

THE VIETNAMESE THROUGH TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY

TON THAT THIEN

1 – Introduction

Vietnam has attracted a great deal of attention, and thousands of books have been written about it in the past fifty years – 1500 between 1975 and 1989 alone -. The majority of these books dealt with the country's anti-colonial struggle and its ramification, in particular with the wars in which Vietnam was involved and their international dimension. These various aspects have been covered rather extensively and exhaustively by many authors. There is therefore no need for me to go over the same ground again here. (For back ground reading material, see bibliography at the end of the chapter).

Consequently, I will not deal with Vietnam's struggle for independence from French colonialism, or with the Vietnam wars and the international politics related to these wars, except incidentally. I will focus instead on one aspect which has been largely neglected by writers on Vietnam the psychological and cultural aspect. In my view, this aspect is particularly relevant to this study, as it is the most important one pertaining to the development of underdeveloped countries.

Economic development depends on the willingness and capacity of people to meet the conditions which produce positive and sustained economic growth. In the first years after the end of World War 2, people involved in the promotion of fast economic development for the underdeveloped countries, mostly economists and technical experts, and western idealists with a guilty conscience prone to blame their own countries and governments , found out very quickly two stark truths: 1) the greatest obstacles to quick development, or to any development at all, are traceable to the attitude of the people of the countries concerned; they are psychological and cultural, and not technical, i.e., not the lack of "know how" and capital; and 2) these obstacles are essentially endogenous, deeply rooted in the histories of the people concerned, and not exogenous, raised by stubborn nostalgic imperialism. One should thus expect Vietnam also to be subject to the same constraints in its economic development. Focusing on them is therefore quite appropriate.

Vietnam has undeniably become fully independent since 1975. It is now the master of its own destiny. France, the United States, the Soviet Union, although perhaps not China, have ceased to be the major players in Vietnam because none of them is seeking, wishing, or being in a position to control the country's destiny and direct its people's conduct any more. Policies intended for Vietnam today and in the future will have to be centered essentially on the Vietnamese , the people – and their political leaders – who will play the major role in the implementation of these policies.

For the policies recommended for Vietnam to be acceptable to the Vietnamese, in particular to all Vietnamese governments, one should ensure that these policies are feasible, i.e., realistic. It is therefore necessary for their formulators to make correct assumptions concerning the willingness and capacity of the Vietnamese and their political leaders to implement such policies. This, in turn, means that a knowledge of what makes the Vietnamese "tick" is essential.

As a matter of common sense, we can assume that, regardless of ideological inclinations, what makes the Vietnamese "tick" today is likely to be what has always made them "tick" during

their two thousand years' history. The present study is based on the belief that such an assumption is valid.

A study of this kind is unavoidably subject to two constraints: 1) it has to be essentially interpretative rather than purely descriptive, and 2) it has to be thematic rather than chronological. Within the limits of these constraints I propose to deal with the following themes:

- 1) How the Vietnamese responded to the challenge of their regional environment before the intrusion of the west, i.e. , from the origin to the mid-XIX century.
- 2) How the Vietnamese responded to the challenge of the west between 1850s and 1975.
- 3) How the Vietnamese responded to the challenge of a totally new international environment since 1975, with the break-up of the communist brotherhood, the end of the cold war, and the collapse of communism in Europe.

2- The country and its people

Vietnam occupies the easternmost part of the Indochinese peninsula, which itself lies on the southeastern edge of continental Asia. It has the shape of a big S hugging shores of the South China sea over 3200 kilometers, from the border of China, in the Gulf of Tonking, to the border of Cambodia, in the Gulf of Thailand. It is Elongated and narrow, extending over 15 degrees north-south, between latitude 8.30° and 23.20° north, but just over one degree west-east, between 102.10° and 103.30° east. In a straight line, a distance of 1650 kilometers separates its northernmost point, Nam Quan gate, on the Chinese border, just below the Tropic of Cancer, from its southernmost point, the Ca-Mau point, about 1000 kilometers north of Singapore. Its widest part extends over 600 kilometers north of Singapore. Its widest part extends over only 50 kilometers inland from Mong-Cay near Hai-Phong on the northern coast, and its narrowest part extends over only 50 kilometers inland from Dong-Hoi, north of Hue.¹

Vietnam occupies a central position in Southeast Asia. The distances from its major cities to other cities of the region are moderate:

Saigon to Singapore: 1100 kilometers

Saigon to Jakarta: 1890 kilometers

Hanoi to Rangoon: 1770 kilometers

Hanoi to manila: 1120 kilometers

It is at the crossroads of the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. The major sea lanes from Europe and the Indian Ocean to northeast Asia pass off its coastline. Indeed, it overlooks the Pacific Ocean, and for this reason, it has been called a " balcony over the Pacific". Below this balcony, its continental shelf stretches over 500,000 square kilometers.

Vietnam's immediate neighbors are China in the north, with which it shares 1150 kilometers of common borders; and Cambodia in the west and south-west, with 930 kilometers of common borders.

With an area of 329,560 square kilometers, Vietnam is slightly smaller than Arizona. It is larger than its Indochinese neighbours, Cambodia and Laos, but is tiny compared to its northern neighbor, China, and ranks slightly below Japan. Compared to its southeast Asian neighbors, Vietnam is of moderate size, coming after Indonesia and Thailand, holding equal rank with Malaysia, and larger than the Philippines and Singapore,(see Table I on page....)

In broad physical terms, one distinctive feature of Vietnam is that is composed of two large bulges in the north and the south linked by a narrow and long waist in the middle, a division reflected in the administrative structure of the country. The respective areas of the three parts are: Northern Vietnam: 116,000 square kilometers; central Vietnam: 140,000 square kilometers, and southern Vietnam: 60,000 square kilometers.

Another distinctive physical feature is that the two large bulges in the north and the south are also two large basins watered by two big rivers: the Red River in the north, of which 510 kilometers out of a total length of 1150 kilometers flow across north Vietnam, through a delta some 15,000 square kilometers wide; and the Mekong River in the south, of which 220 kilometers out of a total of 4220 cross Vietnamese territory and feed water to a delta 40,000 square kilometers wide. Along the length of Central Vietnam is a string of narrow coastal plains, each 2000-3000 square kilometers large, forming pockets separated by hills protruding into the sea, in particular in three areas: the Deo Ngang Pass, between Ha-Tinh and Dong-Hoi; the Hai-Van Pass, between Hue and Danang; and the Deo Ca Pass, between Qui-Nhon and Nha-Trang. (See map I on page....). Apart from the deltas and coastal plains mentioned above, three quarters of Vietnam's territory are occupied by mountainous terrain.

In terms of climate, Vietnam lies entirely in the subtropical zone and is under the influence of the monsoons. Mean monthly temperatures and annual average rainfall for the three parts of the country are as follows:

<u>Cities</u>	<u>Coldest month</u>	<u>Hottest month</u>	<u>Annual rainfall</u>
Hanoi	16.5 ^o	28.8 ^o	1763 mm
Hue	19.7 ^o	29.4 ^o	2867 mm
Saigon	25.8 ^o	28.9 ^o	1910 mm

Monsoon rains sweep from the northeast to the southwest in May-October, and from the southwest to the northeast in November-April. Average humidity during the rainy season is 90%.

