Hữu Quynthia, 1970: 53). In view of the fact that the Đặng Sơn culture had long been pointed to as evidence of Vietnamese dependence on foreign civilisation, the action by the DRV in claiming it as a national treasure certainly had political overtones. This does not, of course, mean that the claim was without foundation. Although there is a degree of affinity between the Đặng Sơn culture and some European and Chinese cultures of the Bronze and Iron Ages in decorative styles and metal working methods, there is room to argue that the Vietnamese -- or their ancestors -- had been among the first to develop this culture. But regardless of the scientific merits of the DRV arguments (which were, incidentally, coherent and convincing), the important point here is that the history of the Hùng period and the related Đặng Sơn culture was used to serve the political purpose of autonomism in the North:

To find a solution to the Hùng Bằng is to solve a problem of political importance.

If, as early as the first millenium BC, our predecessors were already developing into a "civilised society", this would mean that the Vietnamese people, at a very early stage, already possessed great strength in South-East Asia, and gave birth to a unique culture in what is now our northern region.

This is an honour for our ancestors and a source of pride for our people ... [who] in the past defeated foreign invaders many times ... and are now determined to triumph over the American imperialists ...

(NCLS, 1967: 6)
Here again, it is clear that the study of history in the DRV was used deliberately to motivate people to fight in the anti-imperialist war. The "problem of political importance" was that of instilling in the population sufficient self-confidence and resolve to enable them to face with equanimity the prospect of a long and bloody war against the world's greatest power, and the autonomist consciousness to deal with a difficult and complicated political reality.

The society which existed in the Hùng period had now been endowed with real historical flesh and bones. DRV textbooks described it as having been highly developed, with clear stratification, a well-balanced economy, a strong defence and equality between the sexes. The dominion imposed by the Chinese on this humane and flourishing society was thus able to be portrayed as a cruel and unnecessary interference. Textbooks published in the 1970s, in particular, claimed that the Chinese occupation had not been in fact a decisive event fundamentally affecting the course of Vietnamese history, but rather a basically transitory episode of aggression, condemned to ultimate failure (see, in particular, Hoàng Trọng Hanh et al., 1973: 15). Occasional vague and grudging reference to the changes brought about in Vietnamese society as a result of the Chinese occupation was, however, inevitable; whenever it appeared, emphasis was placed on the ways in which the Chinese had themselves been 'Vietnamized', and on the defiant continuing development of the indigenous culture:

“Our people always had their own nation and their own culture. The enemy wished to destroy our nation in both its physical and its intellectual life. We went through many changes in our social behaviour and our ways of thinking under the extremely cunning assimilatory policy of the enemy. However, the essence of our traditional culture, and many of our fine traditions such as the spirit of unity in struggle, the consciousness of independence and self-reliance, remained alive while we absorbed and adapted the good elements in the foreign culture.

(Bổ Giáo Dục, 1978: 23-4)

Even though it represents the antithesis of both colonialism and foreignism, autonomism per se does not necessarily entail the rejection of all things foreign. Within the autonomist framework, however, the old view of sinicisation as a civilising process was untenable; the ideas and innovations brought by the Chinese to Vietnam
were dismissed as "drugs" and "instruments aimed at the assimilation and enslavement" of the Vietnamese people (op.cit.: 22).

According to this line of thinking, a high level of repression and exploitation was a necessary characteristic of a society living under foreign domination, and the experience of the Vietnamese under the Chinese feudalists certainly provided no exception to this rule. For instance, Chinese agricultural innovations such as the use of draught animals and iron implements, which brought about great increases in efficiency, were described in DRV textbooks in terms which emphasized only the increased profits which they brought to the Chinese landholders. Han officials and landowners were accused of having expropriated both land and people from the local indigenous aristocracy, while the introduction of Chinese education and Chinese law and customs were sinister developments clearly aimed at the assimilation and cultural extinction of the Vietnamese (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1966: 33).

Since the systems of colonisation was held to be synonymous with oppression and exploitation in the official DRV view, then its representatives, by implication, were necessarily evil by virtue of the positions which they occupied. Hsi Kuang and Jen Yen were cases in point. Although they were not singled out for attack in DRV textbooks for any particular crimes, it was clearly intimated that the respect and good reputation previously enjoyed by these characters in traditional and colonial-era histories was henceforth to be seen as undeserved. If anything, their attempts to assimilate the indigenous people branded them as 'oppressors' (UBKHXH, 1971: 80).

The DRV textbooks also accorded to the Chinese commissioner Chao T'o a radically different treatment to that which had formerly been reserved for him. He was now clearly denounced as an "aggressor who invaded Âu Lạc" through recourse to trickery (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1966: 27; UBKHXH, 1971: 74-7), and as "an ambitious and sly rascal" (Hoàng Trọng Hanh et al., 1973: 10). While these views were not completely without precedent or foundation (see Chapter IV), such round condemnation of Chao T'o is only explicable within the autonomist framework. It can be seen as a calculated political blow aimed at the foreignists and the colonialists, both of whom were ideologically committed to the concept of conqueror-as-national-hero. The autonomist message in the official DRV teaching about Chao T'o was that students were meant to absorb
"the spirit of perseverance and heroism in the struggle of the people of Âu Lạc against foreign invasion" (Hoàng Trọng Hanh et al., 1973: 52). It is therefore not surprising to find that Chao T'o and his administration were subjected to harsh treatment, as is shown by the following instruction issued to DRV teachers:

In teaching this subject [Chao T'o and the Han domination] teachers should concentrate on the following main points:

- the government organisation and the exploitative policy of Triệu Đà and the Han: the establishment of a colonial administration; maintaining the old aristocratic system of Âu Lạc in order to achieve their aim of exploiting the local people and expropriating their goods through the tribute system;
- the purpose of assimilation;
- the misery of the people of Âu Lạc under the yoke of the cruelly exploitative system imposed by the foreign aggressors.

(op.cit.: 55)

The constant emphasis which the DRV placed on "the contradiction between the mass of our people and the colonial government" (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1978: 26) established a solid basis for the many 'populist' explanations which stressed the key role of 'the people' in anti-colonial movements. Thus in the DRV view the Trưng sisters' uprising of 40 AD was no less than "the crystallisation of a whole process of struggle, sometimes quiet, sometimes open, by the people of Vietnam" (UBKHXH, 1971: 83). Here again we can see the important political implications of the way in which a history lesson was presented. Since its chief purpose was to instil the spirit of autonomism, the "patriotic spirit and unbending will to fight shown by the two sisters" (Bộ Giáo Dục, 1973: 35), the event itself had to be idealised to achieve this effect. It was as a result of this kind of thinking that DRV textbooks portrayed the rebellion as "a shining example of the unity of men and women, old and young, from all classes and ethnic groups", "the awakening of national consciousness" and "a brave act of defiance against the authority of the Han empire" (UBKHXH, 1971: 83).27

Consistent with their idealisation of the rebellion, DRV historians attributed the cause of its final defeat in 43 AD to mere tactical problems: "Our troops fought bravely, but since we were not sufficiently well organised or trained, we could not resist the powerful army of the
experienced Ma Yuan" (Bo Giao Duc, 1966: 34). To minimise the importance of the defeat, DRV writers went to the extent of describing Ma Yuan as "an elderly general who had suppressed many uprisings of the Khuong and whose hands were still stained with the blood of Chinese peasants in Hoan Thanh (An Huy)" (UBKHXH, 1971: 83).

Where the colonial-era interpretation of the Trung episode had reflected the colonial authorities' apparent approval of the traditional, neo-Confucian attitude toward women, the DRV view of the matter now represented an attempt to correct this position. There is in fact evidence that this was part of a deliberate DRV policy of redefining the traditional role of women:

Women's tradition is an important part of the national tradition. We must not fail to study the fine tradition of Vietnamese women, in order to realise fully their important role in defending and building the nation over the past 4000 years, as well as in the present and in our nation's future.

(Tran Quoc Vuong, 1972: 7)

The desire to raise the people's consciousness of sexual equality was perfectly compatible with the struggle for both national defence and socialist production. But since in the final analysis the desperate anti-imperialist revolutionary war took precedence over questions of social revolution, the emphasis was more on equality of effort in defence of the nation than on work opportunities for women. The Trung episode provided the opportunity for the DRV authorities to express this emphasis:

The uprising led by the sisters not only revealed the spirit of recalcitrance among our Vietnamese people. It also demonstrated the abilities of our women. Vietnamese women, even in antiquity, have not only been as upright and as recalcitrant as anyone at any social level, but also as capable of leadership. Leading a rebellion to victory, they are also capable of founding and administering an independent state.

(Doong Minh, 1962: 6)

In the light of what has been revealed so far about DRV historical studies, it is not surprising that, in the DRV view, it was the Vietnamese people themselves, at all levels, who were responsible for the final liberation of their country from the long Chinese domination:
Under the heavy yoke of Chinese feudal regimes, our people carried out a struggle, sometimes passively, sometimes openly, but always continuously and thoroughly, on three fronts: struggle for increasing production, for preserving and developing the national culture, and finally for liberation.

(Bo Giáo Dục, 1966: 44)

This is in direct contradiction to the view held in the colonial period and by RVN scholars who argued that the Vietnamese desire to break free from Chinese domination was itself a result of that domination. This fundamentally different perception shows clearly for whom the DRV regime claimed to speak in its interpretation of history. Although DRV writers never ignored the fact that the Vietnamese people had "absorbed much of the experience and many of the valuable techniques, customs and practices of the Chinese people", they always maintained that the former deserved the credit for achieving their own liberation. An autonomist outlook was assuredly widespread among the Vietnamese long before the founding of the DRV, but under this particular regime its ideological expression took the form of a practical, mass-based struggle not only against colonialism (and its offshoot, foreignism) but also against what the regime saw as the feudal form of economic relations (the land-rent system) and its related confucian system of ideas. Seen in this way, the key feature of autonomist historiography lay in the concept of 'populism', in much the same way as 'apolitical culturalism' served the foreignist historiography in the RVN. According to this populist concept, the motive force of history is to be found in the mass of the people itself, rather than in their individual leaders. The DRV adoption of this Marxist-inspired view, which has had a strong influence on modern historians in much of the world, can be explained to a large extent in terms of its ability to express an existing autonomist will.

The above analysis shows how the presentation of the early stages of Vietnamese history in DRV textbooks was guided by the dominant ideology of autonomism. It is interesting to note both the parallels and the dissimilarities between this presentation of history and that which appeared under the colonial regime. Archaeological evidence was used most extensively in the DRV textbooks, and was certainly helpful to the autonomist interpretation, but it did not preclude the use of other sources. It would be more correct to say that archaeological studies in the DRV provided valuable insights which were used in the
reinterpretation of material drawn from both Chinese and Vietnamese classical writings. Vietnamese oral tradition, including legends, folk songs and proverbs, also served as a rich source of information for the radical reinterpretation of history. The extensive reliance on oral tradition, beyond its very real usefulness in reinforcing DRV arguments in many cases, reflected the officially proclaimed attitude of respect for the views of the mass of the population. This was consistent with the populist outlook, which attributed to the people themselves the key role in the making of history.

The Resistance to French Colonialism

In writing their version of the modern history of Vietnam, DRV historians remained faithful to the principles which had governed their interpretation of ancient Vietnamese history. Historical events and characters were described and interpreted strictly within an autonomist framework. The themes of Vietnamese internal evolution and development of cultural individuality and of the tradition of popular resistance to foreign invasion are recurrent ones in DRV histories dealing with the modern era.

Operating within this framework, DRV historians had no illusions about the nature of the 'mission' which the French had claimed to be the imperative moral force behind their occupation of Vietnam toward the end of the 19th century. The extension of French dominion over Vietnam was seen by the DRV scholars as having sprung from a complicated mixture of motives and objective situations: the worldwide development of the capitalist system, the growing need for cheap raw materials and captive markets for European factories, intra-European economic and military rivalry, and the weakness of China, which made her an attractive prey for the expanding colonial powers and commercial interests of Europe, with the geographical position of Vietnam providing what was seen as easy access into her southern provinces (X.H., 1955: 46-7). Added to these were particular developments in Vietnam which facilitated the process of French conquest: the shortsightedness of the Nguyễn policy of suppressing Christianity by force; the ruthless oppression and exploitation of the peasantry, the Court's weakness, degeneracy and defeatism. This situation was summed up in the following terms:
... in the mid-19th Century, our country was in danger of invasion. The growth of capitalism in general and the French capitalist system in particular was the underlying cause of their war of aggression. In the meantime, the Nguyễn policies -- oppressive and reactionary in all respects -- weakened our country. This made it easier for the French colonialists to implement their plan of invasion.

(Lê Huy Phan, et al., 1969: 117)

It is worth recalling here that according to colonial-era textbooks it was the misery of the population and the domestic failings of the Nguyễn dynasty which provided the justification for French intervention under the banner of the 'civilising mission'. This view was now completely reversed. The allegedly miserable state of the Vietnamese people in the pre-French period was still indeed seen as a factor in the imposition of French rule, but from the autonomist point of view, it was anything but a justification. Colonialists and Nguyễn 'feudalists' were now seen essentially as allies working in cooperation to crush and exploit the mass of the Vietnamese people for their common profit. The populist DRV interpretation of history showed considerable sophistication in establishing a structural relationship between colonialism and Nguyễn feudalism. The Nguyễn background was first dealt with in distinctly hostile terms:

The storms of peasant revolution soon led our people to realise that there was no necessary connection between the feudal order and the basic national interest and that the feudal class could no longer perform its function of charting the direction of our country. The Nguyễn dynasty, from its beginning, manifested complete indifference to the interests of the nation and people. Its selfish class interests and extremely reactionary domestic policies rendered the regime devoid of a solid social foundation.

(VKHXH, 1971: 381-2)

The Nguyễn regime was further charged with defeatism and outright collaboration with the invaders:

The Nguyễn feudalists in the 18th Century were even then trying to sell our country. Once they had secured the support of French capitalists in laying hands on the throne, they introduced the land-rent system, a policy which led to national disunity and the ruin of trade and industry. Our people were thereby impoverished, and the way was paved for the aggressors to plunder our country. Then, on the brink of the foreign invasion, they used their forces, not against the enemy, but to wipe out the peasant movement.

(Minh Tranh, 1955c: 122)
At this point, some important questions need to be raised. Was there a shift in the DRV interpretation of modern history in relation to its application of Marxist class analysis? And if there was, what are the implications for our understanding of the autonomist ideology in the North? A shift is indeed apparent in the fact that accounts of the pre-French period, as presented above, seem to have emphasised internal dissension and class antagonism -- precisely the points which had been generally suppressed in the post-1960 accounts of ancient history. This difference, or shift, in fact, far from reflecting ambiguity in the DRV policy of autonomism, reinforces the position of autonomism as the prevailing ideology in the North: the Marxist influence, reflected here in its class analysis, was subordinate.

In both interpretations, then, the will to fight against foreign powers in defence of Vietnamese independence was the principal yardstick against which history was judged. While in accounts of the historical period culminating in the Trưng rebellion, the sisters' resistance to Han aggression was held up as an example of the unity of the Vietnamese people, in the history of the modern period the Nguyễn collaboration with French colonialists was explained in terms of class antagonism. The theme of national unity was dominant in both accounts, since it was directly relevant to the current situation of impending war. This relevance lay in the implied parallels between the corrupt Nguyễn regime and its direct descendants in presentday Saigon, on one hand, and between the heroism of the united Vietnamese people in the Trưng and the modern eras in their resistance to foreign aggression, on the other.\(^{30}\)

It is not implied here, however, that DRV scholars resorted to deliberate distortion of historical facts for the purpose of furthering the dominant ideology of their society. In most cases, their interpretations of the modern era were supported by sound evidence. Although some historians might question the general factual value of DRV populist arguments, which seem to have placed the entire responsibility for historical development with the anonymous mass of ordinary people (the peasantry in the case of Vietnam), it is difficult to contest the veracity of the facts which were quoted in support of the official DRV views. There is no doubt that the Nguyễn regime encountered constant violent popular opposition\(^{31}\) and that its neo-Confucian attitudes were especially rigid and oppressive (see
Trần Văn Giàu, 1973; Woodside, 1971). The well-known anti-trade and anti-industry policies of the Nguyễn (see Minh Tranh, 1956: 28-9) can be linked with its neo-Confucian mentality. And there can be little doubt that such an outlook contributed to the weakness of the regime and its fatal inability to resist French aggression. Once it had succumbed, and once the French had perceived that their interests lay in maintaining a façade of local authority, the Nguyễn regime, in order to preserve the dynasty, had to resort to collaboration with the invaders.

The autonomist attack on both Nguyễn 'feudalism' and colonialism by the DRV was launched from another direction as well. Although French colonial rule and the capitalist system it brought with it were alien to the traditional socio-economic system of Vietnamese feudalism, the colonial policy of exploitation took advantage of, and developed upon, the existing system of land ownership. On one hand, the feudal society was radically transformed by the growth of towns and cities, the development of an internal market, the spread of new transport routes, the beginnings of industry and the introduction of a nation-wide money economy (Minh Tranh, 1956: 29). On the other, many aspects of colonial policy helped to perpetuate and even to strengthen the land-tenure system, already noted for its oppressiveness under the Nguyễn. It brought in an extremely regressive system involving usury, crippling taxation, corvée labour, the monopolisation of formerly communal land and the granting of huge tracts of territory to French colonists and their Vietnamese collaborators. The result was an increasing concentration of productive land in the hands of big owners and a rapid growth in the numbers of poor tenant farmers and landless peasants. The economic system of Vietnam under French rule was neither entirely capitalist nor feudalist; it could be described as a system of semi-feudal colonialism.

It was against such an historical background that the DRV felt it had sound reasons for its firm conviction that "the fight against feudalism is inseparable from that against colonialism, just as the fight against the latter is extricably bound up with that against the former" (Trần Huy Liệu, 1954b: 10). Both French colonialists and local landowners were accused in DRV textbooks of having brought about the destitution of the Vietnamese people:
The cruel, exploitative policy carried out by the French colonialists and the Vietnamese landowners drove our people into a dead end. Millions of poor peasants and tens of thousands of artisans were unemployed and became an inexhaustible source of cheap labour. The life of a worker consisted of a succession of bleak days of hard work, punishment, persecution, starvation wages, illness, imprisonment, threats of death, etc.

(Dinh Xuân Lắm, et al. 1972: 58)

The process of colonial commercial exploitation was described in equally indignant tones:

Almost all the materials stolen from us were transported to France and goods manufactured in France were brought back in return. Our people had to pay dearly for these. Light industries served merely to support the luxurious lifestyle and to satisfy the greed of the horde of imperialist colonists and their lackeys, who lived on our people's bones and blood. Textile mills wiped out the traditional craft of weaving, liquor factories produced millions of litres of alcohol to poison our people, and rice mills served the export trade at the same time as the people were starving. Other factories produced materials for building government offices, residences, prisons, etc. Heavy industry was almost non-existent. All the industrial goods used in Indochina were imported from overseas, especially from France.

(op.cit.: 57)

DRV writers also dwelt on other forms of exploitation which appeared in finance and taxation, politics (as in the so-called divide-and-rule policy), education and culture (see Hoàng Trọng Hạnh, et al., 1972: 67-73; Lê Khắc Nhãn, et al., 1974, vol.1: 3-7). Strictly speaking, of course, the basic truth of the facts presented in the DRV accounts cannot be denied. Compared to the accounts presented in RVN histories, those produced in the DRV are based on better documentation and scholarship. However, the rather strident tone of the language used in the DRV textbooks, together with the use of rigid and one-sided arguments (however well-reasoned), shows that the main purpose of the history taught in the North was to arouse emotion; in particular: hatred for colonialism. This is apparent from reading the kinds of questions provided at the end of each lesson. Students were asked, for example, to demonstrate the cowardly nature of the King-mandarin clique ruling Kampuchea and Laos at the time of the invasion by the French colonialists; and in discussing the main features of the colonial policies with regard to the economy, finance, politics, culture and education, they were also asked to "show how greed, cruelty and
The major target of colonial exploitation, in the view of DRV historians, was the Vietnamese peasantry, and it was the peasantry which provided the anticolonial resistance with whatever force it had. Although individual leaders of anti-French revolts such as Trương Định and Phan Đình Phùng were still given honourable mention in DRV history texts, their glory was somewhat eclipsed by the praises reserved for the heroism of the common people. The rebellions led by Nguyễn Trung Trực, Nguyễn Hữu Huấn, Trương Định, Hoàng Kê Việm, etc. were characterised first of all as popular revolts in North and South (Lê Huy Phan et al., 1969: 124-8). The revolt at Ba Đình led by Đinh Công Tráng was marked by "the high morale and courage of the righteous militia and people of Thanh Hóa province" (Hoàng Trọng Hanh et al., 1972: 80, 82). In a similar way, the Yên Thế movement was called a 'peasant uprising' whose leadership was shared by peasants themselves, notably Đệ Thắm (op.cit.: 96-102).

Another distinct feature of DRV histories was the attempt to include members of national minorities in their pantheon of heroes. It was in DRV history books that names such as Độc Ngư, Đeo Văn Trị, Hoàng Đình Kinh and Bạch Cẩm Chân, and the uprisings among the T'ai, Mêo, Mường, Tày and Nùng received official recognition for the first time (Hoàng Trọng Hanh et al., 1972: 83-4; 89-90; 130). Thus, the theme of national unity among the common Vietnamese people, and between them and the national minority groups, was consistent throughout DRV historiography regarding both ancient and modern events.

Since Vietnamese history was interpreted in the DRV essentially as the history of the struggle of the Vietnamese people for survival and national identity, the French administrative system itself and its representatives, both French and Vietnamese, received relatively scant attention in its accounts of the modern period. French governors and their local collaborators, being regarded as mere epiphenomena of the whole machinery of French colonialism, deserved no special treatment, and hence occupied hardly any space in DRV textbooks. Where mentioned at all, they generally received only brief, straightforward and rather disparaging comments. Doumer, for example, was mentioned for his link with "the first stage of the French exploitation" (1883-1918) (Hoàng Trọng Hanh, et al., 1972: 107), and Sarraut for his "speeches full of
lies and trickery" (p.125). In contrast to the RVN usage in which 'Vietnamese traitors' referred only to military collaborators, in the DRV the term was used to indicate collaborators in both military and cultural fields. The list of these thus included Hoàng Cao Khải, Nguyễn Thân, also Phạm Quỳnh, Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh and Trương Vĩnh Ký who were denounced as 'servant writers' (bội but) (op.cit.: 94, 125; Lê Khắc Nhänn, et al., 1974, vol.I: 7).

