THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO COLONIAL VIETNAM

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO COLONIAL VIETNAM:

A MODIFIED MODEL OF REVOLUTION

By

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ABSTRACT

The principal focus of this thesis is the examination of revolutionary processes in colonial Vietnam from a theoretical perspective. This involves the critical assessment of the predominant universal or holistic approaches to revolution and the analysis of subtheoretical models of revolution that have been applied to colonial Vietnam. The critique of these conceptual frameworks is examined in the context of the historical development of the Vietnamese revolution. This is followed by an attempt to merge the salient components of two models providing conceptual tools that offer a more convincing explanation of the Vietnamese revolution in its colonial context. This includes three components. First, the world-historical and international dimension of Theda Skocpol's socio-historical approach, which permits a more focused emphasis on the development and nature of the revolutionary movement and the important factors affecting the emergence of revolutionary situations. Second, Charles Tilly's group conflict model adds another important theoretical component by emphasizing the attributes and relationships of revolutionary groups that influence the degree to which revolutionary situations may be exploited. Finally, the concept of ideology and its role in revolutionary process is included in both theoretical frameworks. The combination of the socio-historical and group conflict approaches, with the inclusion of an ideological dimension, is applied to colonial Vietnam and attempts to demonstrate the potential explanatory capacity of this form of syncretic model building.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The study of revolution has been the focus of numerous scholarly studies and debates. This is understandable given the historical importance of revolutions and their impact on the transformation of social and political institutions. Despite the rich abundance of historical and theoretical literature on revolution, the study of this phenomenon is still pervaded by conflicting models and disagreement over the fundamental nature and determinant variables of the revolutionary process.[1] This thesis does not pretend to resolve the many issues confronting the study of revolution, but it does attempt to analyze some of the predominant theoretical approaches and formulate a composite model that improves upon current explanations of revolution in colonial Vietnam.

Many of the current models of revolution in the social sciences have their theoretical roots in the sociological approaches of general systems theory (structural-functionalism), socio-psychological frameworks (frustration-aggression), and Marxist/Neo-Marxist conflict analysis.[2] These general theories provide the basic theoretical framework for many of the more specific or subtheoretical models which, in one form or another, have been used to explain the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. These subtheoretical or middle-range

theories, as they apply to colonial Vietnam, range from Mus'and McAlister's use of General Systems and Social Psychological frameworks to the Neo-Marxist influence on Paige's structuralist model and the approaches of the Moral Economists. Many of these studies have offered interesting, and often enlightening explanations of the factors influencing the Vietnamese revolution. None, however, have provided a comprehensive analysis that examines the crucial role of international developments and how they influenced the development and outcome of the Vietnamese revolution. Nor has any of the models explained the factors contributing to the success of the Communists, or how this group was able to control the revolutionary movement at the expense of other revolutionary groups. These are crucial components that cannot be neglected if one is to explain the revolutionary process in Vietnam. While these models often implicitly acknowledge the role of international developments and group conflict, these variables are not developed or integrated into the various subtheoretical explanations of the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. The approaches of Skocpol and Tilly provide a theoretical framework that incorporates these variables.

While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt an exacting formulation of an alternative model, the latest theoretical developments in Historical Sociology have provided new frameworks involving a more comprehensive analysis of revolutionary processes.[3] Unlike many of their predecessors, these approaches demand historical precision and a broad holistic perspective.[4] This thesis attempts to merge, conceptually, the explanatory frameworks of two historical

sociological models that are particularly relevant to the study of revolution, Theda Skocpol's socio-historical approach and Charles Tilly's group conflict analysis.[5] While a detailed historical analysis in the context of either approach is beyond the scope of this study, this thesis argues that the predominant theoretical approaches analyzing the revolution in colonial Vietnam are unsatisfactory; and, that merging the most salient features of Skocpol's and Tilly's models offers a more powerful basis for explaining the process of revolution in Vietnam.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One examines general theories of revolution and indicates why the Historical Sociology approach of Tilly and Skocpol are superior to the other general models. There is also a discussion of ideology which is later integrated into the model of revolution developed in this thesis. Chapter Two provides a general historical outline of the various periods and stages relevant to the Vietnamese revolution. This avoids unnecessary repetition as different theoretical approaches are discussed. Also, this permits a more systematic focus on the theoretical dimension of the revolutionary process in the later chapters, as well as the relationship between theory and historical evidence.

Chapter Three examines the predominant theoretical approaches directly applied to colonial Vietnam. This includes models that while drawing their fundamental assumptions from different general models, analyze factors specific to peasant societies. These models are subtheoretical because they generate explanations for specific and conditional situations rather than formulating universal or holistic

approaches such as the General Systems, Social Psychological, and Marxist/Neo-Marxist models discussed in this chapter. This does not mean that these models are without value. They do highlight different processes that influence the revolutionary process. But, such models do not account for the impact of international and group developments, both of which I argue are crucial variables in the revolutionary process.

Chapters Four and Five offer an alternative model that is more holistic than the frameworks discussed in Chapter Three. This holistic component is important because, unlike the subtheoretical models, it places the Vietnamese revolution in a world context and examines the factors permitting revolutionary groups to exploit or adapt to changing circumstances. Chapter Four applies the major components of Skocpol's model and its modifications to colonial Vietnam. It is divided into three main sections: 1) the international context of early structural and ideological developments; 2) the socio-economic transformation of Vietnam; 3) the transnational relations weakening the colonial regime's hegemonic rule. Parts one and three are relatively new components that are neglected by both the general theories and the subtheoretical models. While all the subtheoretical models in Chapter Three include socio-economic transformations and in some cases class analysis, part two incorporates a political dimension by examining taxation, landownership patterns, and administrative and political institutions as indicators of the changing political relationship between the state and various groups and classes in Vietnamese society. This provides some understanding of the degree to which revolutionary groups can organize support in different sectors of society, as well as the nature of that

support. It is this emphasis on the political component of socio-economic and institutional changes that differentiates Skocpol from her subtheoretical counterparts.

Chapter Five applies Tilly's group conflict model to the colonial situation. This is the important second half of the alternative model of revolution proposed in this thesis. It follows the analysis using Skocpol's model because it focuses on the factors that contribute to a group's revolutionary capacity. In other words, this chapter examines the characteristics that permit some groups to rebuild after periods of effective colonial repression, to compete with other revolutionary groups for control of the movement, and finally, to exploit the weaknesses of the regime when it is undergoing the politco-military crises examined in Chapter Four.

Before discussing Skocpol and Tilly, it is necessary to provide a general overview of the various general theoretical approaches to revolution and examine the reasons why they offer inadequate explanations of the revolutionary process. The earliest models of revolution in the social science tradition, while attempting to find consistent patterns within historical events, were limited by the absence of any "broad theoretical perspective".[6]   During this period, theoretical models were influenced by the Natural History approach. This required that historical experiences be divided into stages or a sequence of events. In the search for a standard or universal sequence, many scholars likened the process of revolution to organic processes.