In terms of resources, agriculturally, the country's areas of arable land are rather limited. They occupy only 95,000 square kilometers, one third of the country's territory. On the other hand, the forested areas are extensive and contain a large variety of species, including many precious ones, while the surrounding seas are rich in fish as well as crustaceans, in particular in shrimps. In terms of mineral resources, the country is known to be relatively well endowed also; its soil is known to contain some 50 kind of minerals, including lead, antimony, gold, nickel, bauxite, iron, tin, copper, and especially sizeable reserves of coal and oil.

In terms of population, with 58 million (1991) Vietnam ranks fourth in Asia and second in Southeast Asia. It is behind China, Indonesia, and Japan; places higher compared to the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore; and again, dwarfs its Indochinese neighbors, Cambodia and Laos. (see Table I on page.....).

According to the Vietnamese planners, if the growth rate could be brought down from 2.4 % in 1976 to 1.7 % million in 1985, and to 1% in 1991-2000, Vietnam will reach 75 million in 2000 and 100 million in 2050. If population grows unchecked at the annual rate of 3%, then it will reach 100 million in the year 2000 and 400 million in the year 2050.² However, population already reached 68 million in 1991. It is currently growing at the rate of 2.2 % and is expected to reach 70 million by 1992.

Racially, like every other country, the Vietnamese population is mixed. It contains some 60 ethnic groups belonging

TABLE I
ASIAN AREAS AND POPULATIONS (1991)

<u>Countries</u>	<u>Areas</u>	<u>populations</u>
Indochina:		
Vietnam	327,000	68.0
Laos	231,000	4.2
Cambodia	181,000	8.2
Southeast Asia:		
Burma	670,000	42.5
Indonesia	1,904,345	182.5
Malaysia	329,589	18.3
Philippines	299,700	62.8
Singapore	587	3.0
Thailand	514,000	54.6
China	9,600,000	1,150
Japan	377,000	124

Source: compiled from Asia Week, 28 June 1992.

TABLE II
Vietnam's ethnic groups (1986)

Group	Size
Viet (or kinh)	46,000,000
Hoa (or Han)	930,000

Tay (or Tho)	900,000
Thai	760,000
Mien(or Kho-me)	700,000
Muong	680,000
Nung	560,000
Hmong (or Meo)	400,000
Dao	350,000
Gia-ral	185,000
E-de	140,000
Ba-na	110,000

Source: Georges Condominas, in Ruscio, Vietnam, op, cit. p.43

to two predominate streams: mongoloids moving down from the north and malaysians moving up from the south. The Vietnamese, or kinh (residents of the lowlands) predominate, with 80% of the total. The others are the Hoa, or Han-Vietnamese of Chinese origin - and the thuong (residents of the highlands). There are twelve groups numbering over 100,000 each. (see Table II, on page....). The smallest groups, about a dozen, have 1000 members or less each. (Condominas, in Ruscio, p. 43)..³

Religiously, the majority of the Vietnamese have adopted the traditional “ tam giao” (the three religions – Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism -). All Vietnamese adopt basic confucianist moral values although Confucianist political institutions have long been discarded and confucian social values have much weakened. Confessionally, the majority practice Buddhism, while small minorities have adopted Cao Dai or Hoa Hao, two religions born in the south. There is also a sizeable catholic community. At present, there are no exact figures concerning the sizes of the Cao-Dai and Hoa-Hao. They are estimated to number 2.5 million each. The Catholics number 5 millions (?) in 1989 according to one estimate. (Lange, in Ruscio, p.104).⁴ of course, concurrently with these main forms of worship, animism and superstition continue to exert a strong influence on the masses.

III – Vietnam from the origin to the early XIX century

In the 1850, at the time of the French first intervention, Vietnam had achieved the status of a recognized separate state and regional power. Its struggle to achieve this status extended over 18 centuries. Of these, ten were spent on struggling to resist pressure from the north, avoid total absorption by China, and win a separate statehood; and eight to expand southward from the Red River delta to the Mekong delta and gain the status of a major power of the region. During this long period, Vietnam rejected Chinese rule, but adopted Chinese culture. It escaped the status of a Chinese province, but became a “ little China”.

The uncertainty concerning Vietnam’s origin has made the Vietnamese very sensitive to China’s claims to not just of suzerainty over their country, but more dangerously, to its annexation. Until the 1960s the prevailing view concerning the origin of the Vietnamese people was based essentially on Chinese records. According to this view, the Vietnamese are the descendants of the Hundred Yue(Viet) tribes whose original home was in the area around the Tung-Ting lake and the Yang-Tzu river, in central China. These tribes were driven south under the pressure of stronger

neighbors, and one of them settled in present northern Vietnam, mingled with the local people there, to found the kingdom of Nam-Viet (Nan Yue: Yue of the south). Thus, the Vietnamese people is the product of an immigration of people from China, a view obviously full of unpleasant and dangerous implications for Vietnamese proud nationalists.

In the late 1920s, certain archeological finds, especially of bronze drums, in the Dong-Son (Than- Hoa area) pointed to the possibility of the existence of an early civilization inside northern Vietnam. Since the 1960, Vietnamese archeologists have tried hard to find more conclusive evidence to support the view that Vietnam had existed as a state and a civilization long before the Han invasion and conquest in the second century B.C. They were anxious to prove that the Vietnamese popular assertion concerning “four thousand years of civilization” under the Hung-Vuong dynasty of the Van-Lang state, and under King An-Duong of the Au-Lac state, are not just legends in Vietnam’s history, but true stories provable by facts.

The Hanoi scholars’ efforts have been partially successful. Their archeological finds since 1960, joined to the discovery of bronze drums at Dong-Son four decades earlier, warrant the view that the Vietnamese legendary states did exist, with undeniable state structures and a “distinct and brilliant civilization”, between 2878 and the third century B.C., and very possibly as far back as 4000 B.C. The Hanoi scholars call this “the Red River civilization”. (Phan Huy Le, pp. 162-165).⁵ They have thus proved that the cradle of the Vietnamese people is the Red River delta and not the Yang-Tzu river area, and could feel more comfortable vis-a-vis their gigantic northern neighbor. (see map I).

But the Hanoi scholars did not dispute the fact, recorded in Chinese annals, that in the year 111 B.C. Vietnam was invaded and conquered by the Han under Emperor Wu-Ti, annexed outright to China, and given the name of Giao-Ghi. It will remain under Chinese direct rule for the next 1050 years. This, obviously, is a capital fact in the history of Vietnam, from every point of view, particularly from the psychological and cultural one.

Politically, Giao-Chi was administered as a province of China in every way, like any other province of China, by Chinese officials, according to Chinese rules. The Chinese naturally exploited Gia-Chi economically. But, on the other hand, they also brought to its people a form of higher culture and civilization. A number of good officials introduced new crops and better agricultural techniques, in particular the planting of rice and the use of the plough; improved the educational and cultural level of the people, organizing examinations, teaching good manners and marriage rules. The work of these Chinese officials was acknowledged by the people, who built temples to honor and worship them.