The August Revolution and Resistance to American Imperialism

The history of Vietnam from 1930 onward was presented in DRV textbooks almost exclusively in terms of the history of the Indochinese Communist Party and the people of the working class. The founding of the Party in 1930 was regarded as the "great turning point in Vietnamese revolutionary history, opening the way to an era of revolution led by the working class of Vietnam" (Bình Xuân Lâm, et al., 1972: 77). The themes of colonial repression and patient Vietnamese resistance continued to predominate. DRV histories devoted at least three-fourths of the space covering the period 1930-1945 to details of the struggle, with most attention being given to military operations.

The first significant uprising in this period was the 'Nghệ Tĩnh Soviet Movement' (1930-1931) -- a general uprising taking the form at first of public demonstrations and strikes by peasants and workers, and later of armed revolts against the French garrison and Vietnamese landlords (Bình Xuân Lâm, et al., 1972: 78-83; Lê Khắc Nhänn, et al., 1974, vol.I: 49-56). Next came the uprisings at Bắc Sơn (September, 1940) which spread to South Vietnam (November, 1940) and at Bố Lộc in Central Vietnam (January, 1941). The founding of the Việt Minh in 1941 prepared the way for a series of uprisings against both Japanese and French forces in 1945 (Bình Xuân Lâm, et al., 83-98; Lê Khắc Nhänn, op. cit.: 56-72). In the DRV view, the successful occupation of Hanoi by Việt Minh forces in 1945, leading to the declaration of independence in September of that year, was the climax to the whole movement of history in the modern era. This event, called the 'August Revolution' in the DRV, was hailed in the following terms:

... it was a great event in the history of Vietnam. Not only did it crash through the two levels of enslavement imposed by the French and then by the Japanese over the previous 80 years, but it also overthrew the feudal monarchy which had
oppressed our people for tens of centuries. The August Revolution has turned our country into an independent nation under a democratic republican regime. It has delivered our people from slavery and made them the masters of their own country.

( Lê Khắc Nhãn, 1974, vol.I: 100)

There followed a series of detailed accounts of military operations against the returning French forces, notably the 'battle of Hanoi' (1946), the 'Việt Bắc victory' (1947), the 'Hoa Bình campaign' (1952-1953) and finally the "Diên Biên Phủ campaign' of 1954 which sealed the French defeat (op.cit., vol.II: 16-75). In writing about this period, DRV scholars always stressed the leading role of the Party and the heroism of the people. This was, however, not done to the exclusion of certain outstanding individuals such as Hồ Chí Minh (with long biographical notes and a distinctly reverent tone), Trần Phú, Nguyễn Thị Minh Khai and Lê Hồng Phong (Le Khac Nhân et al., 1974, vol.I: 16-72).

Disinterested historians, of course, might find a great deal to quarrel with in the DRV interpretation of the recent history, especially its assertions concerning the role of the working class and the distinction drawn between the 'people' and the Party. Nevertheless, the DRV arguments, when seen from an autonomist point of view, and in the context of total war against the immensely powerful American forces from the mid-1960s onward, become more comprehensible. If autonomism can be seen as an antithesis of colonialism in terms of both movement and ideology, then it is not at all surprising that autonomism became a dominant ideology in the DRV: it was the current dominant group of the DRV which represented the most successful anticolonial fighters in recent Vietnamese history. Here, the point of great significance is a complete difference in historical approach between the DRV and its rival political system, the RVN, in writing about the modern period. And this difference, I would argue, can only be properly understood in terms of ideological rivalry; i.e. autonomism versus foreignism. We have seen that in the RVN, even the details of French colonial policies were covered, as well as the achievements of local 'cultural' collaborators, the negotiations between the French and the ineffectual Nguyễn court, together with stories of the perfidy and cruelty of the ICP and the Việt Minh. DRV writers, on the other hand, concentrated on a single theme -- that of Vietnamese struggle against French colonialism -- and relegated all others to positions of minor importance.
A sharp contrast also emerged in the writing of the history of the post-1954 period. While the RVN directed its main effort into forthright denigration of the DRV and of every aspect of life in the North, the DRV put relatively little into attacks of this kind against its southern enemy. For the autonomists, it seems, the RVN 'state' was not a serious rival for power or political legitimacy in the Vietnamese historical context. For them, the RVN as a political entity and individuals like Diệm or Westmoreland played mere incidental parts in the great Vietnamese historical drama. As portrayed in the history books, the real contenders in the struggle were the whole Vietnamese people, both North and South, on the one hand, and foreign imperialism, represented by the United States and its allies, on the other. This attempt to play down the legitimacy of the RVN was, of course, another tactic used in the struggle against the RVN.

It is therefore not surprising to find that DRV history lessons on its contemporary period were structured around such topics as "the socialist revolution in the North" and "the liberating revolution in the South and the struggle for national unification" (Dinh Xuân Lắm et al., 1972: 154-86; Lê Khắc Nhã̃n et al., 1974, vol.II: 87-134). Under the first topic, RVN students learned about the achievements in land reform, the development of industry and agriculture, and the progress in education and culture. Under the second, emphasis was placed on the "heroic struggle of South Vietnamese people against the domination of American-Diệm"; and the Diệm government itself was dismissed merely as an "extremely cruel Fascist and totalitarian regime" (Dinh Xuân Lắm et al., 1972: 162, 163). Here again, DRV texts went into considerable details in describing the major military operations. The 'General Uprising' (1960), we are informed, led to the founding of the NLF. Then textbooks went on to the accounts of the 'victory at Ấp Bâc' (1963), the failure of the 'Special War' and the 'strategic hamlets' campaign by the American imperialists which were followed by those of the victories at Bình Giã̂ and An Lộc, and the failure of the Johnson-MacNamara strategy. This historiographic pattern was also applied to the histories concerning the war in the North: Vietnamese heroism and American defeat were the main features of the air war.
CONCLUSION

Despite a residual influence of the colonial past manifest in some early interpretations, DRV histories can be said in general to have presented a picture of Vietnam radically different from, if not completely opposite to, that found in colonial textbooks. Students in the DRV learned about their ancient origins and that they were the legitimate heirs of their ancestors who had been not only the original occupiers of Vietnam but also the creators and bearers of a unique civilisation, namely the Đồng Sơn culture. They were also taught that their evolution had been quite often interrupted by foreign invasion, but that the Vietnamese had always endured and upheld a proud tradition of national unity (embracing races, sexes, ages, and social strata) and recalcitrance in fighting for self-determination and national sovereignty. In modern histories, imperialism -- whether French or American -- was identified as the enemy, and was depicted as the main obstacle preventing what should have been the normal development of Vietnamese history.

It has been shown in this chapter that Vietnamese history was interpreted in the DRV within the framework of the dominant ideology of autonomism and that its central conceptual instrument used in its historiographic campaign was a kind of populism. The expression and dissemination of this ideology through historical accounts involved the extensive use of the traditional means also employed in other regimes. We have seen how DRV writers selected from Vietnamese and Chinese classical sources, made much wider use of folk literature, intensified archaeological work relying heavily on recent discoveries, and made a selective and uneven application of Marxist doctrines. All of these must be seen in the context of the 30-year war from 1946 onward and the associated autonomist ideology. Further discussion of this ideology and its connection with its rivals -- colonialism and foreignism -- will be taken up in Chapter VII.

Notes to Chapter VI

1. Its original name was the Commission for History, Geography and Literature, but this soon changed to Literature, History and Geography. The same change took place in the name of its official journal.
2. In the first issue of *VSD* there appeared a long article by Đạo Duy Anh (1954) concerning the Lạc Việt origin of the Đông Sơn culture. An article on the division of Vietnamese history into periods made its appearance in the third issue (Nguyễn Đông Chi, 1954).

3. The expression 'con Rồng chầu Tiên' (the descendants of dragon and nymph) is commonly used in Vietnam to refer to the legend connected with the ancestors of the Hùng.

4. This book was apparently a revision of Đạo Duy Anh's early *Việt Nam Lịch Sử Giáo Trình* (Course Material on Vietnamese History), published in 1949. It was used in the pre-university course which he conducted in Thanh Hóa (Văn Tấn, 1958: 72).

5. It should be remembered that Đạo Duy Anh was himself involved in this 'rebellion'.

6. There were five subjects in which cadres were to be instructed: investigation, research, experience, history and science (Phan Ngọc Liên, 1973: 19).

7. It should be noted that 'Kinh' is a generic Vietnamese term meaning 'city dwellers', commonly used to denote the ethnic majority (as opposed to Thượng, or Montagnards). It is not, therefore, the name of an ethnic minority group, as Minh Tranh seems to indicate here.

8. 'Môt' is also misconstrued here as the name of an ethnic group. It is in fact a pejorative, now archaic, generic term meaning 'barbarian'.

9. See Marr (1981: 315-26) for an interesting account of the importance of the policy of national unity in the anti-French struggle waged by the ICP and the Việt Minh, as far back as 1930.

10. The attempt to re-interpret the French archaeological, anthropological and linguistic works with regard to the question of Vietnamese origins was also carried out in earnest outside the school context. In a contribution to the two-year study campaign on this subject run by the Institute of History in 1959 and 1960, Văn Tấn (1959), for example, argued that the evidence provided by Western, and in particular colonial French scholars showed that the Vietnamese had originated in two racial groups, Melanesoids and Nesiots, who had lived in Vietnam since the Palaeolithic. He thus rejected Aurousseau's theory that the ancestors of the Vietnamese had not migrated there until 400 to 200 BC.

11. On the basis of the Mount Đỏ discovery, Văn Tấn (1961a) maintained (with Boriskovski) that the Early (or Lower) Palaeolithic existed in Vietnam. It was argued that Mount Đỏ industry was equivalent to the European Chellean (Abbevillian) and Acheulean traditions in the Lower Palaeolithic and that the local people, namely the Sinanthropus, created this culture themselves and were the ancestors of modern Vietnamese and other Southeast Asians. In reconfirming his early theory advanced in 1959, Văn Tấn, with the support of the new finding, criticised Colani, Aurousseau and Chavannes for having been biased and racist in thinking that
Vietnam did not undergo the Early Palaeolithic and that the Vietnamese came from elsewhere. It is interesting that Đạo Duy Anh, another historian of the DRV, had a different idea from Văn Tấn. Though Đạo (1961) did not dispute the belief that the Sinanthropus were the owners of the Mount Đê culture, he still held on to his early contention that the Lạc Việt, the direct forbears of the Vietnamese, came from Chekiang with their Đông Sơn culture whereas the bearers of the Neolithic culture were the proto-Malays who were "distantly related" to the Lạc Việt (see also Đạo Duy Anh, 1954). However, Đạo's ideas received repeated criticisms from Văn Tấn (1958; 1959: 27-8). Judged from the official acceptance, Văn Tấn's ideas seem to have been influential in the DRV.

The Mount Đê discovery also generated a chain of reactions to the allegedly "racist thesis" advanced most notably by American archaeologist Hallam Movius. Pham Huy Thông (1978), Phạm Văn Kinh and Lưu Trần Tiểu (1978) and Hà Văn Tân (1978) took pains to demolish Movius's hypothesis that in the Lower Palaeolithic there was an Oriental tradition of chopping tools which contrasted with the more advanced Western biface handaxes, revealing the 'cultural retardation' of Southeast Asia. For a detailed description of the Stone-Age discoveries and the DRV official view of their significance, see Viên Sỹ Học (1961).

12. The 'East Sea' is more commonly known in the West as the "South China Sea". As the names themselves suggest, the former is more acceptable to the Vietnamese whereas the latter seems more correct to the Chinese.

13. This date was sometimes recorded as 500,000 (see, e.g. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, 1969: 9).

14. There were many hypotheses regarding the issue of Vietnamese nationhood. One proposed that the Vietnamese nation came into existence in the 10th - 11th centuries when Vietnam broke free from Chinese domination (Văn Tấn, 1968; Nguyễn Lưỡng Bích, 1963). Based on the Stalinist thesis that economic development (with a national market which can only come with capitalism), among other factors (e.g. language, culture and territory), was the most important determinant of the formation of a nation, another hypothesis propounded that the Vietnamese nation was formed in the 18th or 19th century (Trần Huy Liệu, 1955b). Still another stipulated that Vietnam became a nation in the Hùng period (1000-300 BC) because the Vietnamese at that time already had a developed culture (Đông Sơn) which must have accompanied a common language and a common territory (Vương Hoàng Tuyên, 1970, 1972; Đình Gia Trinh, 1974; Phạm Huy Thông, 1974b). This hypothesis seems to have been officially accepted in Vietnam.

15. 'Nationality' was used in the RVN to denote ethnic group or community. According to Professor Phạm Huy Thông, the original term 'tộc' (ethnic group) was forced to be replaced with 'đản tộc' (nation or nationality) by the DRV authorities in response to the minority ethnic groups' concern about their racial equality. Thus it was often said that the 'Vietnamese nation comprises many nations' (interviewed in Canberra, 12.10.1981).
16. Although Champa was considered in DRV history books as a (former) country as distinct from Vietnam (UBKHXH, 1971: 164), the conflict between the two countries which led to the destruction of Champa was generally depicted as a Vietnamese internal (class) struggle (op.cit.: 294). It is interesting that histories written in the 1950s took a different view of this matter. Minh Tranh (1955a: 57) and X.H. (1955: 23), for example, contended that the Vietnamese "feudal regimes" often "invaded" Champa and finally "destroyed" it.

17. In 1976, after the war, however, the authorities of unified Vietnam abolished these zones.

18. As mentioned earlier, in comparison with Đào Duy Anh's book and the less well-known Tóm Tát Lịch Sử Việt Nam by X.H., Minh Tranh's STLS was seen as a most acceptable history school book for its approach and class viewpoint.

19. In contrast to some historians such as Đào Duy Anh (see Nghiem Xuân Hè, 1955; Nguyễn Lương Bình, 1957a: 19-30; 1557b) and Trần Quốc Vương (see Văn Tấn, 1960: 30) who argued that there was no slavery in Vietnam, the majority of DRV historians agreed on the existence of this system. They differed, however, in their ideas on how and when slavery appeared. Some believed that slavery began with the state of Văn Lang under the Hùng (e.g. Văn Tấn, 1960), others argued for the state of Âu Lạc under the Thúc (Minh Tranh, 1955b) or for a much later period -- from 39 to 544 AD (Nguyễn Lương Bình, 1957c). Numerous pieces of evidence were cited for the existence of this system in Vietnamese history: the use of bronze and iron tools, defence works, a regular army, the foundation of the state, trade etc. Legends also served as a source of information on this matter (see, e.g., Nguyễn Đông Chí, 1956a).

Generally speaking, the slave system in Vietnam, once confirmed, was commonly described as one of 'patriarchal slavery' (nô lệ gia trưởng) in which slaves were believed to have served mainly as domestic servants rather than as serfs. This system was also characterized by DRV historians as having co-existed with the feudal system (see, in particular, Nguyễn Đông Chí, 1956b), and carried on even into the French colonial period. In the later development of DRV discussions on slavery, there was an increasing tendency to avoid 'vulgar Marxism' and thus to interpret this particular system in terms of 'the Asiatic mode of production'. The concept of 'class' was also considerably modified within this analytical framework. It was generally argued that class divisions had not been so sharp as they were in the West.

20. In the presentation of DRV archaeological discoveries given by Davidson (1975: 82-4), the Mount Đô culture was dated at 300,000 BC, the Sơn Vi at 120,000 BC, the Hòa Bình at 10,000 BC, the Bạc Sông at 8000 BC, etc. There are some errors in these datings, particularly with regard to the Sơn Vi. Professor Phạm Huy Thông confirmed these errors in Davidson's source (interviewed in Canberra, 12.10.1981).
21. It is important to note that DRV historians seem to have understood the Hùng period more in its symbolic rather than its factual sense. Pham Huy Thông (1970: 25), the Director of the Hanoi Archaeological Institute, declared:

We can affirm now there is a period called the Hùng. Why is it possible to say so? It is true, of course, that we do not know yet if archaeology will enable us to find a king called Hùng ... But have we ever regarded history as a series of monarchies? Surely, it is not right to say that there was a Hùng period only after one has ascertained the real existence of such a dynasty. We know nothing about the history of the Hùng Kings per se. But even if they did not leave any trace in the record, the history of their period remains written in a great historical book: the soil of the Motherland.

22. The site of bạng Sơn (on the right bank of the river Mã, Thanh Hoa) was first discovered in 1924 and excavated intermittently from 1925 to 1928 under the supervision of Pajot who worked under the auspices of the EFEO. A large number of bronze artifacts including kettle drums, double-edged swords, daggers, socketed axes, mirrors, girdle-clasps, vases, spear-heads, arrow-heads and statuettes were unearthed in this period. In 1935-1939, Janse resumed excavations at bạng Sơn, finding more artifacts of the same nature as those mentioned (van Heekeren, 1958: 92-3; Lê Văn Lan, 1961: 15). Although very little mention of the bạng Sơn culture was made in colonial history textbooks, its discovery engendered excitement and interest in the circles of historians and archaeologists. Many theories were put forward to date and explain the origins of this culture. Heine-Geldern, for example, dated the beginning of this culture in the 8th century BC and attempted to account for its origins in terms of the 'Pontic Migration' (van Heekeren, 1958: 95-6). According to him, 'Western barbarians', including Thracians, Illyrians and Caucasians of the Bronze and Early Iron Age started to migrate eastwards through Central Asia. One branch pushed into North-West China and conquered the Chinese capital in 771 BC, influencing the Late Chou or Huai Valley style of art. Another penetrated as far as Middle and South China, influencing the cultures of Manchuria, Korea and Japan. The last went southwards and entered Yunnan and North-eastern Indochina, being responsible for the birth of the bạng Sơn culture.

Many Western scholars including Patte, Goloubew, Jansé, van Heekeren seem to agree in general terms on the close relationship between the bạng Sơn culture and the Hallstatt culture of the Caucasian Iron Age and the former's ultimate origin in the latter, although the datings of the bạng Sơn varied with each. While Jansé held to the date of 300 BC, Goloubew favoured the first century AD (Pearson, 1962: 42). These scholars also argue for the possible direct influence on the bạng Sơn culture of the Chinese bronze industry under the Han (Lê Văn Lan, 1961: 16-8). Karlén (1942), however, put the date between the 4th and the 3rd century BC, and considered the bạng Sơn culture a derivate of the late Chou or Huai culture of China. It is also worthy of mention that according to Richard Cooler's recent study of the bạng Sơn bronze artifacts, bronze casting may...
have begun in Southeast Asia and been borrowed later by the
Chinese (see Taylor, 1976: 73). In any case, there seems
to be a dominant tendency among Western scholars to emphasize
the foreign origins of what became the Đông Sơn culture of
northern Vietnam.

23. See, in particular, HVDN for the DRV arguments on this matter.

24. It is known that during the anti-American war, the DRV organ-
ised regular mobile exhibitions of the Đông Sơn culture for
people, particularly the youth and new recruits to the army. Prime
Minister Phạm Văn Đông himself declared on his visit
to a Đông Đảo excavation site that the Vietnamese people
would achieve victory over the Americans with their Đông Sơn
culture (Phạm Huy Thường, seminar at the ANU on 13.10.1981).

25. My analysis from now on is largely based on the post-1960
textbooks.

26. In the 1950s there was in the DRV a tendency to subscribe
to a Marxist theory of history based on linear development.
The Han domination of ancient Vietnam was interpreted by some
as a progressive step. Nguyễn Minh (1955: 49), for example,
argued that the exploitation based on land rent introduced by
the Chinese feudalists into Vietnam was more progressive than
the exploitation of the previous system of slavery. Standard-
ised taxation meant limited exploitation, which stimulated
peasants to produce more and thus improved their standard of
living. However, DRV historians emphasised that any progress
brought about by this social change had been purely incidental.
It was not the Han feudalists' intent to bring progress to
Vietnam; rather, progress was what the Vietnamese people
achieved through their own struggle.

In the writing of history text, Đạo Duy Anh favoured the
above interpretation as presented by Nguyễn Minh. In the late
50s and the 60s, however, there was a steady stream of criti-
cism aimed at the idea of attaching too much weight to the Han
domination. Đạo's history book was harshly condemned by Văn
Tần (1958) and dismissed from school use, as I have mentioned
earlier. Since then, the officially encouraged interpretation
of the Chinese domination was that this event played a minor
role in Vietnamese history. Autonomism achieved its dominant
position almost from the beginning of the DRV after
Independence.

27. In the DRV, the story of the Trưng sisters was dramatically
romanticised in storybook form for school children (see An
Cựong, 1973) and also in books written for the general public
(see Phạm Ngọc Phung, 1975).

28. For a discussion on the land-reform programs in the DRV, see,
e.g. Porter (1976) and Elliot (1976).

29. This, in the view of DRV historians, referred to many upris-
ings in the 18th century of which the main one was that led
by the Tay Sơn brothers.

30. There was an interesting polemical exchange between DRV
historian Văn Tấn and Nguyễn Phương of the RVN on the histori-
cal roles of Nguyễn Huệ (King Quang Trung) and Nguyễn Anh
(King Gia Long). According to Văn Tấn, who also reflected the official DRV view, Nguyễn Anh was a traitor who came to the throne through suppressing the Tây Sơn peasant movement led by Nguyễn Huế with French help. Văn Tấn argued that the reason for the Saigon government espousal of such a view stemmed from the fact that this government itself relied on foreign military power. For Nguyễn Phung, whose view also coincided with the general RVN view, Nguyễn Anh was a great King, unifying Vietnam which had been divided among the three Tây Sơn brothers (see Văn Tấn, 1965).

31. Trần Văn Giàu (1973: 51) notes that during Gia Long's reign (17 years) there were 73 uprisings; Minh Mạng's (20 years), 234; Thiệu Trị's (7 years), 78; and in the first 14 years of Tự Đức's reign, 40. Of this total of 405 uprisings, some lasted for more than 10 years.

32. In addition to shouldering the costs of planting the crop, the tenant often paid rents amounting to 40 to 70 per cent of the crop. Also, peasants' demands for credit forced them to receive loans of cash and paddy at an exhorbitant rate of interest from 6 to 10 per cent per month to 240 per cent per year. It was also through this usurious system that smallholders were quite often reduced to being tenants on their own land, lost to the moneylender/landlord (Porter, 1974: 11-2). In 1904, for instance, more than 100,000 hectares were distributed free to Vietnamese and French. The usual amount of land given in grants each year was between 10,000 and 30,000 hectares (Osborne, 1969: 60; cf. Porter, 1976: 14 and Nguyễn Thế Anh, 1970: 187). Well-known Vietnamese collaborators such as Hoàng Cao Khải, Nguyễn Thân, Nguyễn Hữu Độ, Bùi Quang Chiêu etc. were among those who received these concessions (Trần Huy Liệu, 1954b: 15, notes 1 and 6; cf. Porter, 1976: 15-6).