For example, Crane Brinton described revolution as a fever which passed through various stages in an attempt to destroy "wicked people and harmful and useless institutions."[7]

While Brinton's study differs from other natural history models in its recognition of the state and its vulnerability during the emergence of revolutionary situations, Brinton follows the emphasis of his contemporaries. Focusing on the role of revolutionaries and uniform patterns increasing popular discontent with the ruling state, Brinton's analysis obfuscates and neglects the role of international and domestic factors weakening the state's capacity to control its primary means of coercion. Similarly, this approach minimizes the importance of struggles between various revolutionary factions and political groups, the function of coalitions, and the problem of gaining control of the principal political institutions and changing the dominant socio-economic and political structures.[8]

Various attempts to remedy the theoretical problems inherent in the natural history models led theorists to formulate models focusing on "revolutionary states of mind" within a social context. The varying perspectives of this approach to revolution range from social-psychological frameworks to general systems theorizing. The behavioral orientation of these perspectives emphasizes the analysis of certain preconditions and precipitant variables which act as major determinants affecting forms of behavior and increasing the likelihood of revolution.[9] Whether it is the aggregate of individual motivation, structural influences upon collective behavior, or the response of the

general system as a social organism, each model reflects a causal pattern where a stimulus threatening social equilibrium determines the nature of responses.[10]

The most extreme response within the stimulus-response spectrum is revolution, where social-psychological tension or systemic dysfunction is so prevalent that a return to an equilibrium is not possible through the "normal" process of adaptation and gradual change. In many respects this is similar to the "hydraulic model" rejected by Charles Tilly, where tension-related external factors are left unresolved and thereby create mounting internal pressures (these may be systemic or psychological by nature), which eventually result in some form of pressure release mechanism, (ie. revolution).[11] This concept implies that when certain conditions ensure the creation of pressure there is a proportional increase in compression, and if the pressure creating conditions prevail, the individual or system will surpass the compression threshold thereby activating a pressure release mechanism. In this case, revolution becomes the pressure release mechanism. Using a system of causal sequencing that designates revolution as an extreme outcome, the behaviour-oriented models place primary emphasis upon the initial phases of subjective response to objective stimulus as predictive indicators of behavioural outcomes. Revolution becomes an anomalous response to stimulus that threatens the presumed positive orientation of society and individuals towards equilibrium.

The two major representatives of this behaviour-oriented approach to revolution are Chalmers Johnson and Ted R. Gurr. While there are numerous theorists that represent different variations in this

behavioral approach, Johnson and Gurr provide the principal models which apply either general systems theory (structural-functionalism) or the social psychological framework (frustration-aggression).[12] Although Johnson and Gurr reflect similarities at a broad theoretical level, they do represent two different perspectives.[13] Johnson focuses primarily upon structural factors and social conditions, while Gurr stresses individual orientation and cognitive perceptions as principal factors influencing aggregate behavior.[14] Nevertheless, both are subject to various theoretical weaknesses that render each model inadequate as a satisfactory explanation of revolution. This will become even more apparent in Chapter Three, where different attempts to apply the basic principles of these models to colonial Vietnam results in partial and misleading conclusions about the principal factors influencing the revolutionary process.

Structural-Functional Model

According to Johnson, revolutions are social changes that involve the "...intrusion of violence into civil social relations."[15] Revolution becomes a special form of social change that results from strains within a "viable society" that lead to demands for change. These demands are accompanied by the acceptance of violence by a segment of society as appropriate means to ensure particular changes within the social system. Within this context, violence is not limited to overt physical force but rather, entails all action that deliberately or unintentionally disorients the behavior of others by preventing common

normative orientation and stable expectations among the members of society. Using the Weberian concept of social action[16], Johnson describes revolutionary violence as a form of anti-social action that disrupts and destroys the functioning processes of an entire system by attacking its foundation, or in other words, its set of predictable and acceptable norms of behavior.

The structural-functional model assumes that society normally exists within a homeostatic equilibrium. Accordingly, society adapts to changing circumstances in a manner that minimizes social tension and stress. This process of adaptation allows society to readjust itself to changes that threaten systemic synchronization between value structures and modifications within the environment. The pivotal point within this initial premise is that the social system must, if it is to survive, maintain patterns of behavior that enable society to function as a whole. When changes occur, be it values, or environment, or both simultaneously, the social system must react in such a manner as to offset the threat to functional roles and patterns of behavior. If its adaptive mechanisms fail to modify patterns of behavior to accommodate threatening changes, the social system will fail to function properly and will assume a state of disequilibrium.

The disequilibrated social system is an essential condition that must exist before societal forces develop revolutionary potential. According to Johnson, this situation does not necessarily pose an immediate threat to the continuation of the system, but, purposeful "changes must be undertaken to recreate a homeostatic equilibrium, and if a new equilibrium is reached it will usually differ from the old

one."[17] A state of disequilibrium must at some point in time yield to modifications that restore homeostatic equilibrium. Whether these modifications result from revolution depends upon a number of variables.

Johnson's structural-functional model is multi-causal and attributes the occurrence of revolution to "clusters of causes" rather than one single determinant factor. The three principal clusters identified as the primary variables determining the likelihood of revolutionary outcomes are: 1) Power deflation - derived from the system's increasing dependence on the deployment of force to maintain systemic integration during periods of change; 2) Loss of authority - occurs where elites are unable to develop policies that ensure their legitimate use of force to control deviant actors within the system or rectify the disequilibrium; 3) Accelerators - rupture the disequilibrated society's pseudo-integration through the incapacity of the military to deter deviant behavior, the increasing confidence of protest groups, and successful strategic action against the means of coercion employed by elites.[18] All of these variables contribute to the possibility of revolutionary insurrection. While all three clusters are important factors, the causally determined outcome must also consider the attitudinal disposition of the armed forces and the generally perceived validity of the potential changes resulting from revolution.

The elite and the military are important factors in Johnson's structural-functional model. Each has the capability of arresting or exacerbating the conditions determining revolutionary outcomes. According to Johnson, the elite may determine the degree of "power

deflation" and "loss of authority" within a social system through a number of means. First, the elite can reduce the potential for revolution by maintaining the confidence of non-deviant actors. This is accomplished by attempting to understand the factors creating disequilibrium and pursuing policies that remedy the problem. Second, there must be the implementation of gradual change that will not threaten values that are indispensable to the continuity of the social system. Finally, the dissident leaders may be co-opted or bought off by the established elite. If the elite successfully adheres to Johnson's suggestions, and the military remains disciplined and obedient to elite commands, revolution will theoretically be averted. Likewise, if the elite is intransigent, pursuing policies that exacerbate dissynchronization or violate norms that they are charged with preserving, the possibility of revolutionary upheaval will be greatly enhanced.

