

The Nationalist Movement in Indo-China

Q1. Name the countries which constitute Indo-china.

Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are the countries which constitute Indo-China.

Q2. Why the French thought colonies necessary?

- 1) Colonies were considered essential to supply natural resources and other essential goods.
- 2) Like other western nations, France also thought it was the mission of the advanced European countries to bring the benefits of civilization to backward people.

Q3. How did French develop their colonies?

- 1) The French began building canals and draining lands in the Mekong Delta to increase cultivation. Their purpose behind was to export rice & earn profit.
- 2) The vast system of irrigation works-canals and earthworks built mainly with forced labour increased rice production. This was followed by infrastructure projects to help transport goods for trade, move military garrisons and control the entire region.

Q4. What were the fears of the French regarding education?

- 1) Education was seen as one way to civilize the 'native' but in order to educate the Vietnamese, the French had to solve a question "How far the Vietnamese should be educated"?
- 2) The French needed an educated local labour force but they feared that education might create problems.
- 3) They feared that educated Vietnamese would question colonial domination/rule/control.
- 4) French citizens living in Vietnam began fearing that they might lose their jobs as teachers, shopkeepers or policeman if the Vietnamese got educated.

Q5. What were the two broad opinions on the question of the use of French language in Vietnam among the policy-makers?

- 1) Some policy makers emphasized the need to use the French language as the medium of instruction. By learning the language, they felt, the Vietnamese would be introduced to the culture and civilization of France. This would tie them with European France.
- 2) The educated people in Vietnam would respect French sentiments and ideals, see the superiority of French culture, and work for the French.
- 3) Other policy makers were opposed to French being the only medium of instruction. They suggested that Vietnamese be taught in lower classes and French in the higher classes.

Q6. "Only one third of the students in Vietnam would pass the school-leaving examination". Explain.

- 1) Only the Vietnamese from the elite class which was a small section of the population could enroll in the schools.
- 2) Only a few among those admitted ultimately pass the school leaving examination because of a deliberate policy of failing students particularly in the final year, so that they could not qualify for the better paid jobs.

Q7. Describe the ideas behind the Tonkin free school. To what extent was it a typical example of colonial ideas in Vietnam?

- 1) The Tonkin free school was started in 1907 to provide a western style education.
- 2) Education included classes in Science, Hygiene and French.
- 3) The school's approach to what it means to be 'modern' is a good example of the thinking prevalent at that time.
- 4) The school encouraged the adoption of western styles such as having short hair-cut.

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Q8. How did the schools become an important place for political and cultural battle under French rule in Vietnam? What were the fears of Vietnamese intellectuals?

- 1) The French wanted to strengthen their rule in Vietnam through the control of education. They tried to change the values, norms and thinking of the people, to make them believe in the superiority of French civilization and the inferiority of the Vietnamese.
- 2) Fears of Vietnamese intellectuals
 - a) Vietnam was losing not only the control over its territory but its very identity and its own culture. Customers were being devalued and the people were developing a master slave mentality.
 - b) The Battle against French colonial education became part of the larger battle against colonialism and for independence.

Q9. Mention how health and hygiene became one of the ways to fight against colonialism.

- 1) When the French set about creating a modern Vietnam, they decided to rebuild Hanoi. In 1903, the modern part of Hanoi was struck by bubonic plague.
- 2) To stem Rat invasion, a rat hunt was started in 1902. The French hired Vietnam workers and paid them for each rat they caught. Rats began to be caught in thousands.
- 3) On 30 May, for instance 20,000 were caught but still there seemed to be no end. For the Vietnamese the rat hunt seemed to provide an early lesson in the success of collective bargaining.
- 4) Those who did the dirty work of entering sewers found that if they came together they could negotiate a higher bounty.
- 5) They also discovered innovative ways to profit from the situation. The bounty was paid when a tail was given as proof that a rat has been killed. So the rat catchers took to just clipping the tails and releasing the rats so that the process could be repeated, over again.

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Q12. What was Phan Chu Trinh's objective for Vietnam? How were his ideas different from those of Phan Boi Chau? What did they share in common?

- 1) Both Phan Chu Trinh and Phan Boi Chau were great nationalists of Vietnam. Both had the same objective to establish democratic republic in Vietnam.
- 2) Phan Boi Chau: He was a great nationalist He was educated in the Confucian tradition. He became a major figure in the anti-colonial resistance from the time he formed the Revolutionary Society (Duy Tan Hoi) with Prince Cuong De as the head. He was of the opinion that the monarchy should be used and should not be abolished.
- 3) Phan Chu Trinh: He strongly differed with Phan Boi Chau. He was intensely hostile to the monarchy and opposed to the idea of resisting the French with the help of the court His desire was to establish democratic republic influenced by the democratic ideals of the west he did not want a wholesale rejection of western civilization. He accepted the French revolutionary ideal, of liberty but charged the French for not abiding by the ideal. He demanded that French set up legal and educational institutions and develop agriculture and industries.

Q13. Write short note on Go East Movement'.