Readiness to learn and learning quickly is one basic trait of the Vietnamese. Another is stubborn clinging to what they think is “the summum of intelligence”. The combination of these factors explains why the most important thing introduced by the Chinese during their long rule. Confucianism, has taken such a strong hold in Vietnam. The Vietnamese’s views on the cosmos, society, men and their mutual relations, government, ethics, and much else, bore the stamp of Confucianism, which stressed tao li (the li of tao, the moral li) at the expense of wu li (the li of wu, the li of things, the physical li). As a result, good ethics and brilliant literary achievements were valued highly while economic performance was disdained. This contrasts with the Japanese brand, which accepted both dori (moral li) and butsuri (the li of things, the physical li) – a view which opens

the way to modernization and economic development -. The Sung Confucianism stressed particularly the need for a centralized government , a strong bureaucracy, and an absolute ruler.

In addition to Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism also came to Vietnam by way of China. But Buddhism preached renunciation and Taoism mysticism. Neither stressed the necessity of studying and understanding wu li. the li of things, or simply science, a basic condition of modernization and economic development.

Until the West, through France, exerted its impact on Vietnam, Chinese culture extensively and intensively fashioned Vietnam, molding it in the image of China. Any traveler who has visited both Vietnam and southern China was surely struck by the resemblance between the landscapes, as well as the customs prevailing in those regions: the rice fields and farming techniques, the villages surrounded by bamboo hedges, the same worship of ancestors and spirits, the acceptance of the basic confucianist moral precepts, etc...

While accepting , or even absorbing Chinese culture and techniques, the Vietnamese resolutely reflected total absorption by China. This rejection took the form open rebellions caused by excessive oppression, economic exploitation, or abuse by bad officials during the period of Chinese direct rule, as in 40-44 A.D under the Trung sisters; and in 248 under Trieu-Au, also a woman. Or it took the form of open war resulting from Chinese attempts to force Vietnam into abject submission, or to annex it outright after Vietnam had become independent in 939, under Ngo Quyen. Thus Vietnam fought several major wars against China; in 1075 under the Ly dynasty, against the Sung; in 1285 and 1288, under the Tran dynasty, against the Mongols; in 1418-1427, under the Le dynasty, against the Ming; in 1788-1789, under the Tay-Son, against the Tsing. The victory in 939 established Nam-Viet as a distinct and independent state. The other victories enabled Vietnam to preserve this status. But after each victory, the Vietnamese ruler was careful to avoid provoking China by acknowledging Chinese suzerainty over Vietnam, and this means accepting the Chinese model also.

One basic reason of Vietnam's success in its wars against China is that, once distance, terrain, climate, and their determination not to submit had neutralized the advantages enjoyed by China as a big state, the mastery of Chinese culture and techniques gave the Vietnamese equality with China. They were familiar with Chinese thinking and techniques, including military strategy and related matters, they had adopted and mastered the Chinese model, and knew how to cope with the Chinese. Unfortunately, as we shall see later on, this success bred complacency and will make them feel completely at a loss when confronted with the non-Chinese models represented by the cultures and techniques of the western nation.

Until them, however, the mastery of the Chinese model will make Vietnam a strong state capable of both resisting Chinese pressures in the north, and defeating weaker neighbor states and expanding into the south. This expansion is known to the Vietnamese as Nam Tien - "the march to the south" -.

Nam Tien is a great epic of Vietnam's history. Begun in the X century, this march will cover a thousand kilometers and extend over eight centuries. In the process, it will destroy one state - Champa -, swallow up a large chunk of another - Cambodia -, and carry the Chinese model from the

Red River delta to the shores of the Mekong and the Gulf of Thailand, and for a short time, right up to the borders of Thailand itself.

Less than one hundred years after Vietnam achieved independence, in 1020, the Ly, successors of the Ngo staged a major military expedition against Champa. By 1069 they had extended the borders of Giao-Chi, rebaptised Dai-Viet, to Quang-Tri. The next dynasty, the Tran, pushed Vietnam's borders to the latitude of Hue, which became Vietnamese in 1370. In 1402 Quang-Nam and Quang-Ngai were taken by the short-lived Ho dynasty. Then in 1470, the next dynasty, the Le, definitively broke the power of Champa by dividing it into three small kingdoms. The next dynasty, the Nguyen, completed the absorption of this country in less than one century. Phu-Hen (Qui-Nhon) was founded in 1611, Dien-Khanh (Nha-Trang) in 1653, and Binh-Thuan (Phan-Thiet) in 1697. Thus ended Champa. Beyond Champa spread the vast, fertile and beckoning expanses of Cambodia. (See map II).

Less than five years after the formal founding of Dien- Khanh, the first Vietnamese settled in Bien-Hoa, on Cambodian territory. Between 1658 and 1759, what is present day southern Vietnam was conquered by the Nguyen. Gia-Dinh(Saigon) and My-Tho were occupied in 1679; Ha-Tien in 1708; Vinh-Long, Sadec, Chau-Doc in 1759; and Ca Mau in 1780. (See map II)

In the next fifty years, civil war prevented the Vietnamese from seeking further gains. But after the war ended the march resumed, this time westward under Minh-Mang (1820-1840), who changed the name of the country from Viet-Nam to Dai-Nam (Greater Vietnam), Cambodia was annexed and placed under Vietnamese direct administration. Vietnam's borders were extended right up to the borders of Thailand. But Cambodian resistance was too fierce. And the Vietnamese troops and officials had to evacuate the country and pull back to its present-day borders to wait for a better time to resume their march forward. For this, they will have to wait another 130 years, as in the meantime, France had come between Vietnam and Cambodia, and brought both countries under its rule. It should be added that France had come between Vietnam and Thailand also, as Vietnam's expansion into Cambodia had brought it into direct contact, strong competition and armed conflict, with that country.

A glance at map II (on page....) shows that economics, and more specifically, the constraint on an economy based essentially on agriculture, was a major reason of Vietnam's territorial expansion at the expense of Champa and Cambodia. A social crisis had been deepening since the XII century (Nguyen The Thanh, p. 515).⁶ A growing population, an agricultural space limited to the narrow Red River delta, and a state of the arts permitting only low productivity made it imperative for the Vietnamese rulers to acquire more, and especially for more fertile land, constantly to feed their people and avoid social unrest. For this they could push only southward against Vietnam's weaker neighbors.

Statistics on Vietnam's population growth before 1900 are almost non-existent. We have only a few figures scattered here and there. Fragmentary as they are, they tell us that Vietnam's population expanded from about one million at the time of Giao-Chi in the first century (Phan Huy Le, p. 87) ⁷ to 5.2 million at the time of the Ming invasion in the early XV century – according to Chinese records (Nguyen Khac Vien, p.54)⁸ -, and to 13 million at the end of the XIX century – according to Hanoi scholars (Vu Kien and Vu Ngoc Binh, in Ruscio, p.32)⁹ -. (Extrapolation from the sizes of the armies raised by the various rulers during that time (250,000 by Le Loi in his fight against

the Ming in 1418-1427, and 240,000 by Nguyen Hue against the Tsing in 1788-1789, for example, can tell us more, but that is not necessary for our purposes here).

