

10th Standard

Social Science-History

The Nationalist Movement in Indo-China

INDO-CHINA:

Comprises of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia — French colony.

Views of Paul Bernard:

Paul Bernard was an influential writer and policy-maker who strongly believed that the purpose of acquiring colonies was to make profits.

- According to him, the development of economy will raise the standard of people and people would buy more goods. The market would consequently expand, leading to better profit for French business.
- According to him, there were several barriers to economic growth in Vietnam, such as large population, low agricultural productivity and extensive indebtedness.
- To reduce the poverty and increase agricultural productivity, it was necessary to carry out land reforms.
- Industrialization was also essential for creating more jobs as agriculture was not likely to ensure sufficient employment opportunities.

Ho Chi Minh Trail:

- The trail symbolizes how the Vietnamese used their limited resources to great advantage.

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- The trail, an immense network of footpaths and roads was used to transport men and material from North to South.
- It was improved in late 1950s and from 1967 about 20,000 North Vietnamese troops came south each month. The trail had support bases and hospitals along the way.
- Mostly supplies were carried by women porters on their backs or on their bicycles.
- The US regularly bombed this trail to disrupt supplies but efforts to destroy this important supply line by intensive bombing failed because they were rebuilt very quickly.

Influence of Japan:

In 1907-08, around 300 students from Vietnam went to Japan to acquire modern education.

1. The primary objective was to drive out the French from Vietnam, overthrow the puppet emperor and reestablish the Nguyen dynasty that had been deposed by the French. For this, they needed foreign help.
2. Japan had modernized itself and had resisted colonization by the West. It had defeated Russia in 1907 and proved its military strength. The Vietnamese nationalists looked for foreign arms and help and appealed to the Japanese as fellow Asians.
3. Vietnamese students established a branch of Restoration Society in Tokyo but, in 1908, the Japanese Ministry of Interior clamped down on them. Many, including Phan Boi Chau, were deported and forced to seek exile in China and Thailand.

Scholars Revolt, 1868:

It was an early movement against French control and spread of Christianity. It was led by officials at the imperial court angered by the spread of Catholicism and French power. There was an uprising in Ngu An and Ha Tien provinces where the Catholic missionaries had been active in converting people to Christianity since the early 17th century. By the middle of the 18th century, nearly 3,00,000 people had got converted. This had angered the people of these provinces and led to the uprising. Though this uprising was crushed by the French, it had inspired the people of other regions to rise against the French colonialism.

Hoa Hao Movement:

It began in 1939 and gained popularity in Mekong delta area. The founder of Hoa Hao was Huynh Phu So. He performed miracles and helped the poor. His criticism against useless expenditure, opposition to the sale of child brides, gambling and the use of alcohol and opium had a wide appeal. The French tried to suppress the movement led by Huynh Phu So and declared him mad, called him the Mad Bonze and put him in a mental asylum. Interestingly, the doctor, who had to certify him insane, became his follower and finally, in 1941, the French doctors declared that he was sane. The French authorities exiled him to Laos and sent his many followers to concentration camps.

Major problems in the field of education for the French in Vietnam:

1. The French needed an educated local labor force, but they feared that once the Vietnamese got educated, they may begin to question colonial domination.

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2. French citizens living in Vietnam (called 'colons') feared that they might lose their jobs as teachers, shopkeepers, policemen to the educated Vietnamese. So they opposed the policy of giving the Vietnamese full access to French education.
3. Elites in Vietnam were still powerfully influenced by Chinese culture. So the French carefully and systematically dismantled the traditional Vietnamese education system and established French schools for the Vietnamese.
4. In the battle against French colonial education, schools became an important place for political and cultural battles. Students fought against the colonial government's efforts to prevent the Vietnamese from qualifying for white-collared jobs.
5. There was a protest in Saigon Girls School on the issue of racial discrimination. The protest erupted when a Vietnamese girl sitting in the front row was asked to move back to allow a local French student to occupy the front seat. The girl refused and was expelled along with other students who protested. The government was forced to take the expelled students back in the school to avoid further open protests.

'Rat Hunt':

1. The modern city of Hanoi got infested with rats in 1902 and was struck by bubonic plague. The large sewers in the modern part of the city served as breeding grounds for rats.
2. To get rid of the rats, a 'Rat Hunt' was started. The French hired Vietnamese workers and paid them for each rat they caught. This incident taught the Vietnamese the first lesson of collective bargaining.

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Those who did the dirty work of entering sewers found that if they came together they could negotiate a higher bounty.

3. They also discovered innovative ways to profit from the situation. The bounty was paid when a tail was given as a proof that a rat had been killed. So the rat catchers began clipping the tails and releasing the rats, so that the process could be repeated over and over again.
4. Defeated by the resistance of the Vietnamese, the French were forced to scrap the bounty programme. Bubonic plague swept through the area in 1903 and in subsequent years. In a way, the rat menace marks the limits of French power and contradiction in their civilizing mission.

U.S. entry into the war:

- US entry into the war proved costly to the Vietnamese as well as to Americans. The phase of struggle with the US was brutal.
- From 1965-1972, many (over 403100) US personnel served in Vietnam out of which 7484 were women. Many died in battle and a large number of people were wounded.
- Thousands of US troops arrived equipped with heavy weapons and tanks backed by most powerful bombers of the time—B52s. The widespread attacks and use of chemical weapons — Napalm, Agent Orange and Phosphorous bombs destroyed many villages and decimated jungles. Civilians died in large numbers.

Effect of the US involvement on life within the US:

Most of the people were critical of the government's policy of war. When the youths were drafted (forced recruitment) for the war, the anger grew.

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Compulsory service in the armed forces could be waived only for university graduates. US media played a major role in both supporting and criticizing the war. Hollywood made films in support of the war. (Example: John Wayne's Green Berets; 1968). Other films were more critical.

(Example: John Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now 1979 reflected the moral confusion that the war caused in the US).

Role of women:

- In the 1960s, photographs in magazines and journals showed women as brave fighters. There were pictures of women militia shooting down planes. Women were portrayed as young, brave and dedicated.
- Women were represented not only as warriors but also as workers. They were shown with a rifle in one hand and a hammer in the other.
- Many women joined the resistance movement. They helped in nursing the wounded, constructing underground rooms and tunnels and fighting the enemy.
- Of the 17,000 youth who worked on the trail, 70 to 80 per cent were women.