- 1) In the first decade of the 20th century a 'Go East Movement' became popular. In 1907-08 some 300 Vietnamese students went to acquire modern education.
- 2) For many of them the primary objective was to drive out the French from Vietnam, overthrow the puppet emperor: and re-establish the Nguyen dynasty removed by the French.
- 3) These nationalists looked for foreign arms and help. They appealed to the Japanese for help.
- 4) Japan had modernized itself and had resisted colonization by the west.
- 5) Vietnamese students established a branch of the Restoration Society in Tokyo but after 1908, the Japanese Ministry stopped them to do so. Many, including Phan Boi Chau were deported and forced to seek exile in China and Thailand.

Q14. What were the challenges faced, by the New Republic of Vietnam?

- 1) The French tried to regain control by using the emperor Bao Dai, as their puppet faced with the French offensive.
- 2) The Vietminh were forced to retreat to the hills. After eight years of fighting the French were defeated in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu.
- 3) In the peace negotiations in Geneva that followed the French defeat, the Vietnamese were persuaded to accept the division of the country. North and South were split. Ho Chi Minh and the communist took power in the North while Bao Dai's regime was put in power in the South.
- 4) This division set in motion a series of events that turned Vietnam into a battle field bringing death and destruction to its people as well as the environment.
- 5) The Bao Dai regime was soon overthrown by a coup led by Ngo Dinh Diem. He built a repressive and authoritarian government.

Q15. Explain the causes of the US involvement in the war in Vietnam.

- 1) The USA was haunted by the fear of the spread of communism which to her was a potent danger to the capitalist world. USA was ready to fight against communism in any part of the world. So when communism raised in Vietnam, USA entered the war.
- 2) So the war grew out of a fear among US policy planners that the victory of Ho chi Minh Government would start a domino effect and communist govt. would be established in other countries of the world.

Q16. What role did the US media and films play during the US Vietnam war?

- 1) The US media and films played a major role in both supporting as well as criticizing the war.

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- 2) Hollywood made films in support of the war, such as John's Wayne's Green Berets (1968). This has been cited by many as an example of an unthinking propaganda film that was responsible for motivating many young men to die in the war.
- 3) Other films were more critical as they tried to understand the reason for this war. John Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now (1979) reflected the moral confusion that the war had caused in the U.S.

Q17. Write short note on the evaluation of the Vietnamese war against the US from the point of a porter on the Ho Chi-Minh trail.

- 1) The US - Vietnamese war (1965-75) was one of the most disastrous for both the countries as regard, money, men and materials. The US bombers destroyed the villages of Vietnamese and killed them in thousands. But with the spirit of nationalism the Vietnamese fought bravely against the mighty and super power of the world. They sacrificed their homes and family and lived under horrifying conditions and fought for independence. The porters too, played a crucial role in fighting against the most technologically advanced country in the world.
- 2) They used the Ho Chi Minh trail - the immense network of roads and footpaths most heroically. The trail had support bases and hospitals along the way. Supplies were transported and carried by porters, who were mostly women.
- 3) These porters carried about 25 kilos on their backs or about 70 kilos on their bicycles. The US regularly bombed the trail trying to disrupt supplies, but efforts to destroy this important supply line by intensive bombing failed because they were rebuilt very quickly. Most of the trail was outside Vietnam neighbouring Laos and Cambodia with branches lines extending into South Vietnam.

Q18. What was the role of women in the anti-imperial struggle in Vietnam?

- 1) In the 1960s, photographs in magazines and journals showed women as brave fighters. There were pictures of women militia shooting down planes. They were portrayed as brave and dedicated.
- 2) As casualties in the war increased in 1960s women were urged to join the struggle in large numbers.
- 3) Many women responded and joined the resistance movement. They helped in nursing the wounded, constructing underground rooms and tunnels and fighting the enemy. Along the Ho Chi Minh trail young volunteers kept open 2195 km of strategic roads and guarded 2500 key points. They built six air strips, neutralized tens of thousands of bombs, transported cargo and shot down 15 planes.

Q19. Write a short note on Huynh Phu so or Hao Hao movement.

- 1) Hao Hao movement began in 1939 and gained great popularity in the fertile Mekong delta area. It drew on religious ideas popular in anti French uprisings of the 19th century.
- 2) Huynh Phu So was the founder of Hao movement He performed miracles and helped the poor. His criticism against useless expenditure had a wide appeal. He also opposed the sale of brides, gambling and the use of alcohol and opium.
- 3) The French tried to suppress the movement inspired by Huynh Phu So. They declared him mad, called him the mad and put him in a mental asylum. Interestingly, the doctor who, had to prove him became his follower, and finally in 1941. Even the French doctor declared that he was sane. The French authorities exiled him to Laos and sent many of his followers to concentration camps.

Q20. Explain the following terms:

- 1) **Concentration camp** : A prison where people are detained without due process of law. The word speaks of a place of torture and brutal treatment.
- 2) **Syncretic** : Aims to bring together different beliefs and practices, essential unity rather than their difference.
- 3) **Indentured Labour** : A form of labour widely used in plantations from the mid 19th century. Labourers worked on the basis of contracts that did not specify and rights of labourers but gave immense power to employers. Employers could bring criminal charges against labourers and punish and jail them for non-fulfilment of contract.