33. According to Trần Huy Liệu (1954b: 14-6), by December 1943, up to 20 per cent of total land (or 22 per cent of riceland) belonged to French owners and another 20 per cent was in the hands of big Vietnamese landowners. There were over two million landless peasant families of which 70 per cent were in South Vietnam.

34. As is well-known, Saigon was renamed Hồ Chí Minh City after 1975. The former Trường Vĩnh Kỳ boys' high school was changed to Lê Hồng Phong and the former Gia Long girls' high school to Nguyễn Thị Minh Khai. A street in Hồ Chí Minh City was also named Trần Phú.
CHAPTER VII

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE, HEGEMONY AND CHANGE: VIETNAM'S THREE MOMENTS COMPARED

In the last three chapters we have seen in some detail how historical studies were presented in Vietnamese school books under each of the three regimes: the colonial, the RVN and the DRV. My intention in this chapter is to conclude the case study of Vietnam by looking at the subject in a more comprehensive and inter-related way: the three regimes, their societies and their ways of understanding history, are now to be discussed in relation to each other rather than as isolated phenomena. One advantage in examining the three societies side by side, now that we have the salient features of each laid down, is that we can more clearly delineate and compare the ideological, political and social characteristics which distinguish each from the others. It is hoped that this will indicate how hegemony is exercised through the dominance of certain systems of ideas in the writing of history.

Another advantage to be gained in treating the three societies interrelatedly is that we can discern how and why these societies and their concomitant interpretations of history were able to develop, be transformed, survive or collapse. Viewed in this way, Vietnamese society exhibited a lively process of social and intellectual change over a period of 90 years, a liveliness which may have been masked by our previous treatment which perhaps left the study unrealistically 'frozen' in three isolated moments. This freezing was required by the kind of analysis used in those chapters, and served its purpose, but now a more dynamic picture has to be presented. This analysis of change further advances our understanding of the hegemonic process itself and assists in determining the conditions in which it develops and diverges.
A further purpose of this chapter is to show that the test case of Vietnam can shed light on the three-fold proposition which has been put forward in the beginning of this study, \textit{viz.};

i) that social change entails corresponding ideological change;

ii) that ideological change tends to occur in a way which promotes or consolidates the hegemony of the dominant regime;

iii) this hegemonic ideological transformation has a quite sensitive barometer in the writing of history and its mode of presentation in schools.

In Chapter II, it was conjectured that the case study of Vietnam would in fact bear out some such view of the interrelation between social change, ideological shifts and the study of history. It remains to be seen whether this is so.

INCORPORATION OF CONCEPTS

It is evident from the chart overleaf (Table 7.1) that the different societies developed different ways of presenting history. In summary, the French interpretation of all eight items was orchestrated by the theme of colonialism; the RVN's by that of foreignism; and the DRV's by that of autonomism. Furthermore, for each regime, the interpretation of the events of the ancient past (items 1 to 7) prefigured the mode of explanation of a significant modern event, i.e. French domination. Past and present embodied each other in the historical thinking of each regime. This is evidence for the fact that history -- even that of the remotest past -- is essentially history of and for the present. Thus, by examining the mode of construction of historical knowledge in a society, one can form an image of that society. Conversely, an understanding of the social conditions obtaining in a given society can function as a useful predictor of the likely interpretation of that society's ideologically significant events by its historians.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HISTORICAL SITUATION</th>
<th>INTERPRETATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>French</strong></td>
<td><strong>RVN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Origin of Vietnamese people</td>
<td>Immigrant from present China 400-200 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pre-Chinese Vietnamese society</td>
<td>Barbaric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Hùng Kings</td>
<td>Mythical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Formation of Nam Việt by the Chinese Commissioner Chao T'o</td>
<td>First independent Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Chinese domination</td>
<td>Generally beneficial though subject to abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Chinese dominated Vietnamese society</td>
<td>Becoming fully civilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The Trưng Rebellion</td>
<td>Personal, limited and hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. French domination</td>
<td>Historically necessary and beneficial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1 Vietnamese history: interpretation by regime
The case study of Vietnam shows that there is one rule which applies to all the societies in question -- the idealisation, consciously or not, of each system by means of historical studies. What this means is that history is written and taught in order to justify, and thus maintain, the existing social order. History is concerned first of all with demonstrating that the status quo is both necessary and inevitable. To achieve this, each social system involves itself in the 'mobilisation of bias' in its reconstruction of past events.

The concept of mobilisation of bias was first explored by Schattschneider (1960) and later by Bachrach and Baratz (1969a; 1969b) to describe the situation in which the dominant group exercises its power both in the positive selection of some issues and in the creation of barriers for the suppression of others from political consideration:

All forms of political organisation have a bias in favour of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organisation is the mobilisation of bias. Some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out.  

(Schattschneider, 1960 : 69)

Such a mobilisation of bias is precisely what seems to be exhibited in Vietnamese historical writing. An examination of how each regime can incorporate the concepts of tradition and nationalism -- the key concepts in any study of history -- will illustrate this point.

The predominant fact emerging from our empirical material is that each of the social systems in Vietnam exhibited selectivity in its presentation of traditions -- the very kind of selectivity which Raymond Williams (1977: 115) remarks upon in his study of culture and literature:

What we have to see is not just a 'tradition' but a selective tradition: an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification.

and

Most versions of 'tradition' can be quickly shown to be radically selective. From a whole possible area of past and present, in a particular culture, certain meanings and practices are selected for emphasis and certain other meanings and practices are neglected or excluded.
Students of Vietnamese history often talk about 'the tradition' of Vietnam without realising that their position essentially embodies a political choice. As shown in this study, if one takes the colonialist's point of view, the tradition of Vietnam will be one of disunity and submission to foreign power, the very sort of submission to be regarded as an appropriate response to the bearer of real tradition, namely the intervening foreign power. Identifying themselves with the Chinese, the French manifestly asserted in the colonial study of history the tradition of the Chinese 'civilisers', whose successors they claimed to be. If one were to speak about the Vietnamese tradition of recalcitrance and national unity, one would be operating within a frame of definition akin to that favoured by DRV historiographers. Superficially, the peculiar foreignist conceptualisation of the RVN would appear to place it in a 'moderate' position between these two extremes, but in fact it is just as selective as they. Beneath the apparently fatal contradictions in its ideology, foreignism saw the tradition of Vietnam ultimately as one of submission to foreign power. Each system thus selected different traditions, and included and excluded aspects of history for emphasis or neglect in order to show that it alone was the legitimate inheritor, or (in the case of the French) the most worthy sponsor of the 'Vietnamese tradition'.

It is in ways such as this that the major function of historiography emerges as enhancing the sense of continuity and communal identity which provides the psychological basis for the social cohesion necessary for the maintenance of the existing social order. Thus, in the case of the French colonizers, the two most significant facts which were to be emphasized in the ancient history curriculum were the alien origin of the Vietnamese race and the legitimate mission of the Chinese as civilisers. In the case of the 'schizophrenic' RVN, it was argued that Vietnamese ancestry was both alien and indigenous, that foreign powers were both destructive and constructive, and that the Vietnamese both welcome and resist foreign influence. It was on this basis that the RVN embraced, in its historical analysis, the notion of apolitical culturalism which commended itself to the predominantly French background of the indigenous elite in the South. Conversely, the fight against foreign domination in both its colonialist and its neo-colonialist forms explained the tendency of the DRV to lay emphasis on internal evolutionism, independence, unity and the Vietnamese will to resist.
The three kinds of mentality characteristic of the three societies showed up not only in the actual texts of history lessons but even in the chronological arrangement and titles of books. Thus, in both the colonial and the RVN periods, the early history of Vietnam was divided into antiquity (2879 - 111 BC), Chinese colonisation (111 BC - 939 AD), and then independence up to the early 16th century AD. The DRV, however, divided this entire historical span into just two periods -- that of safeguarding the country (400,000 BC - 43 AD), then that of national liberation and the building and defence of the independent feudal state. If in the South we have books entitled Việt Nam thời Pháp đô hộ (Vietnam in the French Colonial Period, by Nguyễn Thế Anh) or Việt Nam Pháp đô hộ Sử (The History of French-Dominated Vietnam, by Phan Khoang) dealing with the "history of the loss of Vietnamese rights to self-determination" (Phan Khoang, 1961: V), in the North we see titles that expressed only the will to resistance, such as Lịch Sử Tam Mạc Năm Chống Pháp (The Eighty-Year History of the Anti-French Struggle, by Trần Huy Liệu), or Chống Xâm Lăng (Fighting Invasion, by Trần Văn Giàu).

These divergences were, however, as already indicated, only differences within a common framework and a shared pivotal concern: the incorporation of the historical concept of tradition. According to its own definition of tradition, the authority of each regime collected and preserved the material for the historiographical campaign to solidify hegemony. The preservation of historical relics, the building of museums to house them and official programmes of historical and archaeological study were a common feature of the whole epoch embracing the three periods. Of course, since tradition was differently defined under each of the three regimes, this was reflected in the physical arrangement and classification of exhibits, as was the case with important archaeological relics such as those of the Đồng Sơn culture.²

Like tradition, 'nationalism' was a popular rallying point. Each system vowed to inculcate the spirit of nationalism in Vietnamese pupils, and each claimed to represent the true nationalism of the country. The content of history lessons, reflecting the expression of the whole cultural atmosphere (plays, festivals, political speeches etc.), pointed to a constant effort by each regime to re-define the
key historical concept of nationalism. In all of this, tradition and nationalism were intertwined concepts in the historical enterprise under each regime; the definition of the latter depends on how the former was conceived. If the tradition of Vietnam consisted in subservience to the tradition of foreign powers, as it did in the French interpretation, nationalism had to be expressed in the form of a dual love and loyalty directed toward both Vietnam and the colonizer's country, China or France as the case might be. In the same way, the idea of nationalism in the RVN was to follow the tradition that had been defined in the framework of foreignist ideology -- that is, one had to be ready to defend the country from colonialism but only after having been subservient to it in order to absorb the 'cultural essence' (portrayed as apolitical) of any dominant foreign power. It is also easy to see in the North the concept of nationalism being equated with the determination to fight any form of foreign domination, explicit or implicit.

The empirical study of Vietnam, then, shows us that hegemony operates in history through the incorporation of popular historical concepts, of which tradition and nationalism are among the most basic. This incorporation of concepts, with actual contents and meanings redefined through the selection of facts and sources and their re-interpretation, reveals and asserts the view of social reality held by the ruling group. Such incorporation plays an active role in the disseminating and popularising the dominant ideology. The aim of this incorporative aspect of hegemony in historical study is to create in the people the sense of continuity and communal identity which is a necessary condition of social cohesion. In this way, the existing social order is accepted on the understanding that the dominant group in control of it is the legitimate bearer of tradition and the authentic voice of nationalism.3

With the dominant group effectively controlling the public dissemination of information, its view of history becomes accepted as the standard national one. This standardisation of history is so effective that history is often conceived as the history. When one says "look at history" or "history proves that..." in defence of an argument, one tends to forget that what is meant by history is in fact only the recorded history, the kind acquired in school, in textbooks and the media.
But the writing of history in its hegemonic task does not merely seek to incorporate the popular concept of tradition, establishing a bridge between the past and the existing order. It also concerns itself with projecting the existing order from the immediate past into the present and future, securing a firm place from which the existing order can develop.

History as presented in textbooks is thus not merely tradition-assertive, but also future-projective. In the former role the dominant group, presenting itself as the bearer of tradition, seeks to control the interpretation of past events according to its specific ideology; with the latter, in projecting itself as the vehicle of progress, it extends its control over the direction of current and future events. In the first case, what is sought is a basis in tradition for the legitimacy of the dominant group by means of a heightening of the sense of identity; in the second, a continuation and extension of legitimacy by means of an enhancement, through the use of projective concepts, of a sense of security and confidence in the future.

In the preceding paragraph I have introduced a new feature of the basic hegemony model which I have been employing, namely, projection. It will be helpful at this point to provide some illustration of this new feature. Like their retrospective counterparts, e.g. tradition, the basic projective concepts employed in the case of Vietnam were modified, just as the model would lead us to expect, according to the hegemonic agencies involved. For the French, future peace, order and prosperity were the key; for the DRV, liberation (from colonialism), independence and socialist revolution; while the 'intermediate' RVN was keen to project itself as being liberated, democratic and humanistic. Thus, with each characteristic projection, the existing dominant regime engages itself in confrontation with its immediate predecessor and its current rivals. Thus, for example, if peace, order and prosperity constituted the colonial society of Vietnam under the French, the pre-French period and any future non-French Vietnam was, and by implication would be, plagued with war, instability and poverty.
This 'projective' competition between the different ideological standpoints in the writing of history achieves a particular sharpness when a current opposition force is powerful and successful enough to achieve a recognised contemporaneous base of existence. This was, of course, precisely the case with the confrontation between the DRV and the RVN. There, the conflict between the rivals was especially acute in their respective historical presentations. Thus, in post-colonial Vietnam, anti-communism and anti-imperialism were the antithetical themes which served to strengthen the self-projected images of the South and the North respectively. Since projection is directly relevant to the existing social order and thus more effective in justifying it, modern history, as we have seen, is usually the main focus in history curricula.

In the study of history, then, projection lays the groundwork for the attack on some selected aspects of the past. While incorporation of concepts selects facts to express the view(s) which can consolidate the dominant ideology, projection selects facts to denigrate peripheral or wayward tradition that opposes the dominant ideology. In both ways, hegemony is in active operation: the dominant culture is positively asserted, and the history taught in schools becomes a complex intellectual discipline involving not merely praise and positive emphasis, but also criticism and denigration. It is partly because of this that one can argue that although the dominant ideology is essentially particularistic and group-bound, it is nevertheless generalisable and can become group-transcending. But whether or not hegemony achieves its target or to what extent it does, is certainly dependent upon how well it adapts to the complexity of social reality.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL FORMATION: THE DIVERGING PATH OF HEGEMONY

The material has revealed that of the two post-French regimes, the DRV was the one that apparently made the most fundamental break with the colonialist ideology. One may be tempted to contrast this rupture with what looks like the smooth, continuous development of RVN society from the immediate past -- a transition so apparently natural that it calls for no special comment. Viewed in this way, the dislocation represented by the rise of the DRV would, in contrast,
seem to require explanation; the obvious one being in terms of an injection of 'alien' ideas -- Marxist-Leninist in this case. Such an 'explanation', however, will prove illusory.

In point of fact, thorough examination of the material shows that each of the dominant ideologies and its related historical perceptions under the two Vietnamese regimes represented a distinct path of mental development, which had in fact germinated in the previous colonial society, though possibly from ancient seeds. This must certainly seem a surprising thing to claim: how and why did the colonialists express such a contradiction in their historical perception? Surely, it might be thought that they would express only one side of the opposition: the colonialist pole casting its thesis' shadow, foreignism, over the Vietnamese arena; with its counterpart antithesis, autonomism, having to come from elsewhere. It is my contention that the answer to this problem must be sought in a recognition of the dialectic of the colonialist ideology as expressed in history books. A few earlier examples can be recalled here to illustrate this point.

First, the public condemnation of the mythological tradition of history in the name of science in the colonial period did not prevent the survival of folklore which represented this tradition. Though we have found that in the post-1930 colonial textbooks, legend played more the role of negative example in support of Aurousseau's theory, the persistence of legend itself in most history books still suggested an expression of contradiction. The second example involves the 39AD Trưng revolt which was belittled as mere personal revenge, yet the heroism traditionally attributed to the sisters remained uncontested. This kind of dualism was present at the very heart of colonial historiography and was, in a sense, canonised there. Again, the same kind of contradiction can be seen in the colonial attitude toward the very fact of the earlier Chinese colonisation. Historians of the colonial period, whilst always emphasising its all-round benefits and striving to play down the anticolonial (autonomist) vectors in the conflicts depicted in Vietnamese history, nevertheless allowed space for criticism of Chinese cruelty and exploitation. Thus, even though one was brightly coloured and the other in shadow, the face of ancient Vietnam had two masks: the dialectic was present.
It is necessary to reassert that contradictions of this kind first of all betrayed the inner contradiction between the French identification with the Chinese in the 'civilizing' role and the simultaneous rivalry between Chinese and French influence in Vietnam. It was, after all, Confucianism (introduced by the Chinese) which partly explained, in the early days of French colonialism, the fierce resistance and non-cooperation of the scholar-gentry who both feared and vigorously opposed any threat to the Confucian hierarchical order of which they were part. Ironically, it was also their very tradition of looking to China for inspiration and direction which eventually alerted Confucian Vietnamese scholars at the turn of the century to the 'subversive' European notions of liberty, democracy, progress and struggle embodied in the works of Montesquieu, Rousseau and Spencer. These works, having been already translated and discussed widely in China, together with the writings of the Chinese modern reformists such as K'ang Yu-wei and L'iang Ch'i-ch'ao apparently found their way to Vietnam at this time and left quite a deep mark on the early-20th century Vietnamese intellectual and educational spheres and the early anti-French movement (Marr, 1971: 98-100; 172-3).

Such was the ironically recursive web of contradiction in which the French more than once found themselves. The gallicizing strategy which, in early cultural and educational policy, they earnestly applied in the hope of eradicating Chinese influence soon began to rebound against them as more and more young Vietnamese picked up liberal European ideas through direct contact with French culture. At this point, we observe the French beginning to encourage their colonised subjects to embrace the 'Vietnamese tradition' which, as I have pointed out in Chapters III and IV, was oriented toward Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism with a special pro-colonial emphasis on unconditional state loyalty, submissiveness, non-action and indiscriminate compassion.

It is in such a dynamic socio-political context that we should see the highly complex and subtle ideological shift involved in the colonial view of Vietnamese history. This is the primary moment in our attempt to understand why such dialectically pregnant contradictions appeared in colonial historiography and why the degree of
tolerance shown by the French to the deviant interpretations should not be seen either as the result of a deliberate policy of objectivity or of mere confusion. Rather, were they in fact an expression of the real contradiction in which the colonial mentality found itself trapped. Contradiction in a case such as this is expressive of the mental conflict which results from a situation where the dominant group, alien to the society under its control, finds itself determined by an incessable demand for progressive re-adaptation -- a re-adaptation that is at once both ideological and deeply psychological. Such a condition is endemic in a colonialism which seeks control primarily by means of military power. Consequent upon conquest, such a power is confronted with an enormous cultural gap over which a bridge is to be built, if cultural hegemony is to be established. Such bridging must, at each step, be provisional and experimental: much trial and error is to be expected.

At another level, contradiction can also be seen as an expression of a degree of conciliation within the dominant structure which is, in this case, composed of two distinctly different fractions: the colonialists and their local collaborateurs. The fact, which has been thus far overlooked but which may have great significance for our theoretical analysis of the colonial contradiction, is that in colonial Vietnam, the writing of history was not monopolized by French colonists but extensively shared by Vietnamese too. While there is no doubt of the faithfulness (structurally speaking) of these Vietnamese to the French master, and of the collateral strictness of French monitoring, one must recognize that there was still a certain degree of 'Vietnamese autonomy' in their historical interpretation. Though their socio-economic status depended chiefly on French patronage, they were not French in background or outlook and, most important of all, lacked any of the power that belonged automatically to the least of the French colonists. This discrepancy, to be sure, was responsible for the kind of conflict underlying the relationship between the colonialists and their local functionaries. However, one should not be misled by this discrepancy into assuming that the kind of contradiction which was reflected in texts written by Vietnamese was fundamentally different from the basic colonial contradiction previously discussed. What it does indicate is merely that contradiction in historical thinking could be exacerbated and made more apparent in these texts. Furthermore, though it expresses the conflict inherent in any sponsor-
client relationship, it shows a degree of compromise or conciliation directed toward its collaborators by the real hegemonic group -- the colonialists.

Contradiction: the Incorporation of Opposition

There is still yet another aspect of contradiction which deserves attention. Some degree of contradiction should be expected in any reconstructed history when the dominant group shows any tendency toward incorporating the opposition. This kind of incorporation differs from that previously-discussed. There we were concerned with the incorporation of popular concepts which involves the redefinition and reinterpretation of tradition and nationalism. Here we see, rather, the dominant group being prepared to recognize and even accept some of the facts and interpretations representing what it would perceive as the oppositional or deviant ideology. This apparent tolerance seeks in fact to incorporate and thus neutralize the opposition. This is the passive side of hegemony which, when combined with its active aspect of conceptual incorporation and projection, shows it to be a highly complicated and dynamic process. If projection and the incorporation of historical concepts betray the subjectivity intrinsic in history, this new mode of incorporation of opposition would seem to make historical study appear objective. Now enshrining both contradiction and tolerance to deviant views, history as a discipline presents itself as balanced, impartial and scholarly, and therefore deserving of a legitimate place in the curriculum. It is principally in this sense that the subjective meanings can be accepted as objective reality: historiography thus becomes transformed into history.

This transformation is strongly reinforced by the fact that there is always a degree of correlation between the incorporation of opposition in historical studies and that occurring in real life. Hegemony operates not merely in school but also over the whole range of cultural activities. Tolerance in the one arena is likely to be mirrored by a corresponding relaxation in the other. Thus, in the exercise of their administration the French often showed a degree of official tolerance toward the popular manifestation of traditional Vietnamese anticolonial feeling directed against the ancestral
Chinese enemy. The official denigration (which yet involved a kind of de facto recognition) of the legendary history of the Hùng Kings, and hence of the importance of their role in Vietnamese historical presentation, still did not in fact result in any harassment or suppression of indigenous commemoration of their reign. In fact, the French went so far as to subsidise the celebrations with financial grants (see Phạm Quỳnh, 1937: 14). Even pilgrimages to the temple devoted to the memory of the Hùng by officials belonging to the French-appointed indigenous elite were not discouraged or forbidden (op.cit.: 12-8). Similarly, recognition of the Trưng sisters' heroism, though peripheral, nevertheless, attracted the official appellation "Vietnamese Joans of Arc" and thus implicitly involved the celebration of their exploits. Indeed, in the later stage of French colonialism, this implicit celebration became explicit: the French officials joined with the Vietnamese in a national festival of hommage devoted to both Joan of Arc and the Trưng sisters (see, e.g., Trần Hữu Quang, 1963c: 74).