At the personal level, the impact of disequilibrium and elite attempts to restore synchronization remain important factors that foster revolutionary activity and contribute to revolutionary outcomes. Although Johnson recognizes "personality needs" as motivating determinants, his primary emphasis is disequilibrium-induced tension and its effects upon developments in ideological cleavages and fragmentation within the social system. According to Johnson's model, the disequilibrated system relaxes its restraints upon normative behavior, allowing anomalous behavior to challenge established norms and roles. As alternative value systems challenge the established norms, interests become polarized and conflictual in nature. The individual, normally

subject to multiple roles (ie. father, worker, and citizen), has his roles harmoniously counterbalanced in a state of equilibrium; but, the polarization of interests resulting from disequilibrium creates internal tension between the various roles within the individual. This results in increasing pressure to align oneself with one role exclusively. Basically, this whole process results in a form of anomie where there exists a great deal of uncertainty and conflict over acceptable norms and behavior.[19] The manifestation of anomie is not sufficient cause for revolution in and of itself, but for Johnson, in conjunction with the appropriate "cluster of causes", anomie provides the psychological motivation for revolutionary activity and attempts to resynchronize values and environment.

Critique of the Structural-Functional Model

Despite the fact the Johnson incorporates a broad spectrum of extraneous and internal sources of disequilibrium, and develops a multi-causal model of revolution, his theoretical framework has a number of serious flaws. First, Johnson's definition focuses on violence as the key factor differentiating revolution from non-revolutionary social change. If violence becomes the critical variable, then one must know precisely how it is applied to the concept of revolution, particularly in terms of magnitude, forms of manifestation, purposiveness, and the element of time. The absence of these factors in Johnson's definition makes it difficult to understand, for example, the conceptual differences that might exist between short-term and long-term forces

that attempt the complete restructuring of society and those that simply strive for changes in government or policy. This implies that fundamental differences do not exist when comparing peasant revolts and great revolutions, (ie. France, 1789). According to Johnson's definition, these examples share a common conceptual premise based upon the manifestation of violence and only differ in terms of outcome, goals, and magnitude.

The principal weakness in Johnson's model is his reliance upon the concept of equilibrium. The assumption that equilibrium is an essential condition of normal society introduces a serious tautological problem into his structural-functional model. The criterion that differentiates equilibrium from disequilibrium is the effective functioning of a social system. With equilibrium understood in terms of functional capacity, all organized and operative societies are defined as social systems in equilibrium. Consequently, as Levi-Strauss remarks, "To say that a society functions is a truism; but to say that everything in a society functions is an absurdity."[20] It is reasonable to assume that most societies exist in some degree of disequilibrium, especially when dysfunction can be readily identified as group conflict or tension between opposing interests.[21] This renders the distinction between equilibrium and disequilibrium relatively meaningless.

Johnson's inability to systematically define the concept of equilibrium makes his inferences concerning disequilibrium unwieldy. As a necessary precondition for revolution, disequilibrium is inadequate as a method of isolating revolution-causing variables. First, dyssynchronization between values and environment is only verifiable

when political crisis is manifested.[22] Second, there is no distinction

between "anti-social" behavior and action that attempts to exert

political pressure without disrupting accepted behavioral patterns.

There is no attempt to differentiate forms of political crisis and this,

inadvertently, classifies all political crises as manifestations of

value-environment dyssynchronization and societal disequilibrium. As a

result, Johnson's concept of disequilibrium perceives conflicts of

interest in the political sphere as forms of anomie. This implies that

all forms of dissident behavior are the result of anomie, which in turn

is the result of disequilibrium. Finally, Johnson's perception of the

elite's capacity to restore equilibrium or suppress conflict resulting

from dyssynchronization distorts elite capabilities and fails to

recognize limitations imposed by international and domestic conditions.

In some respects, equilibrium may be coterminous with state

repression,[23] particularly where it is difficult to assess the degree

of dysfunction within a given society. This renders the concept of

equilibrium ambiguous and consequently useless as an analytical tool

capable of distinguishing revolutionary from non-revolutionary

variables.

The Frustration-Aggression Model

For Gurr, revolution is construed as a socio-political change

accomplished through violence.[24] Similar to Johnson's definition with

its emphasis on violence as the crucial distinguishing factor, Gurr

attempts to solidify this basis by specifying in greater detail his

concept of violence in order to overcome the problem of definitional ambiguity. Despite the fact that Gurr differentiates types of violence, (ie. collective and political), and attempts to demonstrate their causal relationship to revolution, his emphasis on violence as the universal common denominator in revolution diminishes the differentiating capacity of his definition when applied to divergent forms of social upheaval. Gurr may have developed the concept of violence more comprehensively than Johnson, but his definition also suffers from an inability to cope with different forms of political violence and tends to classify dissimilar events such as a coup d'etat and a major revolution, (ie. French Revolution, 1789) as similar phenomena, ignoring their social and political differences.[25]

Unlike Johnson, Ted Gurr structures his model of revolution upon the premise that psychological motivation, rather than an elusive concept of structural-functional disequilibrium, is the basis of revolutionary behavior. For Gurr, societal and structural variables affect the magnitude and scope of political violence[26] (ie. collective violence directed towards the political system and its agents), but, it is the psychological factors that provide the fundamental impetus for actual manifestations of violent behavior. The social-psychological model proposed by Gurr attempts to isolate the principal variables that motivate violence, and from this basis, derive the causal factors that determine the potential for aggregate violence against the political system.

According to the frustration-aggression model, the causal sequence begins with the development of discontent. This is the result

of individual perceptions or relative deprivation which, depending upon the extent and intensity of shared discontent among members of society, leads to participation in acts of collective violence. The degree to which discontent is politicized determines the potential for collective violence to become purposeful and directed towards the attainment of political objectives.

Within this theoretical framework, the development of discontent becomes crucial if violence is to occur. Relative deprivation determines the degree of discontent felt by the individual, and is therefore the most basic variable unit in the causal sequence leading to political violence. Gurr defines this variable as:

> ... a perceived discrepancy between man's value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them.[27]

While deprivation induces discontent which in turn motivates action, the correlation between the intensity of discontent and the probability of violence is determined by the source of deprivation, normative reasoning, and utilitarian justification. These psychological variables are primary determinants, but the correlation between discontent and violence is also influenced by secondary societal variables. These factors determine the focus of discontent on political objects; the cultural sanctions on forms of purposive and collective violence; the articulation and dissemination of symbolic appeals to justify the legitimacy of a political system and its response to

relative deprivation; and finally, institutional impediments to certain forms of action.

Critique of the Frustration-Aggression Model

Based upon the psychological function of deprivation-induced frustration, Gurr assumes that action must be motivated by an individual's psychological state and this state is the result of perceived discontent with the present and future expectations of the fulfillment of human needs. It postulates that discontent and frustration instigate behavior that acts as a pressure release mechanism. Depending upon the societal circumstances, this behavior may become purposeful and directed towards the objects that are perceived as obstructing fulfillment. Herein lies the theoretical weakness in the frustration-aggression model; in the attempt to determine principal psychological factors precipitating revolution, Gurr fails to articulate the process that mobilizes individual discontent into revolutionary movements with specific purpose and direction. Nor does Gurr specify the degrees of frustration required to transform deprivational related actions into concerted efforts to change an incumbent regime. Finally, the concepts of "relative deprivation" and "systemic frustration" oversimplify the forces that impel men to revolt. For example, they exclude the important motivational roles of religion and the action-directing function of ideology.

