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NCERT Class 10 History Chapter 2: The Nationalist Movement in Indo-China YouTube Lecture Handouts

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- Vietnam gained formal independence in 1945. Took another 3 decades for formal Republic of Vietnam to be formed
- Indo-China included Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Many people lived in this area under shadow of China.



Indo-China Included Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia

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- North & central Vietnam maintained Chinese government and culture. It was linked to maritime silk route that brought ideas, goods and people.
- Connected to hinterland where non-Vietnamese people like Khmer Cambodians lived
- French controlled military and economic domination & reshaped culture. Nationalism emerged as fight against French. Landed in Vietnam in 1858 & established a strong grip by mid-1880s.
- After Franco-Chinese war, French assumed control over Tonkin and Annam & French Indo-China was formed in 1887. French sought to consolidate and people in Vietnam reflected on the suffering.
- Francis Garnier, French explored Mekong & established colony in Tonkin in north. He attacked Hanoi, capital of Tonkin but was killed.
- French considered colonies necessary to supply natural resources and essential goods. They thought it was mission of advanced countries to bring benefits of civilization to backward people.
- Canals were built to increase cultivation, increase rice production and allow exports to international market. By 1931, it was 3rd largest exporter of rice in world.
- Trans Indo-China rail network was made to connect south and north Vietnam and China & finally completed with link with Yunan in 1910. Second line linked Vietnam to Siam via Phnom Penh (capital of Cambodia)
- Paul Bernard – writer & policy maker believed that economies of colonies needs to be developed. Idea to acquire colony was to make profit. If living standards improved, people will buy more goods and led to market for French business. Vietnam witnessed high population, low agricultural productivity and extensive indebtedness amongst peasants. To reduce poverty and increase agricultural productivity reforms are required as Japan did in 1890s. Industrialization is required to create more jobs.
- Plantation crops included rice and rubber owned by French & small Vietnamese elite. These used indentured labor (worked as contract with no specific rights but employer had immense power). French were against industrialization.

Dilemma of Colonial Education

- French believed that Europe had developed the most advanced civilization.
- French wanted to educate local laborers but feared if they educated them, they will question the colonial domination. French citizen in Vietnam (colons) feared that the jobs would be lost, so they opposed policy that gave Vietnamese full access to French education.
- Elite Vietnamese used Chinese as a language. To consolidate their power, French had to counter Chinese influence.

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- Emphasis on need for French as language of instruction – this would create Asiatic France tied to European France. This would create respect for sentiments and ideas for French
- Others suggested Vietnamese to be taught in lower classes and French in higher classes. Few who learnt French must be awarded and given French citizenship.
- Only Vietnamese elite could enroll in schools and could pass school leaving examination (around 2/3rd students failed in final exam). In 1925 out of 17 million population only 400 passed.
- Textbooks glorified French and Vietnamese were represented as primitive and backward with manual labour.
- Tonkin Free School was started in 1907 to provide a Western style education included science, hygiene and French (these classes were held in the evening and had to be paid for separately) and adoption of short haircut (traditionally Vietnamese have long hair)
- Vietnamese teachers in lower grades modified the text and criticized what was stated
- Vietnamese girl was asked to sit on back seat and give the seat to French – opened up protests & conflict
- By 1920s students formed political parties (like Party of Young Annam) & published journals like Annamese Student.
- Schools became center for political and cultural battles. French tried to change values and norms but Vietnamese intellectuals felt they were losing on territory and identity. Battle against French colonial education became part of battle against colonialism and independence

Timeline

- 1820: Nguyen Anh becomes emperor symbolizing the unification of the country under the Nguyen dynasty.
- 1867: Cochinchina (the South) becomes a French colony.
- 1887: Creation of the Indo-china Union, including Cochinchina, Annam, Tonkin, Cambodia and later, Laos.
- 1930: Ho Chi Minh forms the Vietnamese Communist Party.
- 1945: Vietminh start a general popular insurrection. Bao Dai abdicates. Ho Chi Minh declares independence in Hanoi (September 2).
- 1954: The French army is defeated at Dien Bien Phu.
- 1961: Kennedy decides to increase US military aid to South Vietnam.
- 1974: Paris Peace Treaty.