The following figures give a measure of the migration of Vietnamese, mostly poor peasants, to the south. Between 1658 and 1696, 40,000 households (some 200,000 people) had settled in the newly acquired lands. By 1880, the number of settlers there had increased to 1,679,000 people. (Masson, pp. 29 and 94).¹⁰

On the other hand, considering the inter-state practice prevailing at the time, instead of being imperialist, Vietnam itself could very well have been a victim of imperialism, of China, Champa, or Cambodia. Indeed, in the early part of the XV century, Vietnam almost ceased to exist when it was annexed outright for two decades by China under the Ming. As regards Champa, before its power was finally broken by Vietnam in the XV century, it was a serious threat to Vietnam. Finally, Cambodia had been a great regional power until the XII century when it was known as Funan.

Vietnam's Nam Tien took place during a period of prolonged civil war. This war is another major fact in the country's history. It lasted for over two hundred years (from 1600 to 1800), divided the country neatly into practically two states: Xu dang trong (the South) and Xu dang ngoai (the North) and left deep marks on the country and its people several decades after it ended, and even today.

In Vietnam's history the war is known as: Trinh-Nguyen phan tranh (the Trinh-Nguyen struggle). In typically Vietnamese fashion, it was a fight between two related, but fiercely rival, families and their followers, both professing to uphold the same values (confucian honor and defense of the authority of the legitimate monarch) and to seek the same aims (carrying out the will of Heaven, and answering the wish of the people).

The Trinh-Nguyen phan tranh was, however, not a two-way fight, but rather a three-way one, as between 1771 and 1802 the Nguyen in the South had to face a rebellion of the Tay-Son, who after having temporarily overthrown the Nguyen, moved north and overthrew the Trinh and the Le emperor as well. One can imagine what this kind of many-sided and constant warfare did to the country and its people. In fact, after the Nguyen had defeated all their enemies and laid claims to the throne, they had to rebuild a tattered county in unsettled conditions.

First, the dynasty being new, its authority was challenged from many quarters, especially in places far away from the capital (Hue). The court had to spend a great deal of time and energy putting down rebellions in the North and in the South. Next, after so many years of bellum osmium contra omnes, the country had to be rebuilt from scratch, at the precise time when everyone - officials of the court, or common people - was physically and mentally exhausted. And yet, for reconstruction, heavy demands were made on them: new efforts and new ideas from the mandarins, and new contributions in labour and taxes from the people. And with all that, the country, from Emperor down, and especially the confucian mandarins of the court, had to cope with increasing pressure, then with aggression, by the West represented by the French.

4- Vietnam and the west (1800-1975)

The intrusion of the French forced the Vietnamese to face a completely new problem: how to cope with a totally alien, non-Chinese nation? Vietnam, as “little China”, could cope with “big China”. But France was not a China; it was totally different from China, and worse still, it was not only different, but stronger, than Vietnam and even than China - the superpower at the time in Vietnamese eyes -. Against the French, the Chinese model based on the confucian Weltanschauung ceased to be effective. What else to put in its place? This was the big problem for the Vietnamese then, and for the next 150 years.

The problem contains two basic questions: 1) how to fight French domination? 2) how to modernize Vietnam? In Vietnamese, the question, put in a nutshell is: “phu, coung” (power and wealth). The two are naturally intimately linked: “coung” – military power – must be based on “phu” – wealth, understood in a broad sense, meaning economic power -).

The necessity of finding correct answers to the above questions had already arisen under Gia-Long (1802-1820), but it became vital under his successors, Minh-Mang (1820-1840), Thieu-Tri (1840-1847), and Tu-Duc (1847-1843). Unfortunately, Gia-Long had missed the great opportunity for change to prepare the country for meeting the new challenge successfully. He had put his successors on a track from which they could not deviate. Instead of westernizing, he chose to revert resolutely and fully to the past, resumed the Chinese connection, and clamped the Chinese mold firmly on his country. He initiated a policy of “massive assertion of confucian values and institutions”. Minh-Mang continued that policy “with a vengeance”, and Tu-Duc also opted unreservedly for “extreme confucian conservatism”. (Marr.pp.22-28)¹¹

It has been suggested that Gia-Long’s behavior conformed to “a law of development” of Vietnam until the middle of the XIX century: “As Vietnam becomes politically independent from the old Chinese colonizer, its sinisation intensifies”. (Masson, p.49)¹². As we shall see, this will remain true even beyond the mid XIX century. In any case, the emperors and their courts stubbornly clung to the Chinese model in spite of the warnings and the repeated pleadings of Vietnamese who had been abroad and seen the world.

The best known preacher of reforms of that time was Nguyen-Truong-To. He had been to Hongkong, Singapore, Penang, Europe, and seen the modern world. His great curiosity, sharp mind, and keen sense of observation allowed him to perceive with great vision what should be done to modernize Vietnam. In more than 20 memorials to the Emperor he outlined a remarkably comprehensive plan for the modernization of the country: survey of the country’s resources, and development of mining, agriculture, commerce, industries, promotion of foreign investments: reform of finances, education, political institutions, etc....

Tragically for Vietnam, Tu-Duc, who as an absolute monarch could steer the country in any direction he wished, took no decision, but referred the proposals to the court, and his mandarins, whose minds were cast in the solid Chinese Confucians mold, and who, especially, wanted security of position, peace and tranquility, found all kinds of pretexts to turn down Nguyen-Truong-To’s proposals. They called them “wild talk”, “impractical”, subversive”, “irrelevant”, “untimely”, “unnecessary”, “matters requiring serious study”, etc....(Truong Ba Can, pp.63 and ff).¹³ The result was easy defeat by the French, and the subjection of the country to humiliating French rule in 1884.

But more importantly, the country's modernization will be retarded for more than a century, and become much more difficult.

In 1885, French high-handed replacement of Vietnam's reigning emperor (Ham-Nghi) by a man of their choice sparked a rebellion of the Vietnamese scholars, the Can Vuong (Support the King). This movement, led by the highly respected Phan Dinh Phung, was to last for a decade (to 1895, when Phan Dinh Phung died), but it could not be more than a demonstration of heroism and observation of Confucian ethics. However, it was not futile. It carried a lesson: the strongest spirit and best value cannot defeat good guns, and the making of good guns requires the mastery of western techniques which, in turn, requires people with a western education and a nation with new institutions.

The lesson was applied by Phan-Boi-Chau and Phan-Chu-Trinh. Both were highly respected confucian scholars – an essential condition of leadership at the time -. But they were reformists and wanted to follow a new path, or so they thought, for although they were greatly stimulated by the example Japan, they could not completely break away from following a Chinese model, although this model was a new one.

The Vietnamese Confucian scholars were acquainted with western science and culture, geography, history, the natural sciences, sociology, politics - not directly through the reading of western works, but through the reading of Chinese translations, and in particular, of the writings of the prominent Chinese reformist scholars Liang-Chich'ao and K'ang-Yuwei. These constituted the Tan Thu (new books) which replaced the Confucian Tu Thu (four books) and Nqu Kinh (Five Jings), and other Chinese traditional literary works.