The weaknesses inherent in Gurr's model apply to other approaches in the social-psychological framework. This framework

maintains that societal factors may cause individuals to exist in a state of relative deprivation, (or systemic frustration), without revolting or creating a revolutionary situation. These inhibiting factors are discussed as secondary variables, and include such elements as: the control of coercive force, institutional structures, systems of support, reform capacity, and the ability to divert and displace the focus of frustration.[28] Despite its inclusion of non-psychological variables that deter revolutionary behavior, the social-psychological models fail to develop a theoretical framework that incorporates these factors as important determinants in the development of a revolution. They are discussed as variables affecting individual behavior and forms of aggregate action, rather than available political means that provide methods of mobilizing support and accentuating interest differences between identifiable groups within society. There is little attention given to the conflictual nature of a political system, or its ability to sustain certain levels of conflict without society erupting in revolution. Instead, the social-psychological models choose to elaborate, in a sophisticated manner, the relationship between behavior and psychological motivation. Consequently, these models fail to explain the difference between non-revolutionary discontent and frustration that induces a complex process culminating in revolution.

Marxist Model of Revolution

The conflicting schools of thought within Marxism make it extremely difficult to generalize about the Marxist concept of

revolution without rendering the generalization oversimplistic and

vague. Because the principal concern of this thesis is with theories of

revolution and their application to colonial Vietnam, not Marxism per

se, the following discussion will focus primarily on the theoretical

work of Karl Marx, although some consideration will be given to

amplifications by Lenin, Trotsky, and Mao.

The most commonly cited passage describing Marx's conception of

revolution is found in the preface to <u>A Contribution to the Critique of</u>

<u>Political Economy</u>:

> At a certain stage of their development, the
> material forces of society come in conflict with
> the existing relations of production, or -- what
> is but a legal expression for the same thing --
> with the property relations within which they
> have been at work hitherto. From forms of
> development of the productive forces these
> relations turn into their fetters. Then begins
> an epoch of social revolution.[29]

Furthermore, Marx adds,

> No social order ever perishes before all the
> productive forces for which there is room in it
> have developed; and new, higher relations of
> production never appear before the material
> conditions of their existence have matured in
> the womb of the old society itself.[30]

In this context, social revolution is the transformation of

society's entire mode of production with a corresponding change in its

superstructure. This denotes a conflictual relationship between the

productive forces of society, which constitute the technical capacity of

human energy to transform nature, and the social relations of production

or forms of intercourse, which consist of all social connections and

relationships between people, and their relationship to the means of production and the results of production.

While this concept of revolution involves the complete transformation of society, it also includes an important historical dimension. It is the "conditions of life", the "...sum of productive forces, a historically created relation of individuals to nature and to one another...", that determine whether or not the conflicting relationship between the forces and relations of production result in a revolutionary convulsion strong enough to overthrow the basis of the entire existing social system.[31] For Marx, complete revolution is not possible until the contradictions between the forces and relations of production become acute, resulting in the formation of a "revolutionary mass, which revolts not only against separate conditions of society up till then, but against the very `production of life' till then, the `total activity' on which it was based...."[32]

The historical dimension of Marx's concept of social revolution encompasses epochal transformations in the mode of production for given historical periods.[33] From this vantage point, revolution becomes the historical mechanism whereby the old relations of production, which hinder the productive process, are destroyed and replaced by new productive relations that correspond to the existing forces of production at the time of the revolution.[34] The active manifestation of the contradictions within the mode of production is the class struggle, which takes on political form as the revolutionary class attempts to overthrow the ruling class. While class conflict is fundamentally economic in nature, these antagonisms are maintained and

exacerbated by the existing political structures.[35] Overthrowing the

existing political apparatus is one of the initial and necessary stages

preceding the transformation of the relations of production.

Emphasizing the political element, Kautsky defines social

revolution as "the conquest of political power by a previously

subservient class and the transformation of the judicial and political

superstructure of society, particularly in the property rela-

tions...."[36] While Kautsky's definition oversimplifies Marx's concept

of revolution, it does focus upon the role of class conflict and the

acquisition of political power, both being necessary elements of Marx's

understanding of revolution. Before confronting the ruling class, the

revolutionary class must "arouse, in itself and in the masses, a moment

of enthusiasm in which it associates and mingles with society at large,

identifies itself with it, and is felt and recognized as the general

representative of this society [emphasis in original]."[37] Furthermore,

for the revolutionary class to liberate a section of society from the

confines of old institutions, especially at the magnitude envisioned by

Marx, mass support is required:

> In order to attain this liberating position, and
> the political direction of all spheres of
> society, revolutionary energy and consciousness
> of its own power do not suffice. For a popular
> revolution and the emancipation of a particular
> class of civil society to coincide, for one
> class to represent the whole of society, a
> particular class must embody and repre-sent a
> general obstacle and limitation. A particular
> social sphere must be regarded as the notorious
> crime of the whole society, so that emancipation
> from this sphere appears as a general emancipa-
> tion. [emphasis in original].[38]

Marx incorporates political conflict into a model that accounts for societal structures and the motivational factors enabling classes to mobilize and direct collective action against political objectives. Nor does Marx neglect the economic/psychological factors (ie. alienation or estrangement) that determine the conflictual nature of human relationships within society.[39] The inclusion of so many variables extends Marx's analysis to many different levels of revolutionary conflict.

Focusing on Europe, Marx outlines a number of developments and conditions that precede and percipitate revolution. Gradual class polarization is the first phase that can be readily observed.[40] As polarization continues, overt class struggle erupts as individual labourers strike out at the bourgeoisie who exploit their labour. Later, workers unite at the local level, acting as an "incoherent mass", directing their destructive action towards instruments of production and products, rather than against the conditions of production.