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- 1975 (April 30): NLF troops enter Saigon.
- 1976: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is proclaimed.

Hygiene, Disease & Resistance

- Hanoi was rebuilt under French
- 1903 – plague affected Hanoi. French part was clean and beautiful with wide avenues and well laid sewer system while native quarter did not have any modern facilities with overflowing water in streets. Large sewers in modern part of city were breeding grounds for rats. Sewers acted as transport system and rats entered homes of French as well.
- Rat hunt started in 1902. French hired Vietnamese workers and paid them for each rat they caught.
- Those who worked in sewer found that if they collected together they could negotiate better and collective bargaining started. Bounty was paid for the tail, so they just clipped the tail and released the rats to repeat the process. People also began raising rats to earn bounty.
- Bounty program was scrapped.

Religion and Anti-Colonialism

- Vietnam's religious beliefs were a mixture of Buddhism, Confucianism (good conduct, practical wisdom and proper social relationships) and local practices. Christianity, introduced by French missionaries, was intolerant of this easygoing attitude.
- From 18th century – many religious movements were hostile to Western presence. Early movement against French control and spread of Christianity was Scholars Revolt in 1868 (against Catholicism and French power)
- Uprising in Ngu An and Ha Tien provinces where many Catholics were killed
- From 17th to mid 18th century – 3 lakh people were converted by Catholic missionaries.
- The elites in Vietnam were educated in Chinese and Confucianism.
- Hao Hao movement in 1939 in Mekong delta – It drew on religious ideas popular in anti-French uprisings of the 19th century. Its founder was Huynh Phu So who performed miracles and helped the poor. His criticism against useless expenditure had a wide appeal. He also opposed the sale of child brides, gambling and the use of alcohol and opium. French tried to suppress him, called him Mad Bronze & sent him to mental asylum. But doctors who were to prove him insane became his followers & French doctors also declared him sane. Authorities exiled him to Laos and followers to concentration camps.

Vision of Modernization

Different viewpoints –

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- Vietnamese tradition must be strengthened to resist domination of west
- Vietnam must learn from west while opposing foreign domination

Resistance to French domination was led by Confucian Phan Boi Chau – formed Revolutionary Society (Duy Tan Hoi) in 1903, with Prince Cuong De as the head. He met Chinese reformer Liang Qichao in Yokohama in 1905 & influenced by him wrote “The History of the Loss of Vietnam” – became widely read bestseller in Vietnam and China – had 2 themes (loss of sovereignty & severing of ties with China)

Phan Chu Trinh - intensely hostile to the monarchy and opposed to the idea of resisting the French, aimed to establish *democratic republic* – he did not want a wholesale rejection of Western civilization & accepted ideas of liberty. Demanded French to set up legal and educational institutions and develop agriculture and industries.

Go East Movement – In 1907-08, 300 Vietnamese students went to Japan to acquire modern education with idea to drive away French from Vietnam, overthrow puppet rule & establish Nguyen dynasty – they looked for foreign arm and help. Japan’s victory over Russia in 1907 proved the military capabilities. Vietnamese students established Restoration Society in Tokyo but after 1908, Japanese Ministry of Interior clamped them down.

1911- Under Sun Yat Sen monarchy in China was overthrown & republic was established. Vietnamese students organised the Association for Restoration of Vietnam (Viet-Nam Quan Phuc Hoi). Objective changed from constitutional monarchy to democratic republic.

Communist Movement & Vietnamese Nationalism

- During Great Depression 1930s – price of rubber and rice fell leading to rural debt, unemployment and rural uprisings in Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces (poorest with old radical traditions and were called as electric fuses – when system was under pressure, they were the first to blow)
- In February 1930, Ho Chi Minh brought together competing nationalist groups to establish Vietnamese Communist (Vietnam Cong San Dang) Party, later renamed Indo-Chinese Communist Party. Minh was inspired by militant demonstrations of European communist parties.
- In 1940 Japan occupied Vietnam, as part of its imperial drive to control SE Asia.
- League for the Independence of Vietnam (Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh) known as Vietminh was formed & it fought the Japanese occupation and recaptured Hanoi in September 1945. Democratic Republic of Vietnam was formed and Ho Chi Minh became Chairman.