By permitting in these ways the expression of a certain degree of anticolonial feeling, the French showed themselves aware both of the fact that popular resentment and resistance against their rule was running high at the time, and of the desirability of allowing a safe outlet for this widespread feeling. What better outlet than to transfer the target from their own present selves to the long-departed Chinese! This practice of 'incorporating' opposition later proved opportune when, in the 1940s, the French found themselves strongly challenged by the Japanese who also sought Vietnamese support by aptly playing a nationalistic tune.

An understanding of this complex mode of cultural hegemony both confirms and illustrates the view of taught history which sees it as capable of serving, actively and passively, the dominant group. The study of history here asserts the dominant ideology not only through redefinition of tradition and through attacks on deviance, but also through the very recognition of the latter. However, there must be, of course, a certain limit to the extent to which the dominant group can safely incorporate its opposition. One point where this limit is reached is when the ruling group comes to discern in the theory and practice of the opposition the foreshadowing of its own eventual overthrow.
In the case of colonial Vietnam, it is clear that the French showed in their treatment of history a subtle appreciation of the length of leash allowable to the anticolonial movement. In the relaxed incorporative mode, both the ancient Chinese and the present French were 'civilizers'; when a distinction needed to be drawn, the Chinese 'colonialists' exhibited 'domination' whereas French 'benefactors' dispensed their 'protectorate'. And while it is true that some anti-French nationalists obtained grudging recognition for their patriotism (in the normal sense of it) from the French in the colonial treatment of contemporary history, it should be noted that the nature of their revolt in such cases was considered to have posed no serious threat to colonial rule: they had already become part of 'history'. On the other hand, those who, like the Việt Minh, did possess a coherent and dangerous program of revolutionary action and were still actively waging an anticolonial war were given neither publicity nor mercy. It is this limit to the incorporation of opposition that makes it both possible and necessary to distinguish between the dominant and peripheral aspects of any regime's presentation of history. Any sensitive attempt to offer an adequate sociological analysis of historical presentation must be able to discern what there is ideologically dominant and what peripheral: anything less, being too exiguous, can give a positively misleading picture. And it is possible, as shown in this empirical study, to delineate these aspects. This is not, of course, to deny that any form of incorporation, even one in a dominant mode, may yet be used by an opposition to strengthen itself in the face of the ruling power: counterhegemony can be developed within the original realm of hegemony. The case of Vietnam indeed, to some degree and under some conditions, exhibits just such a phenomenon.

THE DIALECTIC OF IDEOLOGY

At this point, it may be useful to pick up one main thread of the argument so far in order to carry it further. It has been argued that the development of ideology under the two later regimes in Vietnam can each be seen to have resulted in its own way from the intrinsic contradiction embedded in the earlier colonial Vietnam.
I have shown what this contradiction was and how it was expressed both in the teaching of history and in the broader socio-cultural context. In the teaching of history, it was seen that this contradiction involved two countervailing tendencies each of which was active, though the one was 'brightly coloured' and the other 'in shadow'. It was further contended that this contradiction in colonial history books was an expression of the ruling group's incorporation of its opposition. But now the further question arises: how exactly can one relate the two prevailing ideologies of post-French Vietnam to the parent contradiction within colonialism?

It is not possible to discuss here the complex historical and social circumstances which led to the formation and growth of a native political and military force capable of the complete overthrow of the colonial power in Vietnam. In any case, the basic facts are well enough known not to need further rehearsal here. Defeat at the battle of Điện Biên Phủ in May 1954 signalled the French military collapse which led to the subsequent political re-orientation of Vietnam. This culminated in its provisional partition at the 17th parallel into two zones which domestic and international pressures forced into radically different patterns of development. The significant issue for our study arises from the fact that the division of Vietnam created a situation where the two active streams of historical perception already present were now each separately given concrete political expression. These expressions were henceforth to follow increasingly divergent paths under the pressure of momentous events.

Autonomism: a Counterhegemony

It would be misleading to say that the kind of historical perception shown by the revolutionary regime which succeeded the French in the northern part of Vietnam was in all respects completely at odds with that of its colonial predecessor. For a start, that perception began with a residual French influence — a lingering awareness that Vietnamese civilization was in some respects indebted to foreign examples and pressures without which, unwelcome as they were in many ways, it could not have progressed as it did. It was against this background influence that the autonomist element within
the complex colonial interpretation -- an element that was previously quite peripheral -- was able to emerge and form an ideology to underlie the new perception. A Marxist framework, however crude, could now gain impetus with a reinterpretation based on historical materialism and populism.

The success of the Việt Minh leaders, who, throughout the anti-colonial war, had managed to communicate to the Vietnamese people an unbending will to resist, was perhaps the main immediate cause of this dramatic turn to autonomism. Nevertheless, it was neither Marxism-Leninism in itself, nor for that matter the outburst of archaeological activity starting in the 1960s, which was responsible for the subsequent maturation of autonomism in the North. Ideology, as well as culture in its broad sense, cannot be divorced from the material conditions of society. The autonomist ideology gained a strong foothold in the DRV as a direct response to the emerging needs and problems of that society. Here we can first of all count the pressing demands of a society mobilising itself for total war against a new, post-French alien enemy of apparently overwhelming power. Thus, as presented by the DRV, national unity, self-reliance, national independence and the internal dynamics of national evolution -- all necessary to an anti-imperialist revolution -- unquestionably remained consistent and predominant themes in the new presentation of the history of Vietnam, whether ancient or modern.

Developing from its peripheral position in the colonial study of history where it may be best described in terms of the French incorporation of 'nationalistic opposition', autonomism thus gained a superior position after the victory over the colonial master. But it did not fully mature until the threat of colonialism reappeared in a new guise. Seen in this light, the successful development of an ideology can largely be explained in its close relationship with the changing tides of social reality. Since 1965, when near-daily American air-raids transformed the rhetoric of the anti-imperialist war into a fact of life deeply touching every individual Vietnamese in the North, autonomism became the expression of the mentality not merely of the ruling circle but of the whole society: it was a lived ideology in every sense of the word.
But the autonomist ideology also exerted a broader influence on the people. There is no question but that Hồ's much-quoted saying: "there is nothing more precious than independence and freedom" -- a saying most vividly expressive of autonomism -- was consciously used to exhort the war-ravaged people to participate in the far-reaching 'technological revolution' proclaimed by the state. Industrialisation in the face of brutal hardship exacerbated by war was an extremely ambitious aim, the realisation of which was impossible without dependence on foreign aid. Yet, with the authorities' effort to instil in the people an unshakable spirit of autonomism, the DRV goal of having a self-reliant economy and balanced economic growth achieved a success which, though modest, was still significant: the percentage of the DRV budget represented by foreign aid decreased from 39.5 in 1955 to between 15 and 20 in the period 1961-1964.\textsuperscript{11}

The development of autonomism in the North seems to have been a continuous counter-hegemonic process from the Việt-Minh phase to the post-French phase. One question immediately arises here: how, and to what extent, can one identify the counter-hegemonic cultural struggle actively waged by the Vietnamese in the colonial period? So far, the counter-hegemony of autonomism in this period has been examined in a passive way; it has generally been described in terms of the French awareness of, and attempts to incorporate, the Vietnamese anti-colonial consciousness which found its expression in revolutionary activities. The point which has so far not been sufficiently stressed is that the autonomist struggle of the Vietnamese in what was essentially a political opposition movement must have been above all a cultural struggle. The wealth of anti-French folk literature is of course one of the clearest indications of this struggle (see Vũ Ngọc Khánh and Hồ Như Sớn, 1970). This is the very point of distinction between the practising hegemony of colonialism and the practising counter-hegemony of autonomism. Since colonialism as a system must in the first instance exert its dominance more or less openly through force, colonialism as a hegemonic ideology is a secondary phenomenon, at least chronologically. But on the other side, since a liberation struggle like the autonomist one waged by the Vietnamese is carried on in the face of enormous material and military disadvantage, it must involve in the first place some sort of cultural and ideological campaign.
Naturally, then, in the conduct of the irregular war in which "Each inhabitant was a soldier, each village a fortress, each Party cell and each village administrative committee a staff" (Võ Nguyên Giáp, 1970: 105), the Việt Minh never undervalued the importance of ideological warfare. But the question which concerns us here is: how far did this counter-hegemony penetrate the Việt Minh's study of history? Though information on the Resistance education is extremely scant and largely unavailable, it is difficult to believe that there was no significant counter-hegemonic strand consciously developed in the sphere of historiography. After all, it was Hồ himself who was reportedly a forerunner in this matter. As we have seen in Chapter VI, his polemical 236-line poem, Lịch Sử Nhất Tổ (Our Country's History), written in 1941 in the days of his stay in Pác Bỗ, was itself a paradigm of autonomism. With it, the history of Vietnam took on a radically different image; formerly "nothing but the history of wars" (Louis Vignon, in Bùi Đình San, 1939: 7), Vietnamese history was now seen as "a long series of heroic deeds of the people in their struggle against foreign invasion" (Phan Ngco Lịch, 1973: 16). Hồ, of course, had been a teacher of Vietnamese language and literature rather than of history, but the two disciplines are in themselves closely allied; and certainly this alliance was strongly developed in Hồ's mind as his poem testifies. It is not likely that such a man would have been unaware, in the training of his young Việt Minh charges, of the ideological importance of the counter-hegemonic presentation of his country's history. In any case, another of the Việt Minh's most distinguished leaders, General Võ Nguyên Giáp, had also been a teacher in the colonial period, and a history teacher at that. Even at that time, Võ Nguyên Giáp was already an active revolutionary. Indeed, he was still employed in that teaching position when, on instructions from the ICP, he fled to China on May 3, 1940 to join Hồ in becoming a full-time revolutionary (Võ Nguyên Giáp, 1970: 40-159). With such leadership, the Việt Minh could hardly have been unaware of the need for counter-hegemony through taught history.

It is true, as we have already seen, that the colonial textbook VNXL was in wide use in Việt Minh (and DRV) schools, but this by no means indicates that there was no difference between the conduct of the schools in liberated areas as against those in French-occupied territory with respect to attitude toward and understanding of
Vietnamese history. Since the Việt Minh essentially represented the opposition force, one would expect that the oppositionism peripherally incorporated in the French textbook would at their hands emerge more prominently and occupy a central place. This should also have been true of the history taught in Việt Minh-influenced schools in French-dominated areas. Thus in either case, whether under the constraints of wartime conditions and extreme scarcity of resources, or under those of severe political and cultural oppression, the incorporated fraction would prove quite sufficient for the opposition to promote its counter-hegemonic discourse. Counter-hegemony in such situations, however, can be little more than implicit or potential.

It was not until the DRV achieved a complete success in seizing state power in 1954 that autonomism was able to become fully assertive in its own right. But a question arises here: did autonomism now emerge as simply hegemonic or did it still have a counter-hegemonic character? On the one hand, one would expect it now to be simply hegemonic; it is after all triumphant and there is no longer any extant colonial hegemony for it to run counter to. On the other hand, in the new DRV textbooks, the ideology was still expressed as though there were some ghostly colonialist hegemonic devil still to be exorcised. Autonomism, though victorious, still had the ring of counter-hegemony. To explore this question further, one has to look at the ideology of the DRV dialectically, and thus recognise the structural contradiction inherent in autonomism.

Autonomism, by definition, can never become simply hegemonic. To be meaningful at all, autonomism requires an oppressive force against which it can profess to fight. In this struggle to express itself against an external enemy such as colonialism or imperialism, it both defines itself and provides itself with a raison d'être. But since its very definition is essentially derivative, it has to remain counter-hegemonic even when it has achieved a position of potential hegemony. So, it is no accident that a constitutively oppositionist ideology such as autonomism, in order to survive, always retains its oppositionist tone even when it has already successfully withstood its critical period underground.
The paradox is that in the French colonial period, autonomism existed, but only as potential counter-hegemony, whereas in the post-liberation period, it became, as it were, an active and fully-fledged counter-hegemony. It had been potential or implicit because it operated within the terrain of the hegemony of colonialism and under the restraint of colonial suppression. It became mature and explicit when it came to enjoy the control of State power. By its very nature, autonomism as an ideology is essentially counter-hegemonic, and this is equally true in both periods. In each case the social conditions were such as to enable it to survive; and they were, perhaps surprisingly, only superficially different. As we have seen, autonomism acquired its significance in the earlier period by asserting itself against French colonialism; in the later one it was able to sustain its meaning by virtue of a new threat -- American imperialism. A 'normal' counter-hegemony would look forward to blossoming, if successful, into a triumphant hegemony in its own right. Such would be a logical and proper consummation. But that cannot be the destiny of autonomism. By its own logic, autonomism is doomed either to be crushed or to seek perpetually to assert itself against necessarily heavy odds. As a purely hegemonic ideology, it has no substance and hence no future. Paradoxically, complete success would signal its death; it would then either have to wither away or somehow become subsumed under another ideology.

Autonomism in the DRV, as we have seen, was able to exert a powerful influence, but only while an outside oppressor was there to give it meaning. What, then, happens after 1975, following the ultimate defeat of the American interventionist policy in the South? Does the autonomist ideology then negate itself? And does socialism -- an essential element of an autonomist struggle if imperialism is necessarily connected with a capitalist system -- and which had been subsumed under autonomism now become hegemonic? There is as yet no clear evidence that this is occurring. Historiographically, the predominantly autonomist history textbooks of the pre-1975 period continue in use. The only sign of a revision of history texts is found in the move toward the historical explanation of the current conflict with China which had been carefully distinguished from the 'feudalist enemy' of Vietnam in the past.\textsuperscript{15} Thus, if the previous analysis is correct, one might wonder why this is so. Why is autonomism not disappearing like the dinosaur our theory would make of it? There are various possibilities, e.g.
a) There is always an ideological lag in adjustment to social change. Autonomism may already be in fact a residue of the past (though history texts will take some time to be revised) and in process of yielding ground to a more purely socialist ideology.

b) Autonomism is continually required to play a leading role in ideology because the old external enemy has not disappeared entirely, and even if it were to do so, there would be always a new one to replace it.

c) Autonomism may well be functioning as a rhetorical tool to mask the hegemony of the Party hierarchy itself. In this case, the outside enemy is a necessary invention, not a reality.

It is perhaps too early yet to know which, if any, of the above three hypotheses is nearest the truth. At any rate, before any conclusion can be reached, one has to consider the following:

a) How, and to what extent, if at all, is a change toward socialism occurring in Vietnam?

b) Does American imperialism still pose a genuine threat, though in a different form and under different conditions than formerly?

c) In what ways, if at all, does the current conflict with Chinese 'expansionism' (another hegemony to be countered) affect the socio-political development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam?

Obviously, an attempt to answer these questions is quite beyond the scope of the present study. In any case, the answers to them are not crucial for our analysis to date. The only essential point to note here is that the very posing of such hypotheses -- and each of them is quite realistic in its own way -- confirms the counter-hegemonic character of autonomism.
It is clear that in the RVN the dominant stream of colonialist histories continued to flow strongly. Instead of being diluted and finally replaced as it was in the North, colonialism in the South underwent a process of modification to assume a foreignist orientation. The question is: why did the colonial study of history need only slight revision to accommodate the rise of foreignism in the South? Why should this changing process in ideology be described only as a modification, not at all as a radical transformation? To find an adequate sociological answer to this question requires an examination of foreignism in the colonial period and an understanding of the subtle symbiotic relationship between colonialism and foreignism.

As in the case of autonomism, foreignism in some forms must have existed in Vietnam long before the French came. But in the colonial period, as an ideology, it can be easily traced through the generations of Vietnamese collaborators with the French system. It served as the political ideology of the collaborating elites, as distinct from ordinary collaborators working for the French either as victims of the colonial system or purely for their self-interest. The typical example of foreignism was shown by collaborators like Trường Vĩnh Ky, Nguyễn Văn Vinh, Phạm Quỳnh, etc. The first tenet of foreignism is that the culture of the foreigners who successfully invade a country or alter the course of its evolution must be a superior culture, the emulation and absorption of which must greatly benefit the people under foreign control. Progress, or even national independence, within the foreignist framework, can only be achieved through active collaboration with the foreigners. Though foreignism does not rule out the explanation that colonialism is primarily for self-interest, it still contains the idea that colonial culture is outside, above, quite independent of and uncontaminated by exploitative intent. As has already been discussed, this view depends on the premise that culture is essentially apolitical. Apolitical culturalism, as the key concept in foreignism, is used by local elites to justify their collaboration with foreigners. During the whole period of French occupation, Vietnamese collaborating elites produced an enormous amount of foreign-oriented literature, and formed many associations and parties devoted to similar ends. In arguing the case
for Franco-Vietnamese harmony, they described France as the embodiment of "freedom, gentility, moderation, humility, elegance,... generosity, kindness, compassion -- in one word, ... humanity" (Phạm Quỳnh, 1917a: 18), and the French as "conscientious oppressors" and "good masters" (Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, in Trần Văn Giàu, 1975: 498).

An admiration for foreign culture must be accompanied by a dislike for some aspects of local tradition. In the Vietnamese case, frequent complaints were made about the corruption of village notables, ignorant superstition, formalism, ritualism, subservience, and even the 'traditional' habit of laughing on all occasions. While most of these aspects also received criticism from many quarters in modern Vietnam and from people who were concerned with the modernisation of Vietnam, what makes them distinctly foreignist in this case is the fact that those criticisms were used to justify the position of the collaborating elite. The ideas of progress and struggle were popular among Vietnamese aware of living in a colonial reality. But from the foreignist point of view, progress was necessarily concordant with political conservatism. Foreignism thus urges collaboration with powerful foreigners (to take advantage of what they can offer), and denunciation of the past, but also the maintenance of national identity. The work of Phạm Quỳnh in colonial Vietnam is a typical example of this aspect of foreignism: until the end of his life, he believed in and strove for the synthesis of Western science and Eastern philosophical values, which he thought would bring about a new civilisation balanced in both "quantity" (Liều) and "quality" (phần). Realistic foreignists in Vietnam abhorred the idea of becoming "more French than a Frenchman" (Phạm Quỳnh, 1931b: 107), and they were seriously concerned about the problem of reconciling the desire for progress -- through the emulation of foreign culture -- and the necessity of preserving the "national essence" (quốc tửy) and the "soul of the nation" (quốc hồn). This was a necessary preparation, in their view, for a future Vietnam where "we Vietnamese are the masters and the French our guests" (op.cit.: 110).

Ideas such as the above lay the basis for another major tenet of foreignism: the belief that, though foreignism exists in the shadow of colonialism, it will supplant it in the future. Vietnamese foreignists in the French period thought of themselves as the "source of progress", the "reservoir of the national essence" (in Trần Văn
But foreignism is not free from its basic contradiction: though ideologically it can be said to be quite distinct from colonialism, foreignism owed its structural base to the colonial system itself. It is, it should be stressed, through this structural dependence that foreignism can be identified for what it is. The foreignists' hope for national independence is therefore necessarily ill-founded. The case study of Vietnam shows that foreignism must have a deep-rooted alliance with colonialism. With their political power, economic and social interests tied into the colonial system, the foreignists, to survive at all, have to cling to their sponsors, and any prospect of an end to colonialism represents a real threat to their own existence.

Foreignism, as such, is a parahegemony associated with colonialism. And as a parahegemony, it has a symbiotic relationship with its colonialist host. It is clear that the foreignist concept of apolitical culturalism, as applied in broad cultural context as well as in historiography, has close and organic links with the colonialist concept of the 'civilising mission'. Though ideologically quite distinct, they share the idea that the kind of culture and morality accompanying colonial rule is essentially beneficial to the colonized people. Naturally, both, quite independently, arrive at the same kind of solution: active and willing collaboration. This structural tie between foreignism and colonialism is most evident in the fact that the later foreignists of the RVN could, indeed had to, adopt wholesale many a history book and interpretation from the previous colonial society without doing violence to -- in fact advancing -- its own ideology. We have indeed seen how the theme of social Darwinism and Aurousseau's theory were repeated in the RVN interpretation of Vietnamese origins. We have also seen how, with regard to
the nature of ancient Vietnamese society, the Hùng Kings and the involvement of some Chinese personalities such as Chao T'o, Jen Yen and Hsi Kuang in Vietnam, the RVN view was generally in harmony with the colonial one. The seed of the foreignist idea that the French would eventually be replaced can also be seen as already present in the colonial treatment of the Chinese period, by which the French sought energetically to justify their own position as the successors of Chinese colonial domination. In many respects, colonial history books written by Vietnamese such as those by Bùi Đình San (1939), Châu Kim Đăng (1930) and Trần Trọng Kim (1957) can be seen on close examination as providing early models for foreignist historiography.

Thus, foreignism, at least in its outward manifestation, was already present in colonial historiography. It seems that in most cases, foreignism was the other, dormant side of the colonialist coin, and awaited only the right circumstances to spring into prominence. Because of this symbiotic relationship between foreignism and colonialism, it is the dominant form of politics which determines which ideology prevails. And it is precisely in this sense that one can claim that foreignism in the colonial period was only peripheral.

In the RVN period, foreignism appears to have occupied a dominant position in ideology. Now freed from direct suppression under colonial rule, the foreignist idea, which had until then been merely peripheral, began to flourish. Foreignism, however, involved more than the mere repetition of colonial views. Its other feature -- crucially important to its struggle for dominance -- involved a modification of the colonialist ideology in the RVN study of history. As a matter of fact, this phenomenon owed much to the fact that colonial reality in Vietnam itself underwent a process of modification.

There are two factors which made a decisive contribution to this modifying process: the collapse of the old form of colonialism and the changing identity of the foreign power on which the RVN depended for its survival. As we have seen, despite the fact that nearly all of its members owed their education and social position in some degree to the French, the ruling group of the emergent Republic of Vietnam took a decidedly hostile attitude to the recently defunct colonial regime in its treatment of that period. This hostility was
in fact quite unsurprising, and not at all incompatible with the ideology of foreignism. The prospects of conflict and of power struggles occurring in the dominant colonial structure, and of the eventual replacement of the French, were all contained within the ideological framework of foreignism.

It is also clear that the ruling elite in the RVN was no less determined to follow a Western model of economic and social development than it had been while under French rule. All that had changed was the nature of the Western model which it perceived as desirable. Again, the structure of events conspired to generate a new formula: France was the old colonial enemy, America the new friend and saviour of civilisation. The second World War had sealed the fate of the old European colonialism in Asia and had, in inverse proportion, enormously enhanced the power and prestige of the United States. Furthermore, the anti-colonial theme, prominent in much American political rhetoric of the inter-war period, now struck a responsive chord in those Vietnamese who were now seeking their chance to transfer their dependence from France to America.