The development of industry expands the ranks of the proletariat, and equalizes their interests and conditions. Machinery obliterates distinctions in labour, and reduces wages to the same low level. The resulting industrial expansion increases competition, creating crises of greater magnitude that force wage levels to fluctuate dramatically. With industrialization comes increased means of communication and centralization, creating larger, compact, and better informed workers' communities. While these conditions facilitate the formation of permanent associations (ie. Trade Unions), and enable workers to fight temporary battles over the maintenance of wage levels,

competition among workers and limited organizational and political skills hinder the transformation of class struggles into a national political struggle.[41]

Before the proletariat is capable of united and concerted action, a number of conditions must prevail. First, the bourgeoisie must be involved in a constant battle with segments of the old society, foreign bourgeoisie, and elements within its own ranks who have "become antagonistic to the progress of industry...."[42] This compels the bourgeoisie to enlist the aid of the proletariat in order to fight its enemies. Thus, the bourgeoisie drags the worker into the political arena and furnishes the proletariat with the weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.[43]

The second factor which contributes to the education of the proletariat is the incorporation of "fresh elements of enlightenment and progress" by sections of the ruling class (which is generally the intelligentsia) that have joined the proletariat.[44] This occurs when the advance of industry forces a segment of the ruling class into the proletariat, and when the class struggle reaches such glaring proportions that a small portion of the ruling class freely chooses to separate and join the "revolutionary class" (ie. the proletariat). At this final stage, the bourgeoisie[45] who choose to unite with the proletariat propagate an ideology that provides the basis for proletarian unity based on the irreconcilability of class antagonisms and the inevitability of proletarian revolution. The bourgeois deologists, through their "scientific" understanding of the world, able the proletariat to acquire a "theoretical consciousness" of his

condition. This provides an ideological impetus for concerted efforts to liberate man from the fetters of the existing relations of production.[46]

In the Communist Manifesto, the historical conflict between the forces and relations of production are manifested in the antagonisms between oppressing and oppressed classes.[47] The ruling class, in order to survive as such, must subject the rest of society to its conditions of appropriation of the produce of labour. These conditions become an instrument of oppression, and eventually, in the case of capitalism, exacerbate class conflict and eventual revolution by threatening the very existence of the oppressed class. According to Marx, the ruling class becomes unfit to rule because of its inability to ensure the survival of the exploited class, the class that is the "special and essential product" of the oppressor's conditions of appropriation.[48] In conjunction with the development of "class consciousness", the oppressed class begins to fight for survival. Thus, class struggle begins as a "veiled civil war" and culminates in open class warfare and revolution, where one class acquires control over the state and transforms society accordingly.

Within Marx's concept of revolution there exists an interplay between external or material conditions, the conscious realization of these conditions, and the manner in which collective action is determined by material conditions and enlightenment. Karl Kautsky

exemplifies this interplay in his discussion on socialism and class struggle:

> ...socialism, as a doctrine, has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and, like the latter, emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other; each arises under different conditions.[49]

For Kautsky, the enlightenment of socialism is the result of science which is not available to the proletariat as a method of inquiry. Nevertheless, the proletariat must be imbued with socialism, enlightened as to its "true" condition, by those capable of employing the tools of science (ie. bourgeois ideologists), and thereby achieve the "consciousness of its task".[50] In other words, revolution is not just the result of material conditions, but a combination of environment and conscious awareness. For, as Lenin states, the failure of a revolution cannot be blamed entirely upon the absence of material conditions, rather, the inability of class leaders and ideologists to develop a "class consciousness" is considered partially responsible for revolutionary failures.[51]

Within the context of Marx's framework, the culmination of revolutionary processes requires parallel developments in the declining material conditions of an oppressed class, (resulting from immiserization, technological advances, demographic, and environmental changes created by modern industry), and the maturation of a conscious class struggle. Spontaneous uprisings resulting from frustration or deprivation may be revolutions in embryonic form, but they are not

considered revolutions until they are capable of wresting control of the state. While Marx's concept of revolution is fundamentally social, it must still manifest itself in the political sphere.

Until 1905, and the near success of revolutionary activity in Czarist Russia, Marx's emphasis on the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production as the motor of historical change, and the corresponding conclusion that revolution would occur only in the most advanced nations, remained unchallenged among his followers. However, events in Russia, and later in China, indicated that backward nations were capable of revolution. At this point, Lenin introduces the notion of a two stage revolution, which is later developed by Trotsky.[52] This attempt to explain the process whereby backward nations accelerate the revolutionary process. The two stage revolution emphasizes the role of class conflict. It focuses on the conditions permitting the alignment of various classes that are normally antagonistic towards one another, with the primary objective of overthrowing the ruling class. This is particularly important in cases where historical developments have not created one dominant revolutionary class, or the bourgeoisie is too weak to carry out the democratic revolution necessary for the further development of productive forces.[53] While Lenin and Trotsky recognize the valuable potential of the peasantry in the two stage revolution, they both considered the peasantry reactionary and subordinate to the direction and leadership of the proletariat. Mao modifies this two stage approach to explain the dominant role of the peasantry, the historically changing class alignments in China, and the necessity for colonial and semi-

colonial nations to establish a transitional state under the direction
of several revolutionary classes. According to Mao, this permits a
backward nation which is primarily composed of a large peasantry; first,
to overthrow the external constraints of imperialism by aligning the
proletariat, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and the non-comprador
bourgeoisie in a national revolutionary movement; and second, to
transform the internal feudal structure of Asian society through an
agrarian revolutionary movement based on class conflict and the
methodical elimination of the reactionary elements of society once the
national revolution has been consolidated.[54] Lenin, and those
following in the Marxist-Leninist tradition, differed from Marx in their
increased emphasis on class struggle and the capacity of revolutionary
actors to accelerate the revolutionary process. In some respects this
minimizes Marx's emphasis on the structural configuration of the
contradiction between the forces and relations of production, while
maximizing the importance of Marx's notion of class conflict.[55]

Another contribution to the Marxist concept of revolution is
Lenin's emphasis on the role of class consciousness and revolutionary
organization, and the integral role of conscious human action in the
acceleration of revolutionary developments. He argues that revolutions
do not occur in response to the brutal treatment of the "people",[56] and
that any spontaneous uprising or the development of protest or workers'
movements (without the development of class consciousness) results, at
most, in the expression of "petty demands".[57] Consequently, revolution
requires the establishment of a vanguard that is capable of magnifying
the embryonic consciousness of spontaneous revolts, transforming this

consciousness into a full understanding of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms,[58] and directing the class struggle towards the appropriation of state power.

Merging the ideas of Lenin with those of Marx, the Marxist concept of revolution becomes the conflict between a ruling class and a vanguard-led subordinate class; an increase in class polarization (resulting from the propagation of class consciousness through the efforts of the vanguard and the general class antagonism created by the increasing oppressiveness of the state's counter-revolution); and an eventual attempt to wrest control of the state and thereby achieve the political means whereby the existing social relations of production may be transformed.[59]

Despite Lenin's emphasis on class struggle rather than the development of productive forces and their corresponding antagonisms with the existing relations of production, his theory does not compensate for the ambiguity and weakness of the Marxist concept of the Asiatic mode of production and its relation to revolutionary developments in China and Vietnam.[60] In this respect, Mao attempts to adapt the Marxist model to the socio-economic and political conditions existing in China. Mao's principal theoretical contribution to the Marxist concept of revolution is the identification of the peasantry as the principal revolutionary class in Asia. Still unwilling to relinquish the guiding role of the proletariat, however, Mao argues that the peasantry is given its direction through the hegemony and ideological domination of the Communist Party, which in turn, embodies the ideals and objectives of the proletariat.