The other major stimulant to the Vietnamese scholars' activism was the spectacular rise of Japan to the status of a modern nation, and especially, its resounding defeat of Russia. The Japanese victories of Port Arthur and Tsushima "woke the scholars from a dream; they clapped their hands and shouted for joy; From 1905 onward, the whole nation turned its mind towards Japan;.... the general belief among the intellectuals was that if Japan can do it, we can do it too". (Nguyen-Hien-Le, pp.23-26).¹⁴

The upshot of the stimulation by China and Japan was the founding of the Duy Tan (Modernization) movement with its twin manifestations: the Dong Du (Go East) and the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc (Modern Scholl). Both reached their height point in 1906-1907. The Dong Du, brainchild of Phan-Boi-Chau, aimed at giving young Vietnamese military training by sending them to Japan. The Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc, brainchild of Phan Chu Trinh, aimed at introducing the country to the modern world through a modern education - the acquisition of relevant knowledge in various fields, including commerce and industry.

On political reforms and method, there was a sharp difference of views between Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chu Trinh. Phan-Boi-Chau favoured military action and constitutional monarchy while Phan-Chu-Trinh favored a period of cooperation with France and republicanism. There were no clear schemes of economic development - at least of a realistic kind - in the thinking of either man. Such schemes would be utopian in any case. As Phan-Chu-Trinh saw very clearly from the beginning, and as Phan-Boi-Chau recognized late in his life (during his house arrest), nothing could be accomplished unless the educational, moral, and civic levels of the people were raised.¹⁵

In concrete and immediate terms, all the above movements achieved nothing. The movements were short-lived, lasting only a few years (1903-1908), and Phan-Chu-Trinh was arrested in 1911, while Phan-Boi-Chau was arrested in 1925. The only results of all the above agitations were that they generated a great deal of excitement, kept the nationalist spirit alive, and showed more clearly that the major national problems still awaited effective solutions. This is a challenge for the next generation.

The new, post World War I, generation, was not heavily burdened with the full weight of the past. In fact, while its members were as anti-colonialist as their elders, they were decidedly anti-traditionalist. They were no longer brought up on the Tu Thu and Ngu Kinh, or on the essays in Chinese of Liang Chich and K'ang Yuwei, but acquired their modern ideas directly through the medium of French and in French schools either in Vietnam or in France.

The new generation was a Tay Hoc (western-educated) generation. Its members drew their revolutionary ideas and methods from the West, either from the liberal West, or from communist Russia. Yet, they could not escape from the shadow of China. An examination of the platforms of the two major parties and their leaders' pronouncements makes this point clear.¹⁶ The western liberal model adopted by Vietnam's major nationalist party - the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (VNQDD)- borrowed heavily from Sun Yat Sen's ideas and the Kuomintang's organizational pattern. Likewise, the communist model introduced by Ho-Chi-Minh to Vietnam came via China. It was Lenin's brand of socialism-bolshevism - as interpreted by Stalin and Mao-Tsetung. On the other hand, if those platforms were long on political and social revolutionary strategy and tactics, they were very short on the more complex, but more fundamental, problem of modernization and economic development.

The platform adopted by the VNQDD on its foundation in 1927 had only this reference to economic matters: "[The party was founded] with the aim of bringing happiness and progress to the whole people". In a letter to the French Resident General, Nguyen-Thai-Hoc, founder and leader of the Party, requested authorization to start a magazine with the purpose of "admonishing his compatriots to study agriculture, industry and commerce instead of seeking purely honorific diplomas". (Hoang Van Dao, pp.27 and 37-38).¹⁷ But he went no further.

The platform of the CPV on its foundation in 1930 was simply a statement of revolutionary social policy. Its 10 points contained no plan on economic development, and its summary program contained only these laconic four words "Develop industry and agriculture".¹⁸ The basic economic ideas of the party were contained in the basic textbook which Ho wrote in 1926 for his disciples, Duong Kach Menh, and in a reference to Ho in a speech by Pham-Van-Dong on the first anniversary of Ho's death. In Duong Kach Menh, in the section on economics, which took up 7 out of the 26 pages of the booklet, Ho dealt exclusively with the question of cooperatives. (Tuyen tap I, pp.233 and ff).¹⁹ Obviously, in his eyes, this is the ideal form of economic organization, which, incidentally, was to be the main economic idea of the CPV after 1954 in the North, and after 1975 in the South. And in Pham Van Dong's speech it was pointed out that "that revolutionary line applied by President Ho..... is that of national democratic revolution transforming itself into socialist revolution without passing through the capitalist stage".²⁰

Ho's position was simply a restatement of Lenin's thesis on the National and Colonial Question at the second congress of the Comintern in 1920. Lenin said in that thesis:

“The Communist International should advance the proposition, with appropriate theoretical foundation, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage”.(Lenin,p.59)²¹

This is what made Ho cry in his room in Paris and become an unconditional Leninist. Ho had joined the French Socialist Party in 1918 because it was anti-colonial, but he had to grapple painfully with the insoluble problem of how a pre-capitalist country like Vietnam could become even socialist. In Lenin's thesis he thought he found the solution to his troublesome problem. He did not pay attention at all to the sentence following the above statement. In it Lenin said “the necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by experience.” In other words, Lenin did not tell Ho and his followers in the CPV how to move to communism directly from pre-capitalism without passing through the capitalist stage.

This problem seemed minor to Ho then, but it was to plague the CPV after 1975, especially after the spectacular demonstration that the Soviet experiment in jumping over the capitalist stage had proved to be a dismal failure.

Until World War II, then, the Vietnamese had not come up with any effective solution to the problem of modernization and economic development. Undoubtedly, even having theories would serve no purpose if they had no power to put these then war broke out, and soon there would be Japanese control on top of the French. The war, however, will give the Vietnamese the big opportunity they had been seeking for a century. It made it possible for them to achieve independence.

Unfortunately, independence was achieved through two very costly wars, worse still, it came together with the division of the country into two (North, South) then into three (North, South, South Vietnam National Liberation Front). The Geneva Agreement of 1954 and the Paris Peace Agreement of 1973 only dramatically gave formal recognition to this division. Vietnam was back where it was 200 years earlier, to the time of Trinh-Nguyen-Tay Son, with the same destructive consequences: devastation of the country and exhaustion of its people.

One of the major features of the wars in which Vietnam was involved with France (1946-1954) and with the U.S. (1954-1975) was the clear cleavage of the Vietnamese not only along political and social, but also along economic lines: communism and rigid central planning in the North versus anti-communism and capitalist free market in the South. This cleavage was to have far reaching consequences. But these consequences will be felt only years later. For the time being, in 1975, the cleavage was formally in favor of the communists.

5 - Facing the challenges of a new world (1975.....)

In winning total victory and extending their total control over the whole country, the communists won the exclusive and unfettered right to lead Vietnam in the direction they wished. For the first time in 130 years, a group of Vietnamese was in a position to put into practice its ideas

on how to solve the fundamental problems of Vietnam. Independence being no longer an issue, the remaining fundamental problem was: How to modernize the country? This implies two questions: 1) what model to choose? and 2) where to look for support?

To the leadership of the CPV the clear and certain answers to the above question lie in the resolute adoption of the socialist road, the full application of marxism-leninism, and alliance with the Soviet Union. In the euphoria born of an easy victory, they were confident of success. They indulged in "voluntarism", believing that if with determination they could defeat two world powers, they would be quite capable of carrying out the accelerated "socialist transformation" of the whole country and accomplish economic development with great ease in the same way. Reality was to teach them otherwise.