But in the RVN the loudly-proclaimed rhetoric of anti-colonialism was essentially contrary to the foreignist ideology prevailing in the bureaucracy. This was the basic contradiction underlying the mental processes of a new emergent group which was neither unequivocally the offspring of French colonialism nor part of the movement determinedly hostile to all forms of foreign domination. Thus, although the RVN system was different in major ways from that prevailing under the French, it can be said that the RVN elite found itself caught in a similar kind of dilemma: whether or not to accept the foreign powers which had previously dominated Vietnam. While the similar colonial nature of the French and Chinese systems with regard to Vietnam rendered the contradiction in the French case somewhat difficult to resolve and therefore easily detected in the colonial writing of Vietnamese history, the fact that the foreignists now directly administered the State bureaucracy of the RVN rendered its contradiction more easily resolvable via the concept of apolitical culturalism.

However, the statement of the above should not lead to the assumption that the inner contradiction manifest in the RVN historical
study was of the same nature as the colonial contradiction. While in colonial Vietnam the French fell into a recurrent state of progressive re-adaptation and, to a lesser extent, faced the necessity of making concessions to their Vietnamese collaborators, the RVN's contradiction suggested more antagonism and rivalry within the dominant structure. The problem sprang from the situation in which the departing French left behind a comprehensive bureaucratic and educational structure whose stability was suddenly no longer underwritten by French military or economic power. To those who owed their livelihoods to their positions within these French-built hierarchical structures, the realisation that their country was now dependent on a new source of foreign power, i.e. American, was particularly threatening. This automatically led to a clash of interests between them and those who were more easily able to accept and adapt to a system of American patronage. This system was alien, both philosophically and practically, to that bequeathed by the French, and as soon as its adherents began to claim positions of influence, strains appeared within the ruling groups of RVN society (Chapter III).

But antagonism between factions devoted to different foreign models was probably only a minor feature of the foreignist contradiction. Strictly speaking, it should be seen as an expression of factionalism within the foreignist orientation. The phenomenon of lingering Francophilia, devoid as it was of any solid ideological underpinning, should be seen only as a manifestation of sentimental foreignism. While there is certainly a need to take account of this factional conflict in any attempt to understand the contradictions in foreignist historiography, one should not lose sight of the major concern, which is the broader question of foreignist ideology. Thus, in the main, contradictions expressed in the historiography of the RVN must be explained in terms of the incorporation of opposition by the dominant group. Though conflict did arise between the dominant factions mentioned above, their different foreign orientations, in the outlook of most members of the established bureaucracy of the US-dominated RVN, tended in fact to converge. The real exacerbation of contradiction was between the dominant group and the people under its control.
The somewhat ironic truth was that, while American intrusion, with its accompanying overwhelming economic power, crippled the society of the RVN by polarizing it into segments distinguished by degrees of access to wealth derived from foreign aid, this same intrusion, with its exhibition of devastating military power, strengthened the DRV social structure by giving the people there a common enemy against which to unite. Although dependence on foreign aid seems to have affected, in one way or another, the entire population of the RVN, the foreignist ideology had its really committed adherents only in the top echelons. The attempt to incorporate the opposition in the RVN was thus quite plainly directed against the autonomist tendency, for it was precisely this ideology which was capable of providing a focus for the anticolonial feeling of the population.

In conclusion, then, the growth of foreignism in the South represented a continuous parahegemonic process from the French to the RVN periods. In the first, it sheltered under the umbrella of French colonial power. In the second, American neo-imperialism was its model and beacon. Foreignism, by its own definition, cannot function independently and must therefore always remain parahegemonic. In theory, then, its pattern of development is intriguingly similar to that of autonomism. Just as autonomism needs a menacing hegemony in terms of which it can define itself, the meaning of foreignism is determined through its relationship with an ideological hegemony which functions as its host. The former case is characterised by the emergence of a counter-hegemonic state; the latter by one derived from parahegemony. The structural contradiction is similar in both cases: just as autonomism cannot survive the disappearance of its ideological enemy, neither can foreignism that of its patron. True hegemony, for this reason, must eventually elude both these ideologies.

What, then, was the fate of foreignism in Vietnam after 1975, when the American interventionist effort suffered its apparently final defeat? Has it perished through its own structural contradiction, as our theory would indicate? There seems to be abundant evidence of the decline of the foreignist ideology. Foreignist history textbooks went into oblivion with the regime which produced and used them. But how can the foreignist decline be explained in terms of its structural contradiction, bearing in mind that its rival, autonomism, is itself not apparently suffering a similar fate? The
answer should be sought along the same lines as followed with the hypotheses proposed in relation to autonomism:

a) If there is a lag in ideological adjustment following a major social and political change, the ideology which best serves the interests of the emergent ruling group should be the one which persists most strongly. In this event, it would be normal for foreignism to disappear while autonomism -- the victors' ideology -- strengthens and extends its hold over the whole of Vietnamese society, including the field of historiography.

b) If the persistence of autonomism can be explained by the continued existence of an external threat, then by the same reasoning the concurrent decline of foreignism may be more apparent than real. It may be suffering only from a temporary suppression, and as long as an external sponsor is still prepared to offer it protection and leadership, its chances of revival will not be entirely dead.

c) Finally, if there is no longer any prospect of outside intervention, and autonomism is functioning purely for the sake of masking the hegemony of the ruling party, then foreignism is naturally irrelevant, and its disappearance inevitable.

Whatever the case, the parahegemonic character of foreignism is confirmed.

CONCLUSION

In this concluding section I shall return to the hypotheses postulated in the beginning of this study, concerning the particular case of Vietnam and the general theoretical issue of the interrelations between social change, ideological shift and the study of history. How do these hypothetical propositions now stand up, at both the particular and the general level, in the light of our findings?
With regard to the hypotheses about Vietnam itself, it is clear that they suffer from certain inadequacies:

1. In attempting to justify their colonial system, the French did not have to suppress vigorously the popular history and traditions of Vietnam or avoid the sensitive issue of nationalism. Tradition and nationalism were re-interpreted instead in a way which would allow them to contribute to the hegemony of the colonialist ideology.

2. The original assumption that the anti-colonial view was the leading one in post-French Vietnam now turns out to be an unsatisfactory characterization of the situation in the RVN. Anti-colonialism in the South was more the reflection of an attempt to incorporate the autonomist ideology of the DRV than the true expression of its mainstream foreignist ideology. History written in the South was indeed riddled with confusion and ambiguity, not simply because of conflict generated in the attempt to play down the historical link with the North but chiefly because of the contradiction between the pressing need to incorporate autonomism and the foreign orientation basic to the regime's ideology.

3. The concern with ancient history was common to all three regimes and not peculiar to the DRV, which had to endure the heavy burden of war with the United States. Archaeology and Marxism-Leninism were not the determining factors in the 'autonomist' interpretation of history in Vietnam. Rather, they were part of the current expression of an autonomist tradition which had its roots much further back in the historical experience of the Vietnamese people.

The general hypotheses which I raised again at the beginning of this chapter can be answered in the following way:

1. With regard to the first hypothesis, it is clear that it has been confirmed by the findings of the Vietnamese case study: social change does entail a corresponding ideological change. In the particular case of Vietnam, our material reveals that:

   a) After the initial forcible imposition of colonial rule on a society like that of Vietnam, the ideology of
colonialism must go through a process of refinement and re-adaptation if the huge cultural gap between the colonizers and the indigenous population is to be bridged and hegemony gradually established.

b) By contrast, an autonomist society finds itself in a state of relative ideological stability. From the beginning of colonial domination, autonomism finds its justification in resistance to colonialism. The ideological expression of autonomism, though no doubt capable of changing in response to changed circumstances, remains constant in its intention and essence.

c) In the historical circumstances where colonialism is succeeded by neo-colonialism, the colonialist ideology is replaced by a foreignist one. The contradictions in foreignist ideology reflect the basic contradiction of a foreignist society: structurally it depends on foreign power, yet ideologically it proclaims its independence.

2. The second hypothesis, which postulates that ideological change occurs in a way which tends to consolidate the hegemony of the dominant group, has also been confirmed, though with certain reservations. We can only talk about the 'dominant group' in the sense of its dominance in a particular period. In reality, as is demonstrated by the case of colonial Vietnam, there are other ideologies at work. The interesting fact is that in many cases different ideologies apparently had the same outward manifestation. And the fact that both autonomism and foreignism developed within a colonial environment in Vietnam requires us to recognize a more complex ideological reality. What we find is that ideological change does not necessarily promote the hegemony of the 'dominant group', but rather that of any group which propounds that particular change in ideology. The hypothesis, in order to have genuine theoretical value, must be broadened to cover this general case. This requires a proper analysis and understanding of the nature of ideology, a problem which I shall address in the following chapter.
3. The last hypothesis, that which postulates that the study of history is a sensitive barometer of change in hegemonic ideologies, has also been confirmed. In summary, our study of Vietnam shows that:

a) A particular political regime will develop a distinct interpretation of history, according to its ideology; and

b) The dominant ideology will penetrate the study of history for the purpose of furthering its hegemony, using a variety of stratagems: the incorporation of popular historical concepts, the most important of which are tradition and nationalism; the projection of the existing order from the present into the past and the future; and the incorporation of opposition with the aim of neutralizing it.

Notes to Chapter VII

1. It will be recalled that it was the very same apolitical culturalism which later was to ease the path of the Southern elite into the embrace of American influence. Foreignism, when challenged by the autonomist movement of the post-colonial period, revealed the vagueness of its historical consciousness.

2. It is highly significant that while the display of the Đồng Sơn culture occupied the main frontal part of the DRV national museum in Hanoi and was considered the most ancient representative of original Vietnamese culture, relics of this same culture were displayed in the room reserved for Sino-Vietnamese art in the RVN national museum. This display room was devoted to relics of Chinese origin and described as "giving the impression of being a comfortable, friendly yet dignified room belonging to a wealthy Vietnamese or Chinese family" (Thai Văn Kiệm and Trương Bá Phát, 1974: 103; cf. 102-3). Information on the French display of Đồng Sơn culture is unobtainable. However, the RVN national museum, as already mentioned, gives a general idea of what the former Blanchard de la Bross museum looked like.

3. As I have already indicated, 'tradition' in the colonial setting, however, has to take on an extra meaning. Here, tradition is redefined from the colonizer's point of view, since only in this way can the current colonizer claim to be the carrier of tradition. In the case of Vietnam, the French assumed the tradition of the 'civilising mission' which they saw as the traditional duty of advanced cultures such as their own and the Chinese in respect of weaker and more backward peoples, such as the Vietnamese, whom they saw as already having a long tradition of submission to a superior foreign culture.
4. Of course, it does not imply that any of these regimes could have admitted the loss under its hegemony of all of the ideological 'benefits' claimed by their rivals (the DRV, too, for instance, would have promised future prosperity, democracy and humanism - for example, see Trần Huy Liệu, 1958). Rather it was a matter of where the emphasized concept allegedly holding the key to the future was to be located. Thus 'mobilisation of bias' was also operating here.

5. It might, of course, be argued here that the anti-imperialism of the DRV had a more obvious natural and organic connection with its counterpart 'tradition' component than did the anti-communism of the RVN with its parent structure. This may well be so: the South's anti-communism may indeed have been more ideologically ad hoc, relatively speaking. If so, this may have been a contributing factor in its apparent relative lack of success. As I have shown in Chapter V, anti-communism -- as a cover for the real anti-autonomism -- of the South generated more contradictions than explanations. I will return to this point in the later discussion of the success of the South's hegemony in Chapter VIII.

6. Sometimes, the contradiction was quite severe, to the extent that there existed some views which obviously deviated from the standard expectation which has been discussed in Chapter IV. Bùi Đình San (1939: 8, 9), for example, declared in his history text that Vietnamese ancient life was "quite advanced from the material point of view" and described "the Lạc notables and their followers" (implying the Trưng sisters) as "heroic defenders of their countries".

7. The examples given in note 6 can be taken as illustrative of this point.

8. Among very few Vietnamese who received official recognition, for patriotism in colonial history books were Phan Thanh Giản and Nguyễn Tri Phương (see readings extracted from Luro and Maybon, and Hippolyte Gautier in Bùi Đình San, 1939: 155-6, 164-5; in Dương Quảng Hàm, 1938: 144-6; Hẹc Bảơ, 1927, No.41: 1104; 1923, No.42: 1124). Both of these men served under the Nguyễn and were involved in confrontation with the French. Being unable to defend the provinces under his command, Phan Thanh Giản ordered a surrender and committed suicide (his funeral was later organised by the French). Nguyễn Tri Phương was wounded and captured by the French after his defeat but finally died through refusing to eat while a prisoner. It has been a matter of dispute, however, whether or not these men were truly patriotic or merely Confucianist loyalists (DRV historians held the latter view). Undisputed anti-French nationalists such as Phan Đình Phùng, Phan Bội Châu or Đề Thám, etc. only obtained grudging recognition in one colonial source, the VNSL by Trần Trọng Kim (1958: 568-9). This recognition was apparently added to the text (which first appeared in 1928) much later when the revolts mentioned had been successfully quelled by the French. This is obvious from the fact that the author mentioned in the same section (subtitled 'the patriotic sentiment of the Vietnamese') the events of the Japanese coup de force, the Việt Minh's "stealing of state power" (p.569) and the abdication of Bảo Đại.
It is worth noting that although positive recognition of famous anti-French personalities was generally absent in textbooks, publications of a number of their biographies were increasingly allowed particularly after 1935 when the French eased somewhat their censorship restrictions. The names covered in this series included Đặng Thám, Phan Đình Phùng, King Hạm Nghi and Lương Ngọc Quyền (Marr, 1981: 262).

9. There was ambiguity, if not confusion, about the colonial assessment of the Việt Minh in VNSL, the only source to my knowledge which mentioned this organisation. Though its mention was neatly classified into the short section subtitled 'the patriotic sentiment of the Vietnamese', the comment on it was clearly unfavourable (see note 8). Similarly, though not mentioned in textbooks, Vietnamese communists were often the target for open and savage attack in colonial propaganda leaflets particularly after the peasant rebellions in 1930-1931 (see Marr, 1981: 86-8).


12. Despite its anti-Communist prejudice, Nguyễn Đức Minh's study (1963) is a rich source of documents on the ideological struggle of the Việt Minh.

13. At the age of 21, Hồ taught in Đức Thạnh private school in Phan Thiết, an organ of the anti-colonial Đồng Kinh Free School movement. There, he "passionately transmitted to his pupils not only knowledge but also patriotic ideas". (Hong Hà, 1976: 14).

14. The brief biography of Võ Nguyên Giáp shows that he taught history in Thăng Long private school (Hanoi) while pursuing his post-graduate studies in political economy and practising political journalism in radical anti-French newspapers (Stetler, Introduction to Võ Nguyên Giáp, 1970: 40-159).

15. This information is distilled from my interviews with Vietnamese historians, including Nguyễn Hữu Thanh Bình, Director of the supplementary course for ancien-regime history teachers in Ho Chi Minh City. Interviews were conducted in January-March 1979.

16. For example, Hội Khai Trí Tiên Đức (Association for Intellectual and Moral Improvement) founded in Hanoi on February 5, 1919, included Louis Marty, then the Sûreté director, Phạm Quỳnh, Hoàng Trọng Phu, Thành Trọng Huệ etc. Its avowed aim was "to develop intellectual ability and maintain morality for the Annamite people, to disseminate Western science, especially French ideas, and to preserve the national essence of Vietnam" (Nam Phong, vol.1, no.20, 1919: 16).
17. For example, the Constitutionalist party headed by Bùi Quang Chiêu. For an analysis of its class base and political activities, see Porter (1976: 37-47).

18. Although the question of how to preserve the national identity divided Vietnamese foreignists, there were some points which seem to have rallied support from all sides. The most important of these was the widely-felt need to preserve the Vietnamese language, develop quoc ngu as a national script, and promote a modern national literature and system of education.

19. On my field trip to Vietnam in 1979 I found that they were unavailable even in second-hand bookshops in Hồ Chí Minh City.
CHAPTER VIII

IDEOLOGY AND HISTORICAL STUDY: TOWARD THE SOCIOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The case study of Vietnam being concluded, we are now left with the theoretical issue which underlies this whole work: what is the nature of ideology? In order to seek an answer to this question, I shall attempt to analyse the question of historical study as a form of ideology. I then shall identify ideology through its process of structural growth, relate it to praxis and examine the matter of the involvement of interest. The discussion will finally lead to a critical examination of the sociology of knowledge, which, it will be argued, should be re-appraised in terms of what may be called the sociology of consciousness.

IDEOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

In the previous chapter, I maintained that the analysis of Vietnam from 1885 to 1975 cannot be definitively broken into set periods, but must be seen essentially as a continuing dialectical process of social formation. Vietnam, doubtlessly, had always been the scene of ongoing struggle. This was so, first of all, in a quite literal sense: during those 90 years, fighting went on almost constantly at varying levels of intensity. The battle of Điện Biên Phủ in 1954 and the Spring Offensive of 1975, indelibly etched as they are in Vietnamese history, are not isolated events but merely crucial high points in this perennial struggle.

But can we consistently hold that this whole epoch in Vietnamese history represented a single ongoing process when, in saying the above, we appear to imply once again that it can be periodized by such momentous military events as those in 1954 and 1975? After all, surely those battles were quite decisive, ushering in as they did radical political changes? In order to show that there is not in fact a contradiction here, we need to see that an answer to this question is inextricably linked with a solution to another problem, viz.: was the
Vietnamese struggle primarily a military one? In retrospect, the whole of the previous chapter can be seen to have been devoted to this and already to have delivered a clear answer: the military aspect of Vietnamese history, though very real and most visible and in itself subject to decisive periods, was merely one manifestation of an underlying dynamic process which continued throughout deeply in the form of ideological struggle.

It must be emphasized, however, that the type of account I have just given is far removed from the sort of idealist or subjectivist interpretation of history which has been so popular in many quarters. 'The war in Vietnam is really an ideological one' has been a common enough phrase and I am not, despite appearances, merely echoing it. I reject this idealist interpretation for its implication that in this war all other aspects are merely the by-product of the ideational confrontation. Rather, my purpose in stressing the ideological nature of the Vietnamese war is to emphasise the inter-relationship of all elements constituting history and, most importantly, to identify the links between ideology and other factors. As will be seen, this identification will involve an effort to distinguish between substance on one hand and form on the other. In this way, it will become apparent that the empirical affirmation of the ideological nature of the Vietnamese struggle leads not to an idealist interpretation of history but rather to a materialist conception of ideology. This will entail the recognition that ideology, far from being and remaining an identifiable set of fixed and abstract ideas or values, is essentially structural.

All of this points up the necessity, indeed the urgency, of arriving at an adequate definition of ideology. It will be recalled that in Chapter I, I distinguished between various current senses of this word and provisionally opted for a usage which did not confine ideology to the domain of 'false consciousness' and which sees ideology as a system of ideas and beliefs. For the level of analysis now required, this meaning is extremely limited: ideology has to be shown as essentially structural in character. Until this has been done, the theoretical basis of this study will be incomplete. And not until then will it be possible to see in a realistic way the proper relation between the ideas and the practical factors involved in social formation. This will involve an account of the hegemonic dynamic with
which praxis is interlocked. Despite the urgency of the task of forming this more complete definition of 'ideology', however, it is apposite at this point to reintroduce some further remarks about historiography in order that this important theme of the thesis will keep pace with the general subject matter of this study.

Ideological Form, Structure and Historical Study

Once ideology has been identified with structure, the study of history must be recognised as one such form of structure. And though it is certainly not the most important one, there is little doubt that, as compared with such scholarly pursuits as mathematics or science, historiography is an important form of ideology. There are two points whose elucidation will help to support this assertion.

First, historiography is a sensitive barometer of ideological change. As has been shown in the empirical study of Vietnam, this feature of historiography is closely connected with its concern for the past. But this connection will only be obvious to those who approach the subject with the proper theoretical attitude. On the surface, it appears that the very subject matter of history determines that this study of history should be fixed and not subject to reinterpretation. In comparison with politics, for example, which is basically about what ought to be done (in the future), and thus more open and flexible, the study of history, dealing with past events, looks frozen and definitive. The distinction is, however, illusory. Beneath the surface, historiography is essentially subject to ideological influence, since it is not a mere description of incontestable facts, but involves an interpretative element and hence creates the conceptual ground on which are laid the foundations for present and future action. In this connection, the concept of tradition, for example, was found to be a crucial index of ideological expression.

But historiography, of course, not only reflects ideology; it forms it as well. As a form accommodating ideology, it does not merely act as a mirror but itself constitutes part of the mechanism which serves to shape the form of emerging ideology. This form will take a particular concrete shape, depending upon the specific conceptual ingredients which constitute its tools. Thus, if 'tradition' comes
to be indissolubly linked with the study of history, then this concept will itself be a genuine conceptual framework for ideology in that area, and will indeed become identifiable with ideology, at least in part. It is in this sense that we can say that 'tradition' is ideology, just as is historiography itself.

Furthermore, just as true ideology cannot remain locked in the imagination, so must effective historical presentation be firmly grounded in material realities and capable of becoming a material force. And just as ideology is not a mere 'system' of ideas and values, neither can historical study be seen only as a collection of words, interpretations and descriptions. Like authentic ideology, it is always acted out in concrete terms, lived, and hence necessarily in possession of structural properties.

The affirmation that historical presentation is not ideational or spiritual, but necessarily structural, is first of all a recognition that it has a structural form which is concrete and thus, communicable and observable. This concreteness shows itself as certain determinate idioms, forms of expression, etc., which come to be known and familiar. But structural form is not itself the concrete ingredients, for the concept of structural form implies the possibility of the articulation of different, perhaps competing modes of historiography using the same, relatively permanent forms of expression. At the descriptive level of analysis, 'structural form' is not identical with historical study. The former, strictly speaking, contains, embodies and accommodates the latter: it is a means of transmission for historical study. This kind of structure is quite complex and varied. It includes concepts (e.g. 'tradition', 'nationalism'), images or symbols (flag, dragon, eagle, etc.), organisations (political parties, trade unions, cultural associations) and institutions (school, family, church). It is within this cultural framework (of whatever kind) that ideological struggle, expressed in historiographic activities, and competition for influence and dominance, proceeds. It is on this terrain that the battle for hegemony is fought.