Critique of the Marxist Model of Revolution

Marx's model of revolution, although appealing in its historical treatment of the dissolution of societies, is unwieldy as a model for explaining isolated revolutionary processes. Its implicit eurocentric focus and emphasis on the role of the proletariat and contradictions within developing economic structures, creates serious problems when attempting to analyze the relationship between backward socio-economic institutions and political mobilization in peasant economies. Furthermore, the tendency of Lenin and Mao to focus on national based class struggles overlooks the impact of international political relations and domestic political conflict between rival political organizations vying to lead the revolutionary movement. More importantly, the emphasis on class struggle weakens the principal theoretical tenet in Marxism, the necessity of irreconcilable contradictions between developing forces of production and restrictive relations of production. Lenin's and Mao's focus on the voluntaristic role of vanguards and the inculcation of class consciousness fails to explain how this culminates in a popular revolution where societal contradictions have not fully developed, specifically in the case of the forces and relations of production.

The most serious deficiency in the Marxist concept of revolution is its inability to explain why advanced capitalism has not resulted in class polarization, the immizerization of the proletariat; or why capitalism has not yet produced its "gravediggers". These are the most apparent criticisms of the Marxist approach to revolution

relating to the developed regions of the world. While one may argue that the revolutionary process described in the Manifesto is still unfolding because the forces of production are still capable of functioning within the framework of the given historical relations of production, this does not explain the revolutionary processes in Asia and other backward nations. While the concept of class struggle has permitted some explanation of conflict in Asia, it oversimplifies the nature of conflict in places such as Vietnam. This difficulty is evident in structural models focusing primarily on class antagonisms.[61] Furthermore, class conflict and the concept of an active vanguard fail to account for the failures and successes of various revolutionary movements in Third World nations.[62]

Another problem in the Marxist model is the reliance on the notion of class consciousness to explain class solidarity and mobilization. This form of class consciousness requires an intellectual vanguard that is capable of inculcating the oppressed class with an understanding of its conditions and destiny. A common ideology is necessary in order to unite the diverse elements within the oppressed class, and thereby enabling the organization of a revolutionary force. While an active vanguard may be identifiable, there is little evidence to support the claims of a general revolutionary class consciousness. For example, George Rude's treatment of class consciousness, in Ideology and Popular Protest, is little more than a discussion of popular beliefs predominant among workers at various times and settings, and does not support the theory that class consciousness is a scientific truth igniting the revolutionary fury of the masses. The concept of class

consciousness does not explain the mechanisms that motivate individuals to support one particular revolutionary cause over another, or cause groups to form solid class fronts.

The final criticism of the Marxist approach to revolution, particularly the approach of Lenin and Mao, is that all social upheaval and political conflict can be reduced to class struggle. The Marxist model requires that all phenomena be interpreted as an expression of class related activity. This greatly diminishes the model's capacity to analyze events and situations where class distinctions are not readily apparent and class polarization has not occurred. The reliance upon class struggle as the explanation of revolution limits the predictive capacity of the model, since class struggle is presupposed, with revolution as a necessary outcome.

Historical Sociology Perspective

While the Marxist approach to revolution contains a number of weaknesses, its emphasis on the relationship between political conflict and socio-economic structures has had considerable impact on Historical Sociology. Scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein, Barrington Moore, Jr., S. N. Eisenstadt, and Perry Anderson realize the necessity of explaining events and developments in a broad world-historical perspective that accounts for socio-economic and political change. While Eisenstadt attempts to broaden the structural-functional model by rendering it more amenable to historical complexities, the other three have refined structural and neo-Marxist concepts of change. Summing up

Eisenstadt's concept of revolution, Gary G. Hamilton states that revolution is the process whereby premodern societal patterns are transformed into modern societal patterns. While not inherent in premodern societies, revolutionary change is construed as a minor variation in bureaucratic systems where "traditional rulers" effectively exclude opposition groups from access to resources. Attempts to maintain this exclusion generates new social, economic, and religious groups. In conjunction with "breakthroughs" in revolutionary symbols, ideologies, and organizational principles, a new relationship is created between center and periphery groups; resulting in the transformation of the traditional social and cultural order.[63]

On the other hand, Wallerstein, Anderson, and Moore, focus on the broader structural relationships existing at the economic and political level rather than the more ambiguous symbolic/cultural sphere. Anderson examines the impact of international struggles and war on regime types, arguing that secular conflict is resolved at the political level, not the economic or cultural sphere. In other words, shifts in the relations of production are determined by the "construction and deconstruction" of States.[64] Wallerstein seeks to account for differing political developments on the basis of socio-economic structure, its influence on the formation of political institutions, and the subsequent ability of these institutions to compete within the world economic system.[65] However, of the three, Moore is most concerned with examining revolution specifically.

According to Moore, there are three types of revolutions: 1) bourgeois revolutions which culminate in Western democracy; 2)

conservative revolutions from above which result in fascism; and 3)
peasant revolutions leading to communism.[66] In the case of peasant
revolutions, which is most pertinent to the study of Vietnam, Moore
analyzes the links between the peasant community and the overlord,
property and class divisions within the peasantry itself, and the degree
of solidarity and cohesiveness of the peasant community within a given
historical context.[67] He argues that the capacity of the ruling elite
or intermediary elite to prevent or deter revolutionary activity depends
on the extent to which the various relations mentioned above are non-
conflictual and closely linked. Similar to the Moral Economy approach
of Wolf and Scott, discussed in Chapter Three, Moore concludes that in
addition to closely linked/non-conflictual relations, the peasantry must
perceive the contributions and services of those who "fight, rule, and
pray" as not being grossly disproportionate to the cost born by
peasants.[68] In other words, peasants must feel that the socio-economic
system corresponds to their traditional sense of justice.

Moore's analysis in Social Origins distinguishes two approaches
to the study of revolution. The first examines the general structural
conditions under which an exploited segment of the population seizes
political power. The second emphasizes the circumstances where people
with solid material reasons for grievance actually articulate these
grievances and act on them.[69] The second emphasis is pursued by Moral
Economists such as Wolf and Scott.[70] The first is developed and
refined by Theda Skocpol who incorporates the important role of
transnational relations and their impact on emerging revolutionary
situations into Moore's structural framework.

Skocpol overcomes many of the weaknesses inherent in Moore's approach by focusing on politics as the determining factor influencing revolutionary outcomes, not simply socio-economic developments.[71] While the latter is important in that it determines various levels of social stratification, the formation of institutions, and the nature of class antagonisms and coalitions, it is inevitably the configuration of political relationships that determines whether a regime is susceptible to revolution. This does not exclude the important role of economic factors, for Skocpol argues,

> What is unique to social revolution is that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in mutually reinforcing fashion. And these changes occur through intense sociopolitical conflicts in which class struggles play a key role.[72]

However, Skocpol's emphasis on the structural element of revolution indicates that the crucial variables are the factors determining the state's organization and use of coercion, and its ability to control or suppress class conflict.[73] In this context, unequal and competitive transnational structures (such as states with different military or economic strengths competing for markets or territories) are primary factors shaping state and class structures and revolutionary situations (conjunctures). Transnational relations directly contribute and influence revolutionary crises in a number of ways: 1) by undermining state control of the organization and use of coercion; 2) providing "space" or time for revolutionary forces to consolidate their political position; and 3) establishing the economic and political parameters governing the scope and nature of revolutionary activity.