The basic decision to embark fully on a marxist-leninist socialist road was taken at the fourth Party National Congress in December 1976. The Congress decided "to advance rapidly, resolutely and solidly to socialism", to move "directly from small-scale production to large-scale production without passing through the capitalist stage", to give priority to heavy industry, and to turn Vietnam into a socialist country with modern agriculture and industry "within twenty years". Very ambitious targets were set, although, as Le Duan admitted, "war has destroyed practically everything built by the people at the cost of very great efforts, retarded our development by three five-years plans, and wrought havoc on management".²²

Parallely to the accelerated industrialization of the country, the communist government decide also to step up the acceleration of the "socialist transformation" of the South to bring it into line with the North. The determined eradication of all traces of capitalism - big, medium, small -, was a basic plank of the party since 1930, and a campaign to that end was pushed very vigorously in 1976-1978. Within a relatively short time, the communist government had dismantled the economic and financial structures of the South and driven the southern professionals to either joining the ranks of the "boat people" or becoming irrelevant in their own country. In the process the productive potential not only at the South, but also of the whole country, was destroyed, for economically, the South was far more advanced and better equipped both in material and human terms than the North.²³ If the CPV leadership had not killed, they certainly had seriously crippled, the goose that laid the golden eggs. And this, because they had a blind faith in Stalin and Mao.

For more than 30 years the CPV had lived "with the millstone of Stalinist-Maoist ideology around its neck", and it arbitrarily applied "the Stalinist-Maoist model of development" to the South, says Vo-Nhan-Tri. The CPV leadership thus made the same leftist mistakes "which bear resemblance to the ones committed by Mao". (Vo-Nhan-Tri, pp. 181, 62 and 45).²⁴ The "law of sinisation" evoked by Masson for Vietnam until the mid-XIX century still operated, more than a century later.

By 1980, it became obvious that the course pursued by the party had led to disaster. This was acknowledged by the party leadership at the fifth National Congress in March 1982. At this Congress, the same Pham Van Dong who was full of self-confidence when he presented the plan in 1976 asked, rather bemusedly "if the socialist revolution line and the socialist economic construction line put forward by the fourth congress were correct; why is it that after five years of implantation, we have not achieved the economic results which the country demanded and which the potential of the country should make possible?" And he gave the answers: subjectiveness,

hastiness, setting too big tasks and too high targets, clinging to policies which have ceased to be suitable, in particular those of bureaucratic command and state subsidy, and above all, giving first priority to heavy industries.²⁵

In the view of the CPV leadership, the economy was in a shambles because the policies were ill-conceived by the leadership or incorrectly applied by cadres who were weak and made mistakes, not because of any defect in the system, and still less of the inappropriateness of the system itself. All that needed to be done was taking corrective measures. And so an unrepentant Le Duan complacently proclaimed : “our congress affirms that we will continue to pursue the socialist revolution line and the socialist economic construction line which were defined by the Fourth Congress”. This, he stressed, was part of the “very fierce” struggle to decide “who will defeat whom”. i.e., whether the socialist or the capitalist system will prevail.²⁶ For Le Duan and his comrades in the CPV, marxism-leninism and the world revolution were as relevant as ever.

And so, the CPV leadership concentrated its efforts only on shifting priorities, on identifying and correcting defects, and on ensuring better performance. Agriculture was given top priority; heavy industry projects were reduced; efforts were made to improve management, to eliminate the subsidy system, and generally, to “master the laws of transition from a backward small scale economy to an advanced big scale socialist economy”.²⁷

In spite of the above corrective steps, the economic conditions did not improve, on the contrary, they became much worse. This resulted from unforeseen international and domestic developments and their interaction. Externally, Vietnam was involved in a growing conflict with China (1976.....), which had many ramifications - termination of all Chinese aid: war with Cambodia (1978.....), which led to confrontation with ASEAN, international isolation, and increasing dependence on the Soviet Union. ²⁸ The combined effects of those events, joined to the negative effects of the decisions taken at the Fifth Congress, produced awkward isolation abroad and a revolutionary situation at home. Not only the Party become more unpopular than ever, but there was rumbling rebellion inside its ranks.

As a result of so many adverse factors, the CPV leadership had to accept a major and agonizing reassessment of its “lines” and reorientation of its policies to bring them in line with realities and align them more closely on those of Moscow. The occasion was the sixth Party National Congress in December 1986. This was the congress of Doi Moi Tu Duy (changing the way of thinking - perestroika -). Among the major changes adopted was the slowdown of the pace of “socialist transformation”; acceptance of a “multi-sector economy” with tolerance of limited private enterprise; and normalization with China and the US.

It is not possible to give a detailed analyses of the congress here. Only two points will be mentioned. First, the Congress was held under the slogan proclaimed in the Political Report of the Politburo; “look straight at the truth, assess the truth correctly, tell the plain truth”.²⁹ It called on the Party members to make a big effort to see straight, shed illusions, and find more realistic solutions to pull the country out of its deepening socio-economic crisis, and the Party from alarming unpopularity. On the other hand, it advocated a full alignment on the Soviet Union, consolidation of the “special relationship “ with Cambodia and Laos, unwavering adherence to Marxism -Leninism, strengthening the socialist camp and resolutely pursuing the struggle to see “who will defeat

whom". Nothing really changed except the stress on the need to find more effective "forms" to achieve marxist-leninist ends.

The situation, however, called for drastic changes, and soon momentous events will force the CPV into the position of changing or dying. And the changes occurred in Europe, in the communist camp. The most important one west the rise of Gorbachev to the top leadership position in the Soviet Communist Party. The second was a consequence of the first: Perestroika, which led to the collapse of the communist regimes of Europe, and eventually, of the Soviet Union itself.

The most devastating effect of these events was the disappearance of "the fortress of world revolution"; Vietnam's main source of military protection and economic aid, and especially the CPV's ideological support and lodestar. None of these developments, which followed one another in rapid succession from 1986 onward, reached dramatic point in November 1989, and climaxed in August 1991, had been anticipated by the CPV leadership at their sixth Party Congress. But they were to be the most decisive developments in forcing the CPV to adopt major changes of course.

Externally, it was clear that Vietnam had to 1) disengage from Cambodia, which had become a costly adventure and a major cause of Vietnam's international diplomatic isolation with dire economic consequences; 2) seek closer relations with ASEAN to compensate for the loss of Soviet aid and market; 3) normalize relations with the US to gain access to IMF and World Bank funds. Internally, measures had to be dotted to improve economic conditions, in particular, to encourage production and attract foreign investments. This means an opening up of the economy towards the free market with its inevitable consequences, in particular growing demand for more political freedom. The CPV leaders called these consequences "the mosquitoes and flies", or the "dust and trash" that come with foreign capitalist dollars.

The question whether to make changes, what changes, how far to go, and who should carry out those changes naturally caused deep divisions inside the Party leadership. It took the Party three years, from 1988 to 1991, to resolve those problems, and even then, only partially. The occasion was the seventh Party National Congress in June 1991. At this congress, a major change of personnel occurred. It had been preceded by intense in-fighting in the Party hierarchy, as well as great commotion among the rank and files, and intense excitement among the public.