The thought in the preceding paragraph may appear confused, even contradictory. How can the same concrete items such as phrases, flags, etc. both be incorporated as part of the armoury of the contending forces and yet at the same time define the topography of the
battlefield itself (i.e. designate those advantageous positions which the successful 'army' will occupy in the course of the struggle)? As we shall see shortly, complete explanation of this point comes about through a full articulation of the concept of structure. Firstly, however, it is worth pointing out, if only in passing, that this military metaphor expressing the 'structural' struggle in historiography chimes in well with what Gramsci calls the 'war of position' in politics (hegemony) as opposed to the 'war of manoeuvre' (the seizure of state power). And for him,

...in politics the "war of position", once won, is decisive definitively...the war of manoeuvre subsists so long as it is a question of winning positions which are not decisive, so that all the resources of the State's hegemony cannot be mobilised. But when, for one reason or another, these positions have lost their value and only the decisive positions are at stake, then one passes over to siege warfare; this is concentrated, difficult, and requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness.

(Gramsci, 1971: 239)

Though apparently disparate and diverse, the structural form of historical study is essentially combinatory and unified, and this characteristic highlights the expansive and all-embracing nature of historiography in its hegemonic process. This is to say that, in reality, historical study seeks to penetrate not only one or two aspects of the structure, but usually the whole structural form. And this is essentially because historiographic activity or the teaching of history never exists in isolation, for their own sake or that of the historian or teacher, but always in the total context within which the hegemonic struggle occurs. The case study of Vietnam illustrates this point quite clearly. Qua a battleground for hegemony, the modes of historical presentation in Vietnam involved the struggle for occupation and re-definition of concepts and images. But these modes of historical presentation, qua part of the armoury of the contending forces, penetrate and become deeply entrenched in political parties, cultural associations, schools and other elements in the structure of the culture in which the struggle occurs. This entrenchment tends to become monolithic and ubiquitous.

A clarification of the point I have just made (if we replace the word 'idea' by 'historiography') emerges from Marx's dictum that
the ruling idea is always the idea of the ruling class. Within the context of the present discussion, this means that any group which attempts to make a serious claim to hegemony must seek to expand its authority; and this expansion results from, and is indeed represented by, the pervasiveness of its characteristic mode of historical presentation. Seen in this way, the dominant mode of historical presentation (carrying the dominant ideology) is thus the one which most successfully penetrates this structural form as a whole. In doing so, it serves to strengthen the unity of the structure. It is precisely in this sense that one must recognise that the structural form which serves first of all to accommodate a mode of historical presentation (i.e. a certain ideology) becomes (within the culture defined by that form) identifiable with it: historical study and its host structure become one and the same.

Of course, the fact that the hegemonic group seeks to inject its dominant mode of historical presentation into the structural manifold does not mean that all aspects of the structure are equally important at all times and under all circumstances in their function as transmitters of historiographic modes. Concrete reality points in the opposite direction. Here again, an example can be drawn from the test case of Vietnam. It has been observed that while the colonialist mode of historical presentation came to occupy the dominant position in the formal system of education, the autonomist one, particularly in the early stage of the Việt Minh's underground activity, sought to expand its influence in a more loosely structured way: informal schooling and personal contact with villagers were emphasised at least as much as formal schooling. The most interesting case of uneven structural development of historical presentation is illustrated by the fact that in this same underground period, the autonomist meaning had to be established through an attempt by the teacher to transcend the colonialist mode despite having to use colonial textbooks. Of course, in its later period when autonomism occupied a victorious position, orthodox autonomist textbooks of history came into use.

Examples such as these do not merely confirm that there is always an uneven degree of importance attached to the different aspects of the structural form of historical presentation. They also show that this degree of importance is determined by the demands of concrete historico-social conditions which are in turn seen and applied
inventively by social agents in the ideological struggle. Changing social conditions may determine what is or is not possible structurally at any given moment in the concrete ideological development of a particular culture. Thus, for example, the concept of nationalism, which became a most crucial aspect of the structural form of historical study, is not a feature of the writing of history in the period before the French Revolution; the term itself first appeared only in 1798.

Before we conclude this parenthetical discussion of historiography and return to the more general theoretical issue of ideology and structure, one last remark will help to complete the picture. It will be noted that rival historians may very well use the same 'facts' and the same stock phrases ('the force of tradition', 'the rise of nationalism', 'the wheel of history', etc.), in presenting their historical interpretations. In the service of the correlative competing hegemonic groups, these histories are disseminated as widely as possible. Superficially, each seems to present a similar story to that of its rivals. But this is illusory: different historical studies employ different practices and produce different effects essentially because they are structurally different.

The perceived meaning of these facts and phrases is embedded in the totality of practices, institutions and modes of relationship of the society in which the hegemonic struggle is proceeding. Of course, at any given moment in this ongoing dialectic the structure of that society will not be simply identical with the structure postulated by any one of these historical interpretations. Were that so, there would be no hegemonic struggle: total victory for one group would already be a fait accompli. On the other hand, this recognition should not be taken as implying that the 'structure' of society is a neutral entity, indifferent to the ideological confrontation occurring within it. To say that would be to lapse back into the idealist conception of history which I have already shown reason to reject. The truth is a very complex one which is extremely difficult to state simply and accurately. And yet more comprehensive analysis is still required and it will be the function of the following sections to attempt this.

Clearly, what is urgently required now is the theoretical identification of the structural reality of ideology in general. The task is urgent not only because it is itself an important issue in the
study of ideological formation, but also because it has an intrinsic relationship with the second-level proposition -- that which postulates that ideological change should lead to the promotion of the hegemony of the dominant group. It was noted toward the end of the previous chapter that though this proposition received a certain degree of empirical confirmation, it was not yet adequate to explain a complex ideological reality characterised by the presence of more than one powerful ideology. I have attempted to come to terms with this problem in the preceding discussion. For a more profound analysis, however, more specific questions have to be asked. In what way (using which theoretical criteria) can one identify ideological change? What is meant by 'dominant group'? And how can we trace the direction of the group aspiring to dominance? To answer these questions, we need to consider ideology as both contextual entity and dialectical struggle, the two aspects having a complex relationship with each other.

**Contextual Entity**

Though at one level of analysis structural form remains separate from ideology, it increasingly becomes identifiable with any ideology realistically aspiring to dominance. As dominance increases so does the structural identification of that ideology: in the limited case of successful dominance, it constitutes its purest essence. This is because structural form does not merely provide the focus of existence for ideology, but also, in its very function as such, it simultaneously accommodates, embodies and activates ideological practices and actions. In other words, ideology becomes structuralised not only in form but also in practice: it is itself both form and practice. At this point we come to the recognition of ideology as a contextual entity. What is meant by this?

First, it has been argued earlier that the structural form consists of different aspects whose usefulness in transmitting and embodying ideology depends on concrete existential situations. In the light of what we have just said, it follows from this that ideology has an existence whose form is not completely determined in advance, but is affected by the context of the historical period. This is the most general sense in which ideology is identified as a contextual entity.
The second, more important meaning of ideology as a contextual entity stems from the fact that ideology is lived out in social practices and in human attitudes and actions. Foreignism, for example, does not merely entail an abstract belief in the superiority of foreign civilisation, but involves wearing foreign clothes, eating foreign food, using all kinds of foreign consumer goods and writing books and essays to advocate and justify adaptation to foreign things and ideas. This is of course a most simplified and one-sided view of foreignism, but it shows nevertheless that it is of the very nature of ideology to be lived and practised; it is in this that it has its structural being. Consider, for example, a religious ideology. A specific religion is more than a vague belief in a deity. It involves a definite material praxis, e.g. church attendance, observance of the sacraments (baptism, confession, communion, etc.), scriptures, rituals, ecclesiastical music, functional roles for bishops, priests and other clerical and lay authorities, various organisations and buildings (cathedrals, convents, orphanages, etc.), financial arrangements for the support by the 'faithful' of all this activity, etc., etc. Whatever the religion, it is essential that the religious ideas and principles in question be lived in practice (irrespective of whether such behaviour is based on true belief: even a hypocritical religious adherent must act out his or her hypocrisy).

Though ideology is generally practised unconsciously ('what I do is natural and common sense'), the individual practising it becomes aware of it (in the sense which I shall explore more fully later) and identified with it. This process of growing awareness typically reaches the stage where a person living out an ideology will proclaim his or her absolute freedom in acting according to his or her beliefs. Althusser (1971c: 170-7) sees this as the function of ideology -- that of 'interpellating individuals as subjects'. He writes:

I only wish to point out that you and I are always already subjects, and as such constantly practise the rituals of ideological recognition, which guarantee for us that we are indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects.

(op.cit.: 172-3)

and
I shall...suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals...or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects...by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation, or hailing.

(op. cit.: 174)

Seen in this light, the consciousness of individuality and subjectivity is not miraculously pre-determined, but is always a product of ideologico-social practice. This recognition is imperative if one is to understand the full theoretical implication of the relationship between ideological shift, social change and the promotion of the hegemony of the dominant, or would-be dominant, group.

The first implication is plain: the 'dominant group' or 'dominant regime' which has been consistently used in the empirical analysis is never an empirical group of individuals or the sum of simple numerical additions. It is, in fact, a 'structure' which originates from and grows according to the demands of the ideology constantly adapting to material conditions. This relationship holds just as much for a group which is not yet actually dominant but aspires to dominance -- i.e. it applies to counterhegemony and para-hegemony as well as hegemony proper.

There is a further crucial factor whose elucidation is essential for a complete formulation of a genuine materialist conception of ideology. We have already seen in earlier parts how ideology 'has' a structure and becomes enmeshed with it, through and within the total context in which hegemonic struggle occurs. We have also seen how this structuralness of ideology becomes more determinate through human practice and action. It is now appropriate to introduce a further refinement concerning this structure-growth aspect of ideology. This is that structuralisation is represented by a process which is not qualitatively uniform throughout: it proceeds from a stage marked principally by surface perceptibility through stages of increasing materialisation in depth.

The explanation of this point needs to be linked to the concept of structural form, which has been analysed with reference to historiography. There, we identified the various aspects of the structural whole, which becomes unified essentially through the hege-
monic process. Here, however, it is important that we do not misinterpret this unified state as meaning that ideology penetrates the whole structural form at one blow. It would be a fundamental mistake to assume that ideology acquires its total structure in such an instantaneous way. In reality what takes place is a process -- a gradual one in which ideology grows into its emerging structure. The structure first of all assimilates items which, though concrete and thoroughly communicable, exist mainly at a relatively superficial level: they contain a high degree of perceptibility but not material depth. Items such as concepts, phrases, images, etc. belong in this category and are comparatively easy to appropriate. Subsequently, in response to changing historical conditions, the structure comes to take on more basic and materialised forms such as organisations and institutions.

Obviously, not all ideologies undergo the same course of development as that which I have just described. Only the most successful ideology can grow into a more complete structure, moving from the level of perceptibility to that of increasing materialisation. The illustration of this point, again, can be drawn from the case study of Vietnam. This is the sense in which autonomism can be said to be a successful ideology as compared with its foreignist counterpart. Though both were structurally dependent on colonialism for their identity, this dependence was carried much further in the case of foreignism: as a parahegemony, it was not only dependent but also structurally parasitic. Throughout its course of development, it lacked a truly material structure which could sustain its existence in its own right. Foreignism finally collapsed because so much of the material structure from which it drew its sustenance remained permanently within the parent colonialist hegemony.

Autonomism presented a quite different case. As a counterhegemony, it grew -- over time -- into a complete material structure quite independent of the hegemonic force. Without such a fully materialised structure -- which included an army, a village communication system, an underground school network and a distinct hierarchy of power, to name only some of its elements -- how could autonomism have presented and sustained an authentic alternative social formation after the defeat of the French? Even its ultimate success over hegemonic colonialism can be adequately explained in terms of its own
materialisation. At the most basic level, where was the root of this victory, if not in the fact that the counter-hegemonic autonomist force finally amassed all the material requisites for the functioning of an autonomist society? The development of autonomism in Vietnam finds its echo in Gramsci's profound insight about "historically organic ideologies" which "organise human masses and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc." (Gramsci, 1971: 376-7).

All this serves to underline the validity of the thesis that ideology is a contextual entity, which places us in a better position to grapple with the theoretical definition of the 'dominant group'. Understood within such a framework, it is now arguable that ideology plays a dominant role in defining actual leadership. This means that the social agents who wish to contest legitimate leadership in a socially-determined ideological field must first adapt themselves to such a dominant structure. This further entails that ideology, in defining its own structure, which in turn defines the empirical leadership, thereafter continuously acts on the leaders themselves. Ideology is thus not a trick invented by leaders seeking to control a population through mystification. It is rather a structure, organically linked with concrete social conditions, into which both leaders and led are locked.

In empirical reality, there is always a monarchy, a papacy, a republic, (or whatever), each with its corresponding ideology to be defended and served. When some individual is entrusted with the authority which commands loyalty and obedience, it is because his or her personal qualities are seen as those which best serve the interests of the system; such a person has no particular value as an individual. It is also not uncommon for a leader to base his or her claim to legitimacy on the assertion, and more often than not the genuine belief, that he or she is the best available servant of the population (that is -- realistically speaking -- of the structure). This recognition must naturally lead to the rejection of any idealist understanding of authority and political formation of the sort so widespread in the mainstream of the social sciences. In this connection, Max Weber's notion of 'charismatic' authority is a particularly unfortunate misconception: the 'supernatural' or 'superhuman' character attributed to an
individual leader must rather be understood as essentially connected with the belief in his or her extraordinary ability to serve and represent the ideological structure.

If ideology is portrayed as growing into a (dominant-group) structure, thereby largely determining the empirical leadership, how then are we to approach the hypothesis which postulates that there is a correspondence between ideological shift and the hegemony of the dominant regime?

We have already seen (in Chapters III to VI) empirical confirmation of the fact that ideological shifts initiated by a dominant group tend to serve to expand the hegemony of that group. We have seen subsequently that such a hegemonic expansion involves a deepening structuralisation of the dominant ideology. But an integral part of the structure is the leadership of the dominant group itself. Thus there is a necessary connection provided by the critical idea of structure between particular leadership and ideological change. In passing, it might be mentioned that this phenomenon has been historically obvious in leadership battles in the Soviet Union, China and elsewhere: ideological charges and countercharges involving catch words such as "revisionist", "deviationist", etc. have always marked actual struggle for power within a state or party apparatus. A more profound meaning of hegemony now reveals, generating a deeper understanding of the nature of ideology. Hegemony is placed in a context of ideological activism on the part of both leaders and the led. Ideology can thus be seen to stand in a structural relationship with the whole of the social formation.

Given all this, the hypothesis would nevertheless still represent less than a realistic picture of ideological formation if we failed to bring fully into the discussion another important aspect which so far has been only implied: that ideological change, while consolidating the hegemony of the ruling class, has to transform the structure of the ruling group itself. In other words, what has yet to be explained is the dynamic of this transformation. This will require an explanation of the adaptation of ideology to concrete material conditions (which will reinforce the concept of ideology as a contextual entity). One way in which this subject may be approached is to deal with ideology in the context of a dialectical struggle.
Dialectical Struggle

To say that ideology grows into a structure as it adapts to material conditions is to recognise that hegemony is necessarily a dialectical struggle. This presupposes that:

a) Ideology assumes a specific autonomy -- or 'effectivity', to use an Althusserian term -- with regard to the (economic) base of a given society.

b) Ideology is not a fixed 'instance', necessarily group- (or class-) specific in origin.

c) Ideology, in a realistic hegemonic situation, makes compromises and submits to modifications.

d) In such a process of self-transformation, the subjects which are originally produced by the ideological structure are reactive, contributing to the formation of ideology itself; it is in this dynamic process that social agents struggle to acquire their consciousness.

In short, ideology would be meaningless and misconceived if considered outside the context of the relation of forces.

Point a) is a topic of intense debate among contemporary social analysts, particularly those of a Marxist or neo-Marxist persuasion. It is an issue of considerable importance in itself and it does affect any complete account one might attempt to give of the relationship between ideology and the total structure in which it is embedded. However, I have endeavoured to conduct this whole inquiry without entering into a discussion of the problem associated with economic determinism. To have done so would have opened up a vast field of philosophico-economic debate which would have quite upset the balance of the thesis. I believe that this abstention can be maintained without serious impairment to either the empirical or the analytic dimension of this study.
The other considerations b), c) and d) are closely connected with the present analysis of hegemony, which must now be seen in relation to parahegemonic and counterhegemonic forces. In the last chapter, I discussed the structural contradictions within the parahegemony of foreignism and the counterhegemony of autonomism, and showed how these varieties of hegemonic force maintain a structural dependence on the hegemony of colonialism. What does 'counterhegemony', for example, mean if not above all a force running counter to hegemony? The main focus now, however, is on the converse -- the constantly changing meaning of hegemony itself, which is determined to a large extent by the existence and growth of alternative and oppositional forces: "in practice", as Williams (1977: 112) puts it tersely, "hegemony can never be singular". There are many aspects to this relationship which require careful study.

First, the self-transformation of the hegemonic structure can be seen as the result of accommodating a parahegemonic force. This is in essence related to the question of group alliance. In the previous chapter, it was noted that the contradictions embedded in the expression of the dominant ideology may be attributed in part to the attempt by the dominant group to achieve conciliation within its structure. This aspect of hegemony is not, of course, peculiar to the case of Vietnam under colonial rule, although it may have been more acute there than elsewhere. Hegemony in any given situation must be based on the grouping of allies, which necessarily requires the granting of concessions by the hegemonic group to the different interests of other groups. The dominant group must be able to accommodate within its own structure those groups whose interests are different to, but not entirely incompatible with, its own.

The previous chapter characterised the nature of parahegemony as ideologically distinct from the hegemonic force but structurally derived from it. This conclusion now needs qualification in the light of the more complete theoretical model which is the basis of the current analysis. From the present vantage point, it appears simply contradictory to say that ideology may go in one direction and structure in another. Have I not been insisting here above all else on the essential unity of the total structural form? The explanation, it seems, lies in the fact, itself empirically evident in the Vietnamese material, that the foreignist (parahegemonic)
ideology is not a fully materialised one, together with the fact that the foreignist structure is not a fully 'informed' one. What should be recognised is that there are crucial gaps in both the form and the substance of the parahegemonic force and that this is a typical characteristic of parahegemony. The fact that there is something essentially inauthentic (or 'parasitic' as I have called it) about parahegemonic force is intimately connected with what was previously diagnosed as a basic contradiction inherent in parahegemony. At the present moment, however, the concern is not so much to explore further the nature of parahegemony but rather to pinpoint its effects on the dominant ideology within whose milieu it exists. What it does there is sharpen the contradictions and make more urgent the need for conciliations within the dominant structure which essentially includes both hegemonic and parahegemonic fractions. The parahegemonic part of the structure, though lacking real power, thus has important influence.

The case in which parahegemony is an indispensable component of the hegemonic structure is best illustrated by the empirical study of foreignism in Vietnam. It is not at all an exaggeration to say that without the parahegemonic group of local foreignists, the hegemony of colonialism would never have been successfully established in Vietnamese society. The relationship between hegemony, parahegemony and colonial control can be summed up in terms of the relationship between power, influence and interests. The colonial system, as repeatedly noted, is in the first instance an imposed system created and maintained principally by the use of force. This is the phase in which political domination involves the exercise of power, which is, in this context, defined as the ability to make other people serve one's own interests through physical coercion on a large scale.

When colonialism has passed through its initial stage of imposing a technologically-based military dominance, it moves from the area of power to that of influence: colonialism enters a hegemonic situation. In the replacement of force by influence, defined as the ability to gain control and support primarily by consent, it is imperative for the colonialists to encourage the development of the local information media: this is the formation of parahegemony. This formation must be based first of all on the creation of a compatibility of interests, which leads to a kind of exchange between two groups: active collaboration for wealth, socio-political status, privileges. The (hegemonic-
para-hegemonic) structure needs constant readjustment to ensure this compatibility of interests. In concrete reality, as illustrated by the case of colonial Vietnam, this process of readjustment is expressed in protests, negotiation and change. Though in many cases it appears quite similar to the relationship between hegemony and counter-hegemony, the parahegemonic essence of this process lies in the fact that the colonial structure is always ultimately supported, since it is this structure which provides the skeleton for the parahegemonic body.

In the process of hegemonic self-modification, counter-hegemony also plays a crucial role. After all, the ultimate goal of the hegemonic is the permanent maintenance of the dominant ideology. And since the counter-hegemonic force presents the most fundamental threat to this dominance, it is the one which has to be dealt with in the first and last instances. I have already discussed, in the last chapter, the dominant group's incorporation of deviance and opposition. I have also talked about the limit to which this tolerance will extend. What has not yet been mentioned is that this attempt to suppress, through neutralisation, what the hegemonic sees as potential counter-forces is a dominant feature of the hegemonic dialectic. Since within the definition of hegemony there is a constant implicit possibility of attack and subversion by potential or nascent hegemonic forces, and since the hegemonic group is instinctively and acutely aware of this threat, permanent dialectical struggle is inseparable from the existence of hegemony; the logical corollary of this is the structural dependence of the hegemonic group on its opposition, both actual and potential.

It emerges from the earlier discussion (in the previous chapter) on the incorporation of opposition that an important element in the struggle against perceived potential opposition would be the creation of a compatibility of interests -- just as it is in the process of parahegemonic formation. Indeed, a crucial problem here involves the distinction in their early stages between a potential counterhegemonic force and a para-hegemonic one within the hegemonic dialectic. What is the determining factor in making this distinction?

An answer to this question will provide a better understanding of hegemony as a dialectical struggle. It is also a necessary part
of any thorough analysis of the structuralisation of ideology. The discussion so far has not proceeded beyond an exploration of the ways in which ideology becomes structuralised, and the possible effects of this process. We must now examine why ideology involves structuralisation. It is my contention that an answer to this question must involve a study of the matter of interest, and of its relationship with the hegemonic dialectic, the structuralisation of ideology and the formation of consciousness.

STRUCTURALISATION OF IDEOLOGY

The question of interest is central to any analysis of ideology. For it is now clear that ideology is more than a mere systematic set of ideas (the differential calculus is a systematic set of ideas, but it is not an ideology). For an ideational complex to constitute an ideology, it must contain an evaluative element: it is necessarily polarised with respect to what is deemed worth having, seeking, preserving, fostering, defending, cherishing etc. on the positive side, and disclaiming, avoiding, rejecting, eradicating, minimising etc. on the negative side. Not all of the ideational elements of ideology, however, are directly evaluative in this way. Some are connected with ideas, opinions or theories pertaining to the means by which values may be made operative. Others may include secondary evaluations about the types of persons, events or situations likely to affect relevant causes or conditions governing such outcomes. Some of these ideas may have a sound factual basis; others may be (and typically are) based on supposition, hearsay, prejudice, myth, superstition etc., or may be the product of some psychological mechanism such as displacement, projection, or whatever. The whole complex tends to be intertwined in such a way that it is extremely difficult to separate the specific roles and epistemological status of the individual components. In this sense, an ideology is 'systematic'. The system may be partly logical -- and hence, allow logical analysis and defence -- and partly defy logic. Typically, ideology has a special kind of ideational inertia: ingredients may resist change or replacement even when it is not apparent why any such change or replacement should endanger the integrity of the system. It is as though any disturbance to the system will generate a sense of insecurity. This is no doubt precisely because the connections between the ideational components within the system are not purely rational.
Ideology and Praxis: the Involvement of Interest

All of the above both bears on and arises from the already-recognised fact that ideology is essentially related to praxis. Understood as such, ideology is immediately and intimately motivational both in its source and in its function. Mere abstract idea systems do not in themselves lead to any action; this is why they are not \textit{per se} ideology. It is only when they are organic outgrowths from the very springs of action that idea systems are ideological in this sense.