New Republic

- French tried to gain control by using Bao Dai as puppet emperor. Vietminh were forced to retreat. 8 years after, French were defeated in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu.

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- Supreme French Commander of French armies, General Henry Navarre had declared confidently in 1953 that they would soon be victorious. But on 7 May 1954, Vietminh annihilated and captured more than 16,000 soldiers of the French Expeditionary Corps.
- In peace negotiations after French defeat, Vietnamese were persuaded to accept division & split of north and south took place. *Ho Chi Minh* was in power in north & *Bao Dai* in south. It turned Vietnam into a battle field. Bao Dai was overthrown by *Ngo Dinh Diem* (repressive & authoritarian – those who opposed were called communist and killed). Diem retained ordinance 10, French law that permitted Christianity & was opposed by National Liberation Front (NLF)
- NLF fought for unification of nation. US watched for alliance and was worried over unification and communist gaining so sent troops
- US entered war and from 1965 to 1972 over 3 million US personnel served in Vietnam. Despite good medical supplies, US casualties were high. US troops arrived with heavy weapons and backed bombers B52s. Chemical weapons like Napalm (organic compound to thicken gasoline for firebombs), Agent Orange and phosphorous bombs destroyed villages. From US, many of those sent to fight didn't belong to elite but were minorities & children of working class. US media criticized war.
- Films like Green Berets by John Wayne motivated men to die for war. Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) reflected the moral confusion that the war had caused in the US.
- Minh - Minh became an active member of Comintern, meeting Lenin and other leaders. In May 1941, after 30 years abroad in Europe, Thailand and China, Minh returned to Vietnam & took name Ho Chi Minh (He Who Enlightens) in 1943. He became president of Vietnam Democratic Republic & died in 1969
- Minh would lead to domino effect (communist government established in other countries in the area).

Ho Chi Minh Trail

- Trail is footpath and roads used to transport men and material from north to south, improved from late 1950s. From 1967, 20,000 North Vietnamese troops came south each month. It had support bases and hospitals all the way. Supplies carried by porters who carried 25 kg on back & 70 kg on bicycles.
- Most of it was in Laos and Cambodia with branches in Vietnam but this was quickly rebuilt despite destruction by US.

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Map of Laos and Cambodia with Branches

Nation & Its Heroes

- Women enjoyed equality mainly in lower classes but had limited freedom to determine future.
- In the 1930s, novel by Nhat Linh caused a scandal because it showed a woman leaving a forced marriage and marrying someone of her choice, someone who was involved in nationalist politics. This rebellion against social conventions marked the arrival of the new woman in Vietnamese society.
- 1913 – Phan Boi Chau wrote play based on lives of Trung Sisters who fought Chinese domination. Sisters were idealized and glorified
- Trieu Au – orphaned in childhood, left home, went to jungle and organized a large army & resisted Chinese rule. When her army was crushed, she drowned herself and became a sacred figure.
- Women were portrayed brave and dedicated. Nguyen Thi Xuan shot jet with 20 bullets. Women were represented as workers as well. As casualties increased in war, women were urged to join the struggle. Women joined resistance movement – nursed wounds, constructed underground tunnels & fought enemy.
- Women were seen in agricultural cooperatives, factories and production units.
- US – Vietnam War called as 1st Television war as battle scenes were shown on daily basis.

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- The scholar Noam Chomsky called the war ‘the greatest threat to peace, to national self-determination, and to international cooperation’.
- Peace settlement was signed in Paris in January 1974. This ended conflict with the US but fighting between Saigon regime and NLF continued. NLF occupied the presidential palace in Saigon on 30 April 1975 and unified Vietnam.

-Manishika