The platform submitted by the Politburo to the Congress underwent eleven drafts before it was decided to leave it in non-finalized form, an unprecedented procedure, which revealed the existence of deep and unresolvable cleavages in the Party. The selection of the delegates to the Congress was subjected to serious manipulations. That of the members of the new Politburo was very laborious and was finalized only just before the opening of the Congress. Indeed, deep divisions about these matters had delayed the opening of the Congress several times. All that generated the impression that from then on things would be very different in the Party and in the country, that everything could be called into question, in particular, that communism could no longer rule unchallenged and unchanged. Even the unthinkable - ending communism and disbanding the CPV - was considered and called for by former fervent supporters of the party.

However, the CPV leadership quashed all hopes of immediate real change. The Political Report presented to the Congress by the obviously conservative-dominated Politburo said that the whole Party "reaffirmed its determination to pursue to the end" the road leading to socialism, "the

only road possible" which the Party had followed without reservation since 1930. The Party "absolutely refused to follow any road other than the socialist road". In particular, it "totally rejected conditional opposition and pluralism" because "in the objective conditions of the country today they are not necessary". The Constitution will be amended "to reinforce the socialist legal institutions"; democratic centralism will be maintained, and the leadership of the Party over the state and society will be reinforced.³⁰

On the economy, the formula chosen by the party was "market economy under the management of the state", and this market economy was defined as "a multi-sector commodity economy oriented towards socialism", in which state enterprise occupies a central place.³¹ It made clear that doi moi (renovation) aimed "not at changing the socialist aims, but at ensuring that these aims can be achieved effectively".³² Likewise, the aim of the renovation of foreign policy was "to create favorable conditions for activating the building of socialism".³³ This included seeking a rapprochement with ASEAN, while adopting a mistrustful, if not hostile, attitude towards the United States, which, in study papers intended for Party internal use, was accused of promoting the dangerous "beyond containment" policy of "peaceful evolution" aimed at destroying socialist Vietnam.

In order to keep power and pursue a rigid socialist line, the conservatives, who dominated the new Politburo, had to gain the support of a great power ruled by a like-minded party. In the post-1991 period, that country could only be China, which offered the CPV the model it favored: economic liberalization without political liberalization, and strong opposition to "peaceful evolution". Accordingly, the CPV's new leadership, led by general Le-Duc-Anh, opted for alignment on China.

So, as usual, the changes made by the CPV were only tactical changes. In Leninist terms, the party made only change of "forms" while holding firm to principles. And in ideological terms, like previous Vietnamese rulers, they turned to China and were attracted greatly to the Chinese model, even when the validity of this model itself was being questioned inside and outside China. The "law of sensation" evoked by Masson operates again!

The tragedy afflicting the Vietnamese today is that the CPV's leadership is determined to drag the country along the road to socialism when socialism has been proved to be a disastrous failure even in its original home, and when it itself cannot define socialism. Indeed, at a key plenum of the Party Central Committee in December 1990, with the collapse of socialism in Europe in mind, Tran-Xuan-Bach (who was later expelled from the Politburo) asked: "what are the characteristics of socialism?", and the answer was: "the plenum found that we do not have sufficient conditions yet to argue this issue scientifically."³⁴

Thus, the CPV leaders have learned nothing from Vietnam's painful experience. Like the Confucian mandarins 150 years earlier, at the time of Gia-Long and Tu-Duc, and for the same reasons, they have chosen an obviously wrong road and persisted in pursuing that road, thus wasting the country's precious time. Vietnam's fundamental problem - modernization and economic development - remains unsolved and still awaits solution.

6- conclusion

From the foregoing study, we can made the following pertained conclusions:

- 1) China has exerted on Vietnam a strong gravitational attraction.
- 2) The Chinese-influenced Vietnamese rulers were generally authoritarian and conservative.
- 3) The Vietnamese elite have not given much thought to the problem of modernization and economic development of their country, and have failed to find appropriate answers to this problem.
- 4) The situation of Vietnam today is very similar to that prevailing in the first half of the XIX century under the first Nguyen emperors.
- 5) So long as Vietnam remains an essentially agricultural country, it is bound to be imperialist, or to face constant social crises.
- 6) The basic problem of Vietnam still awaits appropriate answers.

Montreal, Canada

Autumn 1992

BACKGROUND READING

As mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, the number of books on Vietnam published recently is large. Unfortunately, most of those books were written in a period when the urge to be “politically correct” was over whelming. Even the academic people, too anxious to curry favor with the anti-war public, failed to practice what they were supposed to teach their students: balanced analysis and objectivity.

It is therefore difficult to recommend what books to read to obtain a balanced and objective view of Vietnam. I shall mention only a few books whose authors obviously tried to be objective. But the best thing to do would be to read the primary sources oneself, especially the accounts by those who were direct witnesses to the events unfolding in Vietnam in the postwar years, and form one’s own opinion.

General history:

- HAMMER, ELLEN J. The struggle for Indochina 1940-1955. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1966.
- LANCASTER, Donald, The Emancipation of Indochina, London, Oxford University Press, 1961.
- RANDLE, Robert F., Geneva 1954: The Settlement of the Indochinese War. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1978.
- JOYUX, François, La Chine et le reglement du premier conflit d'Indochine, Genève 1954. Paris , Publications de la Sorbonne, 1979.
- DUEKER, William, J. The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, Boulder, Co, Westview Press, 1981.
- TON, That Thien, The Foreign Politics of the Communist Party of Vietnam, A Study of Communist Tactics, New York, Crane and Russack, 1989.
- ZASLOFF, Joseph J., (ed.) Postwar Indochina: Old Enemies and New Allies, Washington, D.C., Department of State Publication No 9657, 1988.
- THAI, Quang Trung, (ed.), Factionalism and Collective Leadership: Ho Chi Minh’s Legacy, Singapore, ISEAS (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies) , 1985.
- THAI, Quang Trung, (ed.), Vietnam Today: Assessing the New Trends, New York, Crane and Russack, 1990.

Witness's accounts:

- (Colonel) PATTI, Archimedes L ., Why Vietnam? America's Albatross, Berkley, University of California Press, 1980
- CHEN, K.C , Vietnam and China 1938-1954, Princeton, N.J. Princeton university press, 1969.
- (Admiral) D'ARGENLIEU, Thierry, Chronique d' Indochine 1945-1947, Paris, Albin Michel, 1985.
- SAINTENY, Jean, Histoire d'une paix manquee. Indochine 1945-1957, Paris, Amiot, 1973
- INSTITUT CHARLES DE GAULLE, Le General de Gaulle et l'Indochine, Paris, Plon, 1982
- (Ex-Emperor) BAO DAI, Le Dragon d'Annam, Paris Plon, 1980.
- COOPER, Chester, The Lost Crusade, London, McGibbon and Kel, 1970.
- KISSINGER, Henry, White House Years, and Years of Upheaval, Boston, Little Brown, 1970 and 1982.

FOOTNOTES TO THE TEXT

¹ . For basic geographical data on Vietnam, see: Hoang Dao Thuy, Huynh Lua, and Nguyen Phuoc Hoang, Dat Nuoc Ta (our country), Hanoi Nha Xuat Ban Khoa Hoc, 1989; Alain Ruscio (ed.), Vietnam: l'histoire, la terre, les homes, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1989; Melanie Beresford, Vietnam: Politics, Economics, and Society, London and New York, 1988.