Another element that Skocpol includes in her theoretical framework is the notion of "world-time". Thus, "actors in later revolutions may be influenced by developments in earlier ones ..."; and "breakthroughs" in technological or organizational innovations such as new forms of revolutionary parties "may intervene between the occurrence of one broadly similar revolution and another."[74] According to Skocpol, this results in new opportunities and necessities created for later revolutions that were not available to or imposed upon earlier revolutions.

With politics (defined as the organization and use of coercion) and transnational structures as the principal focus in Skocpol's theoretical model, the state emerges as crucial component in the revolutionary process. Unlike traditional Marxist theory that argues that the state is the political arm of the dominant class, Skocpol believes that the state is relatively autonomous. She argues that the state is an autonomous structure with a logic and an interest that is not equivalent to or fused with the interests of the dominant class or polity.[75] In this respect, the state mediates class conflict in its attempt to maintain order and stability, thereby ensuring its own continuance. However, the state's position within the international economic and political system influences its ability to mediate the impact of transnational factors. In the case of transnational conflicts or recessionary trends on weak economies, state policies may exacerbate class antagonisms and increase conflict between state organizations and

dominant classes. Nevertheless, unless there is a definite weakening in the state's capacity to use and control its means of coercion a revolutionary crisis will not emerge.

The advantages of Skocpol's model, or what she describes as the Socio-Historical approach to revolution, is its capacity to account for conditions that regulate the political dimension of revolutionary forces. Without excluding the important impact of socio-economic developments on class structure and conflict, Skocpol incorporates into her model the crucial factors affecting the state's use of force and the ability of various sectors or groups within society to challenge that power when it is weakened by extraneous forces. The emphasis on transnational variables and "world-time" (world-historical context) avoids the fallacy of explaining revolutionary processes as "volcanic"; as explosions caused by relative deprivation, anomie (societal dysfunction), or moral indignation.

Despite the strengths of Skocpol's Socio-historical approach, it is relatively weak in its ability to formulate a conceptual model of the processes following the emergence of a revolutionary situation. This is in part the result of an emphasis on rapid change in her definition of revolution and its implicit neglect of the various groups contending with one another, and with the incumbent regime. While I accept the rest of her definition,[76] the implication of rapid change minimizes the transitional phase which involves the consolidation of political control by revolutionary forces. This is particularly relevant to colonial Vietnam where the revolution was protracted and underwent a number of phases involving different group and class

coalitions. Consequently, Skocpol's approach requires the incorporation of an additional theoretical dimension that focuses more clearly on what Skocpol describes as the "intermesh" of groups challenging the incumbent regime following the emergence of a revolutionary situation.

Charles Tilly provides a model that complements that of Skocpol by focusing on the conflict and coalitions of various groups challenging the political hegemony of the state. This provides the necessary theoretical addition to Skocpol's emphasis on the emergence of revolutionary situations. Unlike Skocpol's model, Tilly's concept of multiple sovereignty provides a better theoretical basis for examining group interaction during a revolutionary situation.[77] While Tilly recognizes the importance of accounting for structural circumstances determining the "military vulnerability of the state, the internal organization of its opposition, and the character of coalitions among classes.";[78] his model is weak in its capacity to analyze factors contributing to the emergence of a revolutionary situation. This is primarily because he fails to systematically account for the impact of transnational variables influencing the mobilization and accessibility of resources used by the state and challenging groups. But, it does offer a powerful conceptual framework for understanding the political conflict between the state and various challenging groups. This is important if one is to understand both the emergence of revolutionary situations and the capacity of revolutionary groups to exploit these situations.

For Tilly, the identifying feature of revolution is the development of multiple sovereignty. Thus, revolution commences when

the government, previously under the control of a single sovereign
polity, is subjected to competing and mutually exclusive claims on the
part of two or more distinct polities; and revolution ceases when a
single sovereign polity acquires control over the government.[79] The
critical factor in Tilly's definition of revolution is the emergence of
conflicting groups that exercise control over different segments of a
shared population. These are described as separate polities which are
defined as the collective action of members and of the government, with
government being the "...organization which controls the principal
concentrated means of coercion within the population."[80]

The group focused analysis is more useful here than class
analysis because it facilitates the conceptualization of non-economic as
well as economic relationships in the context of multiple sovereignty.
This is important given the complex configuration of conflicting
polities and the extent to which socio-economic characteristics and
political ties intersect. In colonial Vietnam, class analysis is
cumbersome given the diverse alignments between different sectors of
Vietnamese society and the revolutionary movement. The second important
characteristic of Tilly's group analysis is its modeling of the complex
interaction of various factors affecting the collective action of
political contenders: 1) the basis of the group power or resources; 2)
the capacity to mobilize resources; and 3) the capacity of the group
organization to deal with opportunities or threats.

While Tilly's model will be discussed in greater detail in
Chapter Five, there is one important weakness that requires immediate
discussion. Although Tilly attempts to account for the direction and

solidarity of group action on the basis of shared interests, it does not
account for the flexibility and tenacity of revolutionary organizations
such as the Indochinese Communist Party. Factors such as loyalty,
mobilization, and coalitions are derived through various forms of
cost/benefit analysis. In many respects, this approximates the Public
Choice model used by Popkin and critiqued in Chapter Three. Sharing
some of the weaknesses inherent in the Public Choice approach, Tilly's
model can be improved by developing the concept of ideology and its
application to the revolutionary process.

Ideology

Investigating the process of revolution in colonial Vietnam
presents a number of challenges at the theoretical level. While the
combined frameworks of Skocpol and Tilly provide an adequate model of
revolution at the structural and group level, there is an important
dimension that is neglected. When emphasizing the role of transnational
and world-historical structures or groups and group mobilization, it is
easy to forget that it is human agents affecting change, not structures
or groups. For this reason it is necessary to incorporate another
theoretical component into the Historical Sociological approach of
Skocpol and Tilly.