Insofar as the ideational relationships within the ideological structure are rational (logical), they relate directly to the concept of interest. Somebody who acts in ways knowingly calculated to further his or her interests, whatever they may be, is \textit{ipso facto} acting rationally. It is not the purpose of this study to espouse or defend any particular view of what a person's real interests are, or should be, or how they arise. It is not being assumed here, however, that real interests are necessarily confined to the economic sphere. It is sufficient for the present purpose to state that there are interests (of whatever kind), and that the impulse toward their promotion is the source of action. \textit{Rational} action is, as already indicated, action organised within an ideational matrix calculated to effect promotion of interests.

It is important, of course, to see that not all action is rational. This means that some idea structures, or some components of a given idea structure, may not in fact be conducive to the interests of their adherents. Some obfuscation, confusion, or mystification may be embedded in the structure. Such disabilities may arise from various causes, which it is not my concern here to track down, except perhaps to point out in passing that in some cases at least, the logical aberrations may be systematically implanted by some agents whose interests lie elsewhere -- possibly in direct conflict with those of the adherents of the ideology in question. It is in cases such as this that ideology involves false consciousness: the very sort of false consciousness which Marx had in mind when he spoke about ideology. In these cases, ideology generates a praxis which is not effectively geared to the adherent's real interests. It contains an 'opiate', and therefore constitutes the antithesis of rational or 'scientific' theory.
From the standpoint of the concept of ideology employed in this analysis it is, however, not essential -- but merely possible -- that ideology should involve false consciousness. Our concept is thus more general, and therefore more analytically useful. For it does not presuppose any particular judgement either of the real interests of its adherents or of the 'scientific' efficacy of the entailed praxis in achieving the promotion of such interests. All that is basically necessary to this concept of ideology is that it be systematically praxis-oriented in the complex way indicated.

Such a broad understanding of ideology demands a correspondingly broad concept of interest. This must be located within a spectrum representing many different dimensions and levels, ranging from the most basic and essential biological ones (e.g. survival) to those which appear to be exclusively socially and culturally determined (e.g. entertainment, luxury consumption). Through a complex process of human interaction and socialisation, basic interests become acculturated, and new cultural dimensions are constantly generated and added to the earlier ones. This process continues to the point where behaviour becomes institutionalised and appears to be carried on for its own sake, having become largely detached from the original interest.

An example of this can be seen in the development of the institution of marriage. The basic interest of the human (and other) species is its own perpetuation, which requires the survival of individuals and successful reproduction. Mature individuals perceive their own basic interests in terms of sexual drives and the need for physical and emotional security. The common situation where there is a shortage of suitable partners and/or of resources for the satisfaction of these interests leads to sex and security assuming the role of commodities, each with exchange value. The resultant market in these commodities had to be regulated in order to avoid constant, disruptive conflict within social groups; the solution emerged in the form of more or less formalized heterosexual relationships (marriages) enjoying general sanction and respect.

Marriage at this level has several functions beyond the simple maximising of offspring and their chances of survival. These include: a) the minimising of sexual competition and intra-group friction, b) the encouragement of an individual's commitment to group-based mores and the
group's survival, and c) the maximising of group stability and solidarity through the provision of clearly defined social roles based on kinship networks. Hierarchical relationships within families commonly reflect those existing in the wider society, particularly in the division of labour and the relative power exercised by males and females.

At this stage, then, the basic interests lying at the root of marriage have already been quite extensively acculturated. At a further level of social development (typically, with the growth of fixed agricultural settlements) marriage is commonly used as a mechanism for the orderly transmission of wealth between families and from one generation to the next within a family. The use of marriage in this way represents a further acculturation of interest: the economic factor is now the dominant one. The role played by marriages of this kind in the accumulative stages of capitalist development needs no emphasis; in feudal societies, of course, with their stress on dynastic legitimacy, it is a crucial one.

At this level of development, it is clear that a person entering into a marriage, for whatever personal reasons, is only incidentally making a commitment to a permanent intimate relationship. Of much greater social importance is the new set of roles, duties and expectations which he or she assumes for the purpose (recognized or not) of solidifying and perpetuating a vast social edifice.

Examples of the institution of marriage continuing to flourish long after it has become irrelevant, or even counter-productive, in terms of the individual's own basic interests, are numerous and can be drawn from many different societies. The notorious serial marriages of Hollywood celebrities produce little apart from some re-distribution of wealth through alimony payments, yet with each new partner the individual concerned feels obliged to show full public deference to the institution. At another extreme, rural marriage practices in many peasant societies continue to encourage large families even when overpopulation has already seriously jeopardized the basic survival interest of the social group and of every person belonging to it.

Of course, the example of marriage in its process of institutionalisation can easily be extended to other fields such as education
and the legal system. Indeed, it is not difficult to see that the basic interests involved in the founding of a university or a prison usually become so diluted through acculturation that in the end these institutions appear to function merely for their own sake. Interest, then, is not simple or static, but involves a set of interacting layers which are ceaselessly generated, accumulated and renewed through a process of acculturation. Now it seems that this process through which interest develops is similar to that of ideological structuralization. As we shall see, beside their parallel patterns of development, the two processes are in fact organically related. Of course, this organic relationship neither follows a single observable pattern nor leads to a single predictable outcome. The development of this relationship, and what emerges from it, depends on various factors and social conditions whose thorough discussion is itself a heavy task which exceeds the limits of this essay. What is relevant here is the related process by which the dominant ideology engages itself in a dialectical struggle. In other words, we now return to the analysis of how hegemony, in dealing with its rival forces, i.e. parahegemony and counterhegemony, needs to operate on the basis of a compatibility of interests.

**Hegemonic Structure and Compatibility of Interests**

In talking about human interests in a hegemonic context, one is already in fact referring to acculturated interests. They cannot be basic biological or instinctive ones, because at that level interests do not involve ideological persuasion, and are thus unrelated to hegemony. Hegemony is only manifest when human interests become acculturated, complicated, divergent and variable. Humans do not need to be 'ideologized' into seeking food to satisfy their hunger. Ideology only appears when a question of choice emerges: eating what, and how? Even at the most basic level, such as this, one can already identify a relationship between the acculturation of interests and the operation of hegemony. The two, it can be said, require, condition and parallel one another.

At this level, it may be necessary to distinguish some acculturated interests which are often referred to as the 'objective', 'real' or 'basic' interests of people -- those directly related to
people's socio-economic positions in a social formation, e.g. the interests of a farmer, a worker, a capitalist etc. Interests in this sense can be called structurally conditioned (or sectional) interests. Since hegemony can only be achieved on the condition that the (aspiring) dominant group's interests are compatible with those of the subordinate groups, the exercise of hegemony must always involve some sacrifices on the part of the leading hegemonic group. This is why one speaks of compromise, concession and incorporation in any hegemonic operation.

In the case of what Gramsci perceived as a 'successful hegemony', there should be a genuine adoption and representation of the general interest of the people by the leading group, which is able to 'nationalize itself'. This is only possible if the leading group's interests coincide with the limitation of exploitation.¹ In Gramsci's conception, a successful hegemony is one which is able to ensure for itself a "historical base", create a "collective national-popular will" and form a "collective man" (see Mouffe, 1979; Sassoon, 1978: 193-204). Hegemony of this kind, then, for Gramsci:

...involves the creation of a higher synthesis, so that all its elements fuse in a 'collective will' which becomes the new protagonist of political action during that hegemony's entire duration. It is through ideology that this collective will is formed since its very existence depends on the creation of ideological unity which will serve as a 'cement'.

(Mouffe, 1979: 184)

Apparently, what Gramsci had in mind corresponds to a process in which the structuralisation of ideology involves what may be called an extensive unification of interests. This in fact refers to one particular case of the acculturation of interest -- where different, yet not completely opposite interests of different groups are extensively compromised to become integrated. This unification of interests, which promotes the materialisation of ideology most thoroughly and successfully, is a difficult task involving not only a radical and genuine change in the socio-economic relationship but also a massive task in educational training.

Where there is a real and unbridgeable gap between the hegemonic (exploiting) group and the subordinate majority, hegemony
operates in a more complex way. In this case, the acculturation of interest takes various forms, leading to the formation and/or strengthening of rival forces, which we have already identified as parahegemonic and counterhegemonic.

I have already mentioned that parahegemony is indispensable to the hegemonic operation in such cases, and that the compatibility of interest in hegemonic-parahegemonic relationships is based on the exchange between collaboration and privilege. This exchange serves the joint and separate interest of the two groups: the preservation of the existing hegemonic order from which both derive their power. But outside the hegemonic group itself, who is in a position to benefit from the hegemonic situation and to be drawn into a parahegemonic relationship? It is logical to assume that such people must come from the privileged class whose education, wealth and social status may be enhanced through collaboration with the hegemonic group. This privileged group may already exist, surviving from the previous hegemonic system, or it may have to be created from scratch within the present one. In practice, it is the usual case that the hegemonic group relies mainly on members of the old privileged class as its allies initially, and tends to discard them later when hegemony becomes more securely established. Only in the situation where completely radical changes are made must the privileged class be created anew.

When members of the privileged class actually join the hegemonic structure to form the parahegemonic group, their structurally-conditioned interests are still further acculturated: it is in their own interest now to preserve the hegemonic system which is their major source of sustenance. At a further level, collaboration appears essential if a further acculturated interest is to be served: it is now perceived as a necessary preparation for the eventual orderly inheritance of power by the parahegemonic group from the existing hegemony. All these characteristics can be observed in the phenomenon of Vietnamese foreignism, as has been shown.

Parahegemony as such is distinctly different from mere collaboration, which is typical of the majority of people living in a hegemonic system: it is regarded as an inescapable condition, a job which has to be done for the sake of survival. In this general case, collaboration contributes to the creation of what may be called structur-
ally conditioned interests. For the majority who remain outside the hegemonic-parahegemonic structure and are generally exploited and disadvantaged, an unbridgeable gap exists between their interests and those of the hegemonic. Where a substantial compatibility of interests does not exist, as in this case, the hegemonic must seek ways of creating the impression of one. This involves advertising the hegemonic interest as the general interest of the people. In this case, ideology serves to generate what Marx called "false consciousness". At the same time, the hegemonic makes some effort to reach out and make concessions to a few peripheral interests of the people. An example of this was seen in the minor community services such as the provision of paramedical clinics, the sinking of wells and the supply of tractors which occurred in rural areas of Vietnam. Token gestures of this sort may be likened to the concessions made to nationalist sentiment by colonial historians, as discussed in the last chapter.

The acculturation of interest in these circumstances involves the absorption and neutralisation of the people's real interests. It entails, as Marx would say, an attempt at mystification. People are led to see the hegemonic interest as their own, regardless of their experiences in their own objective situations. A further acculturation of interest would take place once they had been made aware that only a complete change in the hegemonic order could bring about a genuine satisfaction of their (structurally conditioned) interests. This would involve the desire to form an opposition force with the aim of overthrowing the existing dominant group. It can be seen, then, that though the hegemonic-counterhegemonic relationship is one of opposition, it is based on a shared consciousness of interest: the establishment of hegemony over the same population, even though each operates on the basis of radically different political ideologies.

It can now be stated in summary that ideology, operating in the hegemonic context, is a growing structure whose formative process is represented by a dialectical struggle. This is to say that the structuralisation of ideology, always conducted in the relation of forces, is made possible by human participation motivated by interests which are largely ideologically constructed (whether hegemonised or sectional). Ideological structure, therefore, does not define empirical leadership blindly and automatically. It is the human interests which allow this leadership to be defined by the structure. To realise the structuralisation of ideology and of human interests are
dialectically intertwined is in fact to recognise that structure and social subjects always interact in a dialectical manner. In any realistic hegemonic situation, it is the empirical leadership and its initiatives and rigorous planning which finally shape the model of the struggle, since the relation of forces does not merely consist in the recognition of allies and enemies, but also includes geography, communication, customs, population and military tactics, to name but a few. The task of combining all these factors in the conduct of the struggle for (continued) hegemony is undoubtedly "concentrated, difficult, and requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness" (Gramsci, 1971: 239). A study of the role of human interest and initiatives in the structural formation of ideology cannot be complete without a further exploration of the question of human consciousness to which we now turn our attention.

Forms of Consciousness

The preceding discussion points up the necessity of refining the concept of the 'consciousness of individual subjectivity' presented briefly in the earlier section. What was recognised there as the 'consciousness of individual subjectivity' now turns out to be merely one particular dimension of consciousness, namely the habitual or sunken consciousness. This form of consciousness is both the condition and result of the situation where individuals act as passive subjects of their practised dominant ideology, serving the hegemonic interests. Consciousness in this case is 'sunken' because people practise ideology out of habit, with little or no thinking or self-examination.

The second form of consciousness can be identified as sectional consciousness which refers to the situation where one becomes aware of one's own position and hence, one's own sectional interests. The identification of this sectional consciousness is in fact a recognition that, in practising ideology, one also struggles within it, and in this struggle one becomes aware of oneself and acquires the consciousness of subjectivity. Subjectivity here refers to the condition which allows a person to make an ideological choice which corresponds with his or her own objective position in the structure generated by the hegemonic process. The acquisition of subjectivity is not an easy task: it involves study, organisation and struggle which lead to self-consciousness.
and emphasizes the role of consciousness raising. It plays a crucial part in the structuring of any counterhegemonic force. In the feminist movement, for example, one sees that there has been a high degree of involvement and organisation among the pioneers in order to provide images and concepts with which women can be equipped to achieve and explore the awareness of what they have been experiencing: their own oppression.

The same thing has been observed in the case of Vietnamese autonomism: historiography, or the whole educational system for that matter, was not only a mirror of autonomism but also an instrument used by the leaders to produce the consciousness thereof. The autonomist struggle, seen from this point of view, is first of all a commitment to the task of raising the consciousness of the people about their real conditions under colonial exploitation and oppression.

There is another level of consciousness and consciousness raising which requires attention: the acquisition of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is characterised by an individual's ability to recognise not only his or her own objective situation within the restraints of the hegemonic system, but also the whole relation between situation in the hegemonic dialectic and the objective historical conditions. It also actively involves him or herself in the struggle for a liberated society. The consciousness of one's own sectional interests now must undergo self-examination to raise it to a higher critical level of consciousness. In practice, this process results in either a transcendence of sectional interests or a generalisation of them. The first occurs when an individual renounces his or her parahegemonic association with a reactionary hegemonic group, and joins a historically progressive force in its struggle for a new social order. The second points to the situation where one finds one's own sectional interests possibly in line with the general interests, and has to make an effort to align one's own (group's) struggle with the general struggle for radical social changes.

With critical consciousness, we now go beyond the stage of subjectivity to that of active subjectivity -- a precondition for the achievement of genuine autonomy.
THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE OR THE SOCIOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS?

The discussion so far has shown what is involved in seeing historiography as a genuine ideology, namely as a body of thought both sensitive to and effective within the entire historical context in which it exists. What is true in this respect of historiography is as true of any other intellectual enterprise of comparable involvement, i.e. anything which is really an ideology and not merely a free-floating body of abstract ideas. We have seen that ideology is necessarily a 'contextual entity', something whose form and content -- its structure -- are determined through a complex and permanent dialectical struggle.

By the same token, if historiography or other intellectual enterprises can be seen to represent 'knowledge', then ideology also means knowledge. This conception of knowledge inevitably contains some general implications for sociological theory and the sociological enterprise at large. It raises questions -- and challenges -- about a particular sociological branch which is, as mentioned at the beginning, linked with the theme of this study: the 'sociology of knowledge'. My basic argument in what follows is that this so-called sociology of knowledge is a misappellation springing largely from errors in conceptualisation. The correct terminology should be the sociology of consciousness. I shall illustrate this in three points.

Product or Process?

In the orthodox sociology of knowledge, whose tradition was established by Max Scheler, there has been a general tendency to focus on knowledge as a finished product resulting from a 'process of subjective cognition'. Disregarding the detailed differences in their respective approaches, most sociologists of knowledge in the Scheler tradition converge in perceiving the process in which physical reality comes to be transmitted into social 'knowledge' as comprising two major steps: the social structuring of an order of values, and, on the basis of this order, the selection, definition and organisation by individuals of the mass of facts, or to use Stark's term: the "materials of knowledge", into coherent knowledge (what Stark called "objects of knowledge").
This doctrine, so crucial to the sociology of knowledge, is apparently rooted in the Kantian epistemology in terms of which we must distinguish between *noumena* or things-in-themselves which are humanly unknowable, and *phenomena* or things-as-they-appear-in-experience which are knowable through the faculties of Sensibility and Understanding. According to Kant the basic data or Presentations (*Vorstellungen*) which enter the mind of the knowing subject are first of all organised by the Sensibility (which includes the 'external' senses) under the forms of Space and Time to produce 'Intuitions'. These Intuitions, which are as yet 'blind', are then organised by Understanding under the form constituted by various quite fundamental concepts such as those of cause-and-effect, substance-and-accident, of "empirically real" objects. It would appear that these *a priori* "forms" (of Sensibility and Understanding) in the Kantian framework have been translated into the language of the sociology of knowledge as "axiological layer of the mind" (Stark) or "cognitive orientations" (Merton) or "climate of interest", "value climate" (Sprott) or "meta-theoretical, activistic directedness of the soul" (Lieber) (see Stark, 1958: 113), all of which indicates a principle of order or of selection which is responsible for the structuring of knowledge. Thus, though the sociology of knowledge apparently went beyond the individualist orbit of Kantianism in presupposing the social genesis of subjective consciousness, it remains thoroughly Kantian in that it regards the process of consciousness as a fixed, disparate mental operation in two stages.

In a view such as this, consciousness becomes frozen and reduced to a static object, in fact not unlike a commodity which can be 'seen', 'possessed' or 'held' (see Stark, 1958: 155). The sociology of knowledge in the conventional Rickert-Weber-Scheler tradition fails to offer any systematic explanation of the whole process by which an 'axiological system' comes to emerge and by which it gives rise to 'knowledge'. It is simplistic and deterministic in its approach, merely asserting that thought or knowledge is situated within the socio-historical environment.

It must be emphasized of course that this is not the whole picture of what is officially regarded as the sociology of knowledge. At this point, one may rightly ask: What about the phenomenologist tradition represented by Berger and Luckmann, whose basic and well-known
contention is that "reality is socially constructed, and the sociology of knowledge must analyse the process in which this occurs" (Berger and Luckman, 1966: 13; my emphasis)? Unfortunately, as we shall see, the process which Berger and Luckmann professed to analyse itself turns out to be merely a 'static process'.

It is true that in their "treatise in the sociology of knowledge", Berger and Luckmann were quite successful in making a radical re-definition of the problems and tasks facing this sub-discipline. One of the most important achievements, which is relevant at this point, is their apparent success in overcoming the much-criticised determinism which is profoundly embedded in the traditional approach. In the framework of this recent phenomenologist thinking, the relationship between society and human objects is depicted as much more lively and real. The answers to the problem about the production of knowledge in phenomenological terms are thus certainly more complex and insightful. Again and again, the phenomenologists tell us that their sociology of knowledge is "concerned with a dialectic -- that between social structure and the 'worlds' in which individuals live, that is, the comprehensive organisations of reality within which individual experience can be meaningfully interpreted" (Berger, 1973: 275; cf. Berger and Luckmann, 1966: e.g. 194, 201). This complex dialectic in which subjective meanings become objective facticitics, which are then interpreted to become subjective meanings, is described in Berger's own words as follows:

Externalization is the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the physical and the mental activity of men. Objectivation is the attainment by the products of this activity (again both physical and mental) of a reality that confronts its original producers as a facticity external to, and other than, themselves. Internalisation is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from structures of the objective world into structures of the subjective consciousness. It is through externalization that society is a human product. It is through objectivation that society becomes a reality sui generis. It is through internalization that man is a product of society.

(Berger, 1969: 4)

There is, of course, no doubt that such a view is more complex and 'dialectical' than that suggested by the other branch of the sociology of knowledge. But the process itself described by it is
certainly less than an authentic dialectic: it still comprises three separate consequential moments. In other words, this is a 'static process', if indeed we can use the word 'process' at all. The two approaches, though basically differing on some points, agree on one: consciousness is reduced to a static object, misnamed 'knowledge'. The concept of 'concretisation' (Stark) and 'objectivation' (Berger and Luckman) are equally alien to our concept of 'increasing materialisation' which identifies consciousness or ideology in terms of its own growing material structure.

Any reductionist tendency such as that indicated above to treat knowledge as a fixed, subjective copy of unchanged objective entities, rather than as "a mutually transforming integration, through practice, of the knower and the known" (Hearn, 1974: 139) must be detected, submitted to critical scrutiny and, I would maintain, ultimately rejected. The case for the sociology of consciousness (rather than of knowledge) is founded precisely on this rejection together with the realisation that "consciousness is not only knowledge, just as language is not only indication and naming" and that "In cultural production (and all consciousness is in this sense produced) the true range is from information and description, or naming and indication, to embodiment and performance" (Williams, 1977: 139).

Social Harmony or Political Struggle?

In the 'official' sociology of knowledge, such a politically-loaded concept as 'ideology' is something of a rarity. It was completely absent from Scheler's theoretical construction of the three types of knowledge, which he saw as related to three major 'urges': achievement (scientific or technical knowledge), cultivation (metaphysical knowledge) and salvation (religious knowledge) (Scheler, 1970: 180-1; cf. Ringer, 1969: 424-5; Stark: 34-5). In Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia, it seems to play a central role in his theory under what he called the "total conception of ideology" (situationally-determined view of reality) as opposed to the "particular" one (consciously distorted knowledge). But this concept seemed to collapse later when Mannheim spoke instead of "perspective", avoiding 'ideology' "because of its moral connotation" (Mannheim, 1952: 239).
Among those who claim to study the sociology of knowledge, Stark is perhaps the most open critic of the whole concept of ideology. Seeing it as "something tainted, something shady, something that ought to be overcome and banished from our mind" (1958: 48) and basically related to "egoistical", "selfish and sectional interests" (48, 49), Stark demands the complete rejection of ideology as a concept in the sociology of knowledge. He condemns the "doctrine of ideology" as "no more than a historical antecedent of the sociology of knowledge" (46), as "dealing with a mode of thinking which is thrown off its proper course" (49) and makes an attempt to draw a distinction between "pre-judgment" and "prejudice" or "objective values" and "subjective valuations" (Stark, 1958: 126). On this basis, Stark declares that his sociology of knowledge is really the "sociology of truth", not of error.