² . Hoang Mai, planning familial au Vietnam, Courrier du Vietnam, No 7, 1981.

³ . Georges Condominas, " Ethnologies" , in Ruscio, Vietnam, op.cit, p. 43.

⁴ . The figure for the Cao Dai was provided by a Cao Dai personality in Montreal; the figure for the Hoa Hao is a projection from the pre-1975 figure of 1.5 million. The figure for the Catholics is given by Father Claude Lange, in "Histoire du Christianism", in Ruscio, op. cit, p. 104.

⁵ . On this, see Phan Huy Le et al, Lich Su Vietnam (Vietnamese History), vol. I , Hanoi, Nha Xuat Ban Dai Hoc va Trung Hoc Chuyen Nghiep, 1985. pp. 161-165.

⁶ . Nguyen Thi Thanh, The French Conquest of Cochinchina 1852-1862, doctoral dissertation (to be published), Cornell University, 1992.

-
- ⁷ . Phan Huy Le, Lich Su Viet Nam , p. 87.
- ⁸ . Nguyen Khac Vien, Histoire du Viet Nam, Paris, Editions sociales, 1970. p. 54.
- ⁹ . Vu Kien and Vu Ngoc Bich, “La croissance demographique: un probleme preoccupant”, in Ruscio, op. cit., p. 32.
- ¹⁰ . Masson, op. cit., pp. 29 and 94.
- ¹¹ . David G. Marr, Vietnamese Anti-Colonialism, 1885-1925, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971. p. 22.
- ¹² . Masson, Op. cit., p. 49.
- ¹³ . Truong Ba Can, Nguyen Truong To, Con nguoi va di cao, (Nguyen Troung To, The Man and his posthumous manuscripts), Ho Chi Minh City, Nha Xuat Ban Thanh Pho Ho Chi Minh, 1988, pp. 63-100.
- ¹⁴ . Nguyen- Hien-Le, Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc, Saigon, La Boi, 1968 (1956), pp. 23-26.
- ¹⁵ . On Phan-Boi-Chau, see his memoirs: Nien Bieu (Memoirs), Saigon, Nhom Nghien Cuu Su Dia, 1971; and Georges Boudarel: “Phan Boi Chau et la societe vietnamienne de son temps”, France-Asie (Paris), Vol, XXIII, No 4, 1969, on Phan-Chu-Trinh, see the-Nguyen, Phan Chu Trinh (1972-1926), Saigon, Tan Viet, 1956.
- ¹⁶ . On the VNQDD, see: Hoang Van Dao, Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, Saigon, Publisher (?), 1970. (Reprinted) in the US by anonymous publisher). On the CPV, see Ho Chi Minh, “Ba muoi nam hoat dong cua Dang” (30 years of activity of the party) in Ho Chi Minh Tuyen Tap (Ho Chi Minh Selected Works), Vol. 2, Hanoi, 1980, p.152, and “Cach Mang Trung Quoc va Cach Mang Viet Nam “ (the Chinese Revolution and the Vietnamese Revolution”, in “Ket hop chat che long yeu nuoc va ting than quoc te” (Closely uniting patriotism and internationalism), Hanoi, 1976, Nha Xuat Ban Su That , pp. 160-161.
- ¹⁷ . Hoang Van Dao, Op.cit., pp.27 and 38-39.
- ¹⁸ . See Dang Cong San Viet Nam, (Communist Party of Vietnam), Trich Van Kien Dang (Extracts from the Party’s Documents), Vol. I, Hanoi, Nha Xuat Ban Giao Khoa Mac-Lenin, 1979, pp.40 and 302.
- ¹⁹ . Ho Chi Minh, Tuyen tap, Vol. I, pp.233 and ff.
- ²⁰ . Editions en langues etrangers, Notre President Ho Chi Minh, (our President Ho Chi Minh), Hanoi, 1970, p.15.
- ²¹ . V. I. Lenin, Speeches at Congresses of the Communist International, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1972, p.59.
- ²² . Dang Cong San Viet Nam, Phuong huong, nhiem vu va muc tieu chu yeu cua ke hoach 5 nam 1976-1980, Bao cao cua Ban Chap hanh Trung Uong, do Pham Van Dong doc,

(Communist Party of Vietnam, Basic orientations and objectives of the Five-Year Plan 1976-1980, Report by the Central Committee, presented by Pham Van Dong), Hanoi, Nha Xuat Ban Su That, 1977, pp.9 and 24. and Bao cao chinh tri do Le Duan doc, (Political Report presented by Le Duan), pp.39 Hanoi, 1977, pp.58-59. On the overambitious unfulfilled targets, see: Ton That Thien, "Vietnam's New Economic Policy", Pacific Affairs, Vol.56, No 4, Winter 1983-1984.

²³ . On the communist government's policy after 1975, see: Vo Nhan Tri, Vietnam's Economic Development since 1975, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990. For other developments, see: Nguyen Van Canh, Vietnam under Communism 1975-1982, Stanford, C.A., Hoover Institution Press; and Joseph Zasloff (ed.), Postwar Indochina: Old Enemies and New Allies, Washington, Department of State Publication No 9657, 1988.

²⁴ . Vo-Nhan-Tri, op. cit., p.181, 62, and 45.

²⁵ . Pham Van Dong, Phuong houg, nhieu vu, an hung muc tieu chu yeu va kinh te trong nam nam 1981-1985 van hung nam 1980, Bao cao tai Dai Hoi V, (Basic economic orientations, tasks, and objectives for the five years 1981-1985 and the 80s, Report to the V Congress). Hoi Nguoi Viet tai Cong Hoa Lien Bang Duc [Document reprinted by] the Association of Vietnamese in the German Federal Republic), April,1982, pp.5 and 11.

²⁶ . Le Duan, Political Report to V Congress, 1982, pp. 13 and 15.

²⁷ . Le Duan, Political Report to V Congress, p.9.

²⁸ . On these events see: Donald Wheaterbee, Southeast Asia Divided: the ASEAN-Indochina Crisis, Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 1985. Ton That Thien, The Foreign Policy of the Communist Party of Vietnam: A Study of Communist Tactics, New York, Taylor and Francis, 1989, Robert S. Ross, The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy. 1975-1979, New York, University of Columbia Press, 1988. Nayan Chanda, Brother Enemy: The War after the War, New York, Harcourt and Brace Jovanovich, 1986.

²⁹ . Tap Chi Cong San (Communist Review), Van Kien Dai Hoi Toan Quoc Lan Thu VI cau Dang Cong San Viet Nam (Documents of the VI Party National Congress of the Communist Party of Viet Nam). 1-1987.

³⁰ . Dang Cong San Viet Nam, Van Kien Dai Hoi Toan Quoc Lan Thu VII (Documents of the VII Party National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam). Hanoi, Nha Xuat Ban Su That, pp.109-110, 125, 91.

³¹ . – ibid. -, p.66.

³² . –ibid. -, p.53.

³³ . –ibid. -, p.39.

³⁴ . Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Southeast Asia, 8 January 1992.