While the concept of 'ideology' plays an ambiguous role in Mannheim's framework and is vigorously attacked by Stark, it is completely irrelevant -- or firmly 'bracketed' -- in the view of Berger and Luckman, who take as problematic the common-sense everyday knowledge. What, then, is the implication of such an attitude, a common characteristic of both the conventional and the phenomenologist traditions in the sociology of knowledge? On the surface, surely, it represents a common problem which confronts any social scientist who sets out to study the formation of thought: that of re-defining, and perhaps even rejecting, a much-abused term like 'ideology', which does not usually help much in any attempt at theoretical re-formulation. This is the very problem against which I myself had to take precautions at the beginning of the present study. However, the tendency to repudiate the concept of ideology, so readily embraced in the official sociology of knowledge, cannot be interpreted purely in these terms. Beneath the surface, the avoidance of 'ideology' implies the avoidance of the political dimension. This proves to be the underlying theme running right through the official sociology of knowledge.

This avoidance is shown most clearly in the range of concepts employed by the followers of this sociological sub-discipline. They extend from the more particular concepts such as "relationism" and "perspectivism" (Mannheim), "concretization" (Stark) to the more general, functionalist and Durkheimian notions such as 'socialisation' and 'institutionalisation'. Within the framework of the sociology of
knowledge, the concepts of 'hegemony', 'ideology', 'control' and 'incorporation' are neutralized by the use of such terms as 'socialisation', 'knowledge', 'social order' and 'collective consciousness'. If "language is both the foundation and the instrumentality of the social construction of reality" as Berger (1973: 276) himself remarks, and if this study, based on the Marxist concepts of hegemony and ideology can demonstrate anything, it must be that the domination of apolitical concepts within the official sociology of knowledge itself embodies a highly political position: the sociologist of knowledge faithfully serves the hegemony of the ruling group by constructing an 'apolitical reality'. Consider, for instance, the argument of Berger and Luckmann (1966: 87) for the necessity of having 'institutional meanings' acquired through the process of 'socialisation':

The institutional meanings must be impressed powerfully and unforgettably upon the consciousness of the individual. Since human beings are frequently sluggish and forgetful, there must also be procedures by which these meanings can be reimpressed and rememorized, if necessary by coercive and generally unpleasant means. Furthermore, since human beings are frequently stupid, institutional meanings tend to become simplified in the process of transmission, so that the given collection of institutional 'formulae' can be readily learned and memorized by successive generations.

Of course, 'neutral' concepts such as 'socialisation' should be rejected, not because of their hidden political meaning, but precisely, and most importantly, because of their inability to provide an explanatory mechanism for the sociology of consciousness. Questions like 'how does the autonomy of the individual consciousness arise?' or 'to what extent and under what social circumstances does the ruling order emerge as a powerful and constraining force?' cannot be answered satisfactorily from outside the framework of the political struggle (and certainly not by recourse to arguments based on human 'forgetfulness' and 'stupidity').

The concepts employed in the sociology of knowledge, ranging from 'concretization' to 'institutionalization' are unsatisfactory from this point of view because, again, they concentrate not on the process but on the outcome. Their work is description, not explanation. Williams (1977: 137) justifiably calls this the "study of 'effects'" which he sees as:
predetermined by the assumption of norms which are either, like 'socialisation', abstract and mystifying (since it is precisely the historical and class variations of 'socialisation' which need to be studied) or, as in the study of effects on politics or on 'violence', are themselves 'effects' of a whole active social order, which is not analysed but simply taken as background or an empirical 'control'.

Another related problem which renders the sociology of knowledge incapable of explaining social matters is its preoccupation with the moral issue: it sees its 'duty' as teaching people lessons on relativism:

Our sociology of knowledge thus lays on us a duty and teaches us a technique by which to fulfil it. The duty is that we should first put ourselves into the other person's place before we condemn him; the technique, that we can come to understand his peculiar assertions if we try to look out on to the world through the same axiomata visus which are hidden in his mind, behind his mind's eye; in other words, our sociology of knowledge supplies an argument for and an education in the virtue of toleration...


Ideas such as the above are of course not peculiar to Stark. They are also, in different words and theoretical formulations, those of Mannheim, Rickert, Max Weber, Berger and Luckman. It is not my task here to judge the notion of relativism from both philosophical and historical points of view. It would be sufficient in this context to point out the tie between this concern and its political implication. Again, what does a sociologist of knowledge imply through such a passage if not his or her underlying view of 'society' as representing and bringing about social harmony? In the case of Stark (1958: 127), this is more than a mere implication:

Values influence us -- and influence us decisively -- when we formulate our questions: as for the answers, we are obliged, if we want to be honest, to accept them from reality as reality gives them; we are free to enter into reality by whatever approach-road we choose, but we must always take it as we find it.

There is a peculiar tension, if not an outright contradiction, between objectivism ('socially given values influence us decisively') and subjectivism ('we are free to enter into reality') entangled in the above passage which may be taken as typical of the traditional sociology of knowledge. Again, the social constraint and autonomy of a
social individual are not explained, but simply asserted: how to preserve the status quo by preaching social harmony remains the most urgent task of the sociology of knowledge.

It is clear, then, that within the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, not only is politics absent but struggle also becomes irrelevant. Though recognising the social world consisting of 'multiple realities' (Berger and Luckman, 1966: 35), the sociologists of knowledge come to the final position of thinking that "only one of them can be implemented and elaborated at any one time, and the selection of the one out of many is, in its submission, always so made that a mental universe emerges which will fit in with the pattern of human relationships characteristic and constitutive of the society concerned" (Stark, 1958: 50).

Such a theoretical model provides strictly descriptive knowledge but even in this limited task it shows a serious handicap: what it describes is merely hegemony in its most successful instances. The question which focusses on the break-down of a given social paradigm (let alone the reasons for this breakdown) is completely ignored. Its exclusive focus on the apparent coherence and permanency of the social world and its concern with the perpetuation of social harmony, leads to the condemnation, rather than the explanation, of the 'deviant' and 'abnormal', and failure to see them as potential oppositional forces capable of opening new avenues to the future. Thus, though it seems on the surface quite flexible, historical and situational, the sociology of knowledge is at bottom conservative, rigid, astructural and ahistorical.

While the interpretation of socio-cultural meanings forms a crucial part of sociology, what makes sociology a truly worthwhile intellectual discipline deserving of the name is its capacity to explain not only the genesis of these meanings, but also changes in socio-cultural traditions. Obviously, such a task cannot be carried out effectively within the theoretical model based on the sociology of knowledge. What we require is a method which can lead us to an understanding of the social context from which meanings arise and within which they are firmly embedded.
The case which I have been arguing for the sociology of consciousness is thus supported by a further point: the necessity of incorporating the study of ideology within a framework of political struggle. This contention, of course, derives from the empirical analysis which I have already made. If any theoretical inference can be drawn from this study of Vietnam it is that ideology cannot be divorced from politics, and that if ideology is to be understood properly, its political significance must be fully recognized and theoretically grasped. It is only within a framework such as this that the 'knowledge' of history can -- and must -- be transformed in our understanding into a form of socio-political consciousness. And this is what I have demonstrated in empirical terms.

Historiography, for example, is never the result of isolated thoughts occurring within the private world of a 'socialised' individual. Neither is it an intellectual game in which a person trained as an historian participates, with a given set of ideas and values, perhaps illuminated by a spark of creativity. Rather, it is a process of working and reworking an individual- and group-based political and social consciousness. Historiography itself is a terrain of ideological struggle on which social agents, both writer and reader, acquire social consciousness. The case of historiography is equally true of any other discipline, including, of course, sociology.

Contemplation or Praxis?

It should be clear from the foregoing that the sociology of knowledge, despite its apparently diverse strands, is firmly grounded in a contemplative position: its aim is to describe and achieve understanding through such description. As the phenomenologist would put it:

The method we consider best suited to clarify the foundations of knowledge in everyday life is that of phenomenological analysis, a purely descriptive method and, as such, 'empirical' but not 'scientific', as we understand the nature of the empirical sciences.

The phenomenological analysis of everyday life, or rather of the subjective experience of everyday life, refrains from any causal or genetic hypotheses, as well as from assertions about the ontological status of the phenomena analysed.

(Berger and Luckmann; 1976: 34)
But just as I have shown earlier that this avowed intention of description, 'understanding' and 'toleration' is in fact politically-charged, we can now see that the implied contemplative position of the sociology of knowledge is essentially a delusion. This delusion is basically caused by the contradiction of choice between structural determinism and voluntarism which has never been satisfactorily resolved by the 'official' exponents of this discipline. Its refusal to follow any "causal or genetic hypotheses, as well as... assertions about the ontological status of the phenomena analysed" (ibid.), however impossible it is in actuality, leads not only to its failure to deliver a true understanding of the dialectical process of the acquisition of human consciousness but also to the masking of its committed position as a contemplative one. This points up the character of the sociology of knowledge, both idealist and deeply conservative, which has already been reviewed in the previous section.

The sociology of consciousness, whose basic principles have been outlined, is of course established on completely different grounds. Through the materialist conception which attempts to locate and analyse ideology in terms of its organically growing material structure whose construction is always linked with social action, we now arrive at another principle directly related to the sociology of consciousness: sociology, like historiography itself, can be seen as an authentic ideology and, as such, essentially connected with praxis. To state it in a more precise way, the sociology of consciousness -- inevitably involved, as it is, in praxis and struggle -- must consciously participate in the struggle for the awareness and acquisition of active subjectivity.

Such a struggle must aim first of all at the discovery and understanding of the structural limits and influences which constrain individuals as social subjects. The gaining of consciousness of the structural limitation which is part of the hegemonic process within social formation is the first step in the achievement of freedom. The consciousness of one's own condition within the hegemonic system is a precondition for one's realisation of one's own position in the hegemonic struggle. The final step in the acquisition of active subjectivity is taken through the decision to make a full commitment to the dialectical struggle for the emerging social formation.
CONCLUSION

I have attempted to offer an exhaustive discussion on the nature of ideology -- the theoretical problem which was raised at the beginning of this study. Ideology now emerges not as a 'system of ideas' but essentially as a growing structure which is both conceptual and material. As both a contextual entity and a dialectical struggle, ideology is intimately involved in the process of structuralisation which is in fact the hegemonic process of ideology, and which is always conducted in a complex relation of forces. In much the same way as parahegemony and counterhegemony depend on their parental hegemonic force for their meanings, hegemony cannot acquire its hegemonic position without the support of the others. In this process of ideological structuralisation, leadership, or 'dominant group' is theoretically defined, but whether or when it takes an empirical, concrete shape depends to a great extent on subjective involvement affected by a complex acculturation of human interests. It is through this structuralising process that we acquire our consciousness; which is in itself a complex process -- that always involves a degree of commitment and struggle. The kinds of consciousness one acquires belong to three categories which I have come to identify as habitual, sectional, and critical.

In distinguishing itself from the position of what is officially known as the sociology of knowledge, the sociology of consciousness should be first of all concerned with the task of understanding and identification of human consciousness which, I would argue, should be based on a materialist conception of ideology. Only with such a procedure can we avoid, I believe, falling into the traditional mistake of separating ideology and action, thus arguing for a one-way causal relationship which is in itself a misconception. Since the task of identification of human consciousness always involves a degree of commitment and struggle, the sociology of consciousness is inevitably -- and indeed should be -- also concerned with the active participation in the struggle for critical consciousness.

At this point, there is still one remaining question without the discussion of which this study would be incomplete: that of education. What are the implications of all of what has been said with regard to education? The final chapter will be devoted to the exploration of these.
Notes to Chapter VIII

1. This is the condition which Gramsci said of the working class in the later stage of capitalism.

2. A critique of the phenomenological 'humanisation' of the social science is well presented by Robert Gorman (1975).

3. For an interesting exposition of this point with regard to the phenomenological position represented by Berger and Luckmann, see Litchman (1970: 83-4).
CHAPTER IX

HEGEMONY AND EDUCATION: SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A materialist conception of ideology within the framework of the sociology of consciousness, as presented in this work, must have some bearing on an important issue like education. Since education has been closely related to our whole inquiry in both empirical and theoretical terms, it is appropriate now to devote some space to making these connections explicit. The identification of the nature of ideology as both 'part of the armoury of the contending forces' and the 'battlefield' of the hegemonic struggle leads to the recognition that education functions as a hegemonic apparatus, yet at the same time is itself an important theatre of hegemonic struggle. The following discussion attempts to highlight these two basic characters of the educational system.

EDUCATION AS A HEGEMONIC APPARATUS

In Chapter III, in which I outlined the three educational systems of Vietnam in the contexts of their respective social environments, there already emerged one major point which has been repeatedly confirmed by the empirical evidence of historiography: there is an intimate relationship between an educational system and what goes on in the wider society. To be more precise, the schooling system functions as a hegemonic apparatus for the dominant group. This recognition prompts a further series of observations.

It suggests first of all that education (in its formal sense) is not neutral or value-free. Since school is by its nature structur­alised, and structure, as we have seen, is ideological, school is essentially ideological. Being ideologically bound, school serves to establish and strengthen the hegemony of the dominant group. The process of imparting a selection of socially legitimate or hegemonically influenced knowledge ('the curriculum') normally involves a
careful screening of 'facts' and 'sources'. This is done through a process of inclusion, exclusion, emphasis and neglect. What eventually comes to be approved for inclusion in curricula is practical and concrete in its nature and function: to provide a historical and cultural justification for an existing order.

Any complete account of the school in its service to hegemony must include a serious discussion of what has been called the 'hidden curriculum'. This type of knowledge is defined as "those non-academic but educationally significant consequences of schooling that occur systematically but are not made explicit at any level of the public rationales for education" (Vallance, 1974: 7). Clearly, in the framework which treats education as a hegemonic apparatus, the concept of hidden curriculum can be extended to cover the above-mentioned aspects of exclusion and neglect in the selection, organisation and distribution of educational knowledge. This points to the fact that in the very process of formulation of the overt curricular system, the 'hidden curriculum' is also formed and plays a major part as an agent of hegemonic control. Since the work of exclusion and neglect implies the unimportance of the material excluded or neglected, the process itself is ultimately ideological. Our study of the Vietnamese historiographical material provided a good illustration of this. But this is by no means restricted to historical studies, though this subject, as we have seen, is particularly sensitive to ideological influence. Investigations into other areas of the educational system, such as social studies and even science indicate that there is also a massive presentation of ideology in these subjects through the very existence of a tendency to ignore the importance of conflict and basic argumentation (see Apple, 1971).

Of course, the concept of hidden curriculum also applies to "the contexts of schooling, including the student-teacher interaction unit, classroom structure, the whole organisational pattern of the educational establishment as a microcosm of the social value system" (Vallance, 1974: 6). Since, in my conception, ideology is essentially connected with praxis, the concept of hidden curriculum in this sense is particularly relevant. Because of their unquestioned involvement in day-to-day practice, the dominant norms and values expressed in and through the basic structures of the schooling institution may be even more effective than the overt curricular material itself as
hegemonic instruments. Just as it is through practice that ideology becomes real, a 'hidden' particular view of reality is established and reinforced most effectively through routine practices carried out on a regular and unquestioned basis. Elizabeth Vallance (1974: 5) is correct in noting that:

The functions of the hidden curriculum are performed openly, sometimes by the most mundane and venerable practices of the schools. If these practices constitute a hidden curriculum, it is hidden only in the sense that the function of social control goes unacknowledged in current rationales for public education.

A hegemonic apparatus is not, however, on the same level as a static instrument or tool such as a violin or a chisel. In order to understand the school system properly in its function as a 'hegemonic apparatus', we must consider it not only in its functional-formative role, but also in its transformational process. Just as organic hegemony in practice must involve incorporation, absorption, recognition etc., a realistic educational system must also be flexible, adaptable and receptive to new ideas. It is precisely in its formation and function as a hegemonic apparatus that the school is subject to reform, renewal and transformation. This is illustrated by the fact that education in Vietnam, for example, underwent many reforms under each regime.

However, an adequate understanding of education in its transformational process will not be achieved if it is considered outside the context of its other formative-functional aspect: being itself a 'battlefield' for hegemonic struggle. A discussion of education in this role is also necessary for another reason. A solution has yet to be found to the problem so central to the current analysis: If the structure of school and school-imparted knowledge cannot be ideologically free and hegemonically neutral, does this mean that the schooling system is dominated solely by, and serves only the interests of, the dominant group in society?

EDUCATION AS A THEATRE OF HEGEMONIC STRUGGLE

In the previous analysis of ideology, we were confronted with an extreme difficulty in explaining the nature of the dominant ideology in its process of structuralisation. Being immersed in the totality
of practices, institutions and modes of relationship of the society, the dominant ideology is in one sense certainly in a commanding position. But from another point of view, it does not operate in a social vacuum: within the hegemonic context, it is permanently in a state of struggle. It is within this same framework that we must consider the educational system. As an apparatus for the hegemonic group, education is still not completely under its command. Just as hegemony is not a single phenomenon, but a complex process of dialectical struggle, education cannot be a simple process subject to the single-handed manipulation of a ruling group: it is both a lively context of active struggle, and a struggle itself. This conception of the formal system of education gives rise to a series of important observations.

First, it prevents us from falling into the common error of over-politicising the question of schooling, i.e. that of thinking that it always and necessarily has a class or group orientation. This is what happens when school, and school knowledge, to use a metaphorical expression of Poulantzas (1975: 202), are "considered as if they were political number plates worn by social classes on their backs". This is what we must resist. As it is in fact a battlefield for hegemony, school should be seen in its state of full contradiction and unresolved conflict. The material obtained from the Vietnamese case study demonstrated this most clearly. We saw that Vietnamese schools -- particularly in the late colonial period, when the ideological struggle became most acute -- contained an extremely complex mixture of ideological strands. In particular, it was by looking at the textbooks, teachers and schools that we were able to discern the possible later dominance of an ideology then supposed to be in a counter-, or para-hegemonic position. Outside the context of Vietnam, schools anywhere show the same complex relationships. Student revolts and their suppression, so characteristic of the educational scene in Europe in the 60s and Asia in the 70s, are merely the most dramatic evidence of the constant underlying conflict.

The school, as an institution, is much too complicated to be simply reduced to a mechanism of social (or class) manipulation and reproduction -- as Althusser (1971c) called it, an "ideological State apparatus" -- just as it is inadequately described as a 'socializing agent'. This observation leads to the further recognition that, as both a hegemonic apparatus and a theatre of ideological struggle, the
school has the potential for becoming an agent of social change. This is precisely because in carrying out its hegemonic function, the school does provide basic knowledge and skills which are outside the control of, though relevant to, the hegemonic intention. Literacy, numeracy, basic science and, most importantly, the ability to analyse and conceptualize are what may be distilled from education as its 'disinterested' component. The fact that education cannot be hegemonically neutral does not necessarily mean that it must serve only the dominant class. And to say that school knowledge is 'neutral' to some extent is not necessarily to imply that teaching does not have a purpose. Rather, it means that it can in practice be used for different, even competing, ideological purposes.

Let us take literacy as an example. While agreeing with Postman in the Politics of Reading (1973) that "the teaching of reading is to make students accessible to political and historical myth" (in Entwistle, 1978: 95), one should realise that unless one first becomes a literate person one cannot recognize what is 'political and historical myth', let alone work to reject or eliminate it. Literacy thus has the potential to become both enslaving and liberating. It is a prerequisite for any thoroughgoing hegemonic process, yet it is also the first step along the rocky path to acquiring a fully critical consciousness or active subjectivity. This point has been illustrated in our discussion in Chapter III about the uses of quoc ngu in colonial Vietnam. There I pointed out the difference between the colonial programmes of 'functional literacy' and the Viet Minh objective of 'full literacy' aimed at creating a counterhegemonic organisation among the Vietnamese people.

Science and scientific ideas about history, geography, social studies etc. can be looked at in the same way. Though they are no doubt used for a hegemonic purpose, the subjects themselves contain some basic universal values and can be considered disinterested to a degree. Gramsci (1971: 27) himself strongly argued for the maintenance of a "common basic education, imparting a general, humanistic, formative culture". For him, a socialist revolution -- especially of the kind which grounds its support it the peasant majority like the one in his own country -- would benefit a lot from the 'basic, disinterested' knowledge provided by the traditional school. As he pointed out (1971: 34):
The scientific ideas the children learnt conflicted with the magical conception of the world and nature which they absorbed from an environment steeped in folklore; while the idea of civil rights and duties conflicted with tendencies toward individualistic and localistic barbarism -- another dimension of folklore. The school combated folklore, indeed every residue of traditional conceptions of the world. It taught a more modern outlook based essentially on an awareness of the simple and fundamental fact that there exist objective, intractable natural laws to which man must adapt himself if he is to master them in his turn -- and that there exist social and state laws which are the product of human activity, which are established by men and can be altered by men in the interests of their collective development.

Of course, it is not my purpose to suggest any plan of education here. But the foregoing provides sufficient reason for the argument that the school should be seen in its dialectic relationship with hegemony and social relations. Even while serving the existing regime, the school has the potential for providing an ideological counter-attack to the social order which it serves to maintain. This suggests that any serious attempt to change the order of social hierarchy must include education as a key element of counterhegemonic strategy. "De-schooling' or 'free schooling' are at best romantic ideals, and at worst frankly anti-revolutionary. As Lenin (1937: 472) clearly expressed it:

...in rejecting the old school, bearing a legitimate and necessary hatred for the old school, prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must understand that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old system of memorising, the old drilling methods, we must put the ability to take for ourselves the sum total of human knowledge...

After all, if the degree of materialisation represented the measure of the hegemonic success of an ideology, as my theory has indicated, any plan for radical revolutionary politics must include that of 'structuralising' a counter-ideology via the school system as well as other institutions. The case of Vietnam has indeed provided us with a fine example.
Notes to Chapter IX

1. For discussion of the educational ideas of Gramsci, see Mardle (1977) and Entwistle (1979).

2. Discussions on this point have been taken up by Demaine (1977), Gintis (1976), Apple (1977a), and Sarup (1975).
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