When Marx states that "Men make their own history...", with the
qualification that "they do not make it as they please...", he
implicitly denies the active role of ideology and its capacity to direct
history.[81] Admittedly, men do not make history under conditions they

choose. However, to imply that human action is solely determined by structural circumstances ignores the fact that human actors have a wide range of options and alternatives within their respective historical and structural contexts. Ignoring the function of ideology relegates the cognitive element of human action to a peripheral role. This creates serious problems when faced with the teleological and creative component of ideology and its potential effect on decision-making of principal actors in the revolutionary process.[82] It is not sufficient to dismiss the role of ideology by assuming a priori that it is a reflection of the socio-economic structure. Conversely, placing too great an importance on cognitive and ideological factors distorts the actual limitations and restrictions imposed on human action by social, political, and economic institutions.[83]

While Skocpol's work generally avoids discussing the role of ideology, her analysis incorporates "world history" or past historical experiences as action or motivational referents for participants in the revolutionary process.[84] Similarly, Tilly implicitly acknowledges the powerful role of ideology in the formation, proliferation and mobilization of groups oriented towards the transformation of society.[85] However, neither Skocpol nor Tilly develop this component of the revolutionary process.

In order to understand the importance of ideology it is necessary to define its function within the revolutionary process. First, ideology implies that "teleological reasoning" permits human agents to purposefully choose to act or not to act in a particular manner in a perceived set of circumstances for the purpose of bringing

about some intentional outcome.[86] Whether in fact the outcome is the
one intended, which in the broader historical context is rarely the
case, ideology permits human agents to evaluate and decide upon a
particular course of action which affects the overall outcome of the
revolutionary process. In this context, ideology is an intervening
variable which mediates the impact of socio-economic and political
conditions and purposeful human action. In other words, ideology acts
as the mediating vehicle through which reality is perceived and acted
upon.[87] This does not mean that ideology itself is not influenced by
socio-economic and political factors. However, the question of causal
primacy between structures and ideas is irrelevant in the context of
this thesis.[88]

More specifically, ideology provides groups and individuals
with a cognitive orientation towards particular forms of action. This
is crucial if one is to understand why some revolutionary organizations
successfully exploit opportunities while others do not. This also
applies to an organization's capacity to confront threats and remain
resilient during periods of repression. The significance of this
function is not that ideology "causes one to do", but rather, it "gives
one cause for doing".[89] The emphasis on ideology as a "cause for
doing" contains a number of implicit assumptions about the role of human
agents and their ability to act independently of structural
influences.[90] This negates the deterministic causality of general
structures, but still acknowledges the vital influence and limitations
they impose upon individual and group action. For example, socio-
economic structures not only create limits, they also reinforce and

influence modifications in ideological perceptions of the nature of

those limits. Likewise, the socio-economic structures can be modified

or influenced by ideologically motivated action with teleological

objectives. The particular relation between ideology and structures,

and their influence on human agents, becomes one of reciprocity and

mutual reinforcement; resulting in an aggregate effect upon the process

of revolution.

If ideology is to be a useful analytical tool for understanding

revolutionary processes, it must explain, to some degree, the function

of purposive action and commitment to political and social change.

While there are numerous theories describing the role of ideology in the

political process, the one most suitable for the study of revolution is

Willard A. Mullins' concept of ideology as a "language of action".[91]

Mullins defines ideology as,

> a logically coherent system of symbols which,
> within a more or less sophisticated conception
> of history, links the cognitive and evaluative
> perception of one's social condition -- espe-
> cially its prospects for the future -- to a
> program of collective action for the
> maintenance, alteration or transformation of
> society.[92]

In this context, ideology must be distinguished from ad hoc

propaganda and ambiguous, unarticulated conceptions such as "ethos,

spirit of the times, Weltanschauung, or public opinion."[93] Neither is

ideology to be misconstrued as political culture, which subsumes

ideology and consists of the symbolic forms of myths, religion,

philosophy, utopian thought, and science.[94] Rather, ideology is

understood functionally as consisting of a number of general characteristics or qualities that relate to the transposition of thought into purposive action.

In the most general sense, ideologies contain, "in varying proportions, elements of explanation (of fact and of history), justification (of demands), and faith or belief (in the ultimate truth of rightness of their case)."[95] More importantly, ideology functions as an "integrat[or] of religious beliefs and values, philosophical conceptions, and empirical propositions (explicit or implicit)."[96] Ideology differs from pure religion in the empirical orientation of its evaluative/action dimension, while sharing a similar concern for moral judgments. It is distinguished from pure philosophy in that philosophy focuses on "ultimate concerns" while ideology, as a "framework for beliefs and insights that have immediate relevance for social and political action," deals with "ultimate concerns" only to the degree to which they touch upon "man's self-comprehension, his place in the world and his share in shaping it."[97] The "ultimate" norms and insights of philosophy and religion provide ideology with a framework for particularizing universal ideals in the context of concerted action.[98] Finally, unlike political myths, ideology relies on a "form of logic" and "correct categories" to "explicate the significance of events, situations and possible courses of human action."[99] But, ideology differs from science in that it seeks to understand phenomena with reference to normative categories, and is concerned with dilemmas of policy, choice, and commitment.[100]

While the preceding discussion differentiates ideology from other cognitive frameworks, Mullins provides a framework for understanding ideology and its role in the revolutionary process. First, ideology contains an historical dimension that involves a teleological conception of the world. This refers to the ability to conceptualize historical developments and imagine "qualitatively new social arrangements" and the means whereby individuals and groups can effectively bring about these new arrangements.[101] Second, the cognitive and evaluative power of ideology permits the simplification and ordering of a myriad of activities and events; facilitating the conceptualization and evaluation of reality, "not merely as it exists, but also as it might be shaped depending on the intervention of politically organized human beings in the historical process."[102] This incorporates a system of logical coherence which has significance within a given socio-cultural situation, and is not merely an exercise in syllogistic reasoning. In other words, ideology must be sensible in the cultural context in which it is being employed, without necessarily utilizing formal logical argument.

However, as Seliger notes, the prescriptive process can be divided into a cognitive and evaluative function.[103] This relates to the flexibility of an ideology and its capacity to distinguish and mediate between compromises in fundamental values and premises, and compromises required to render programs of action operative. This is particularly important when assessing the flexibility of groups promoting revolutionary action and the extent to which these groups successfully modify policies to meet changing circumstances. In other

words, the extent to which an ideology is pragmatic, while remaining consistent in its teleological objectives, normative premises, and analytical framework, influences the extent to which a group may operate effectively within a given structural context.[104]

All of the preceding elements are components of the action orientation function of ideology. However, while Mullins disregards the "emotivist" view of ideology and its relation to action, he does not account for the tenacity and persistence of successful revolutionary organizations, and the extent to which ideology affects commitment and zeal among revolutionary activists and their followers. This does not presume, as does the "emotivist" view, that ideologies motivate action by triggering and motivating the expression of "deep moral feelings."[105] In this I agree with Mullins. Nevertheless, it is important to analyze what may be described as the religiosity of different ideologies. This does not detract from the evaluative and prescriptive components of ideology, but rather, explains the capacity of ideology to motivate forms of personal sacrifice, altruistic behavior, collective unity, and dedication to long-term objectives. Without these qualities, it is unlikely that the Indochinese Communist Party would have been capable of surviving approximately twenty-four years of colonial repression. Nor could it have dominated the revolutionary movement in Vietnam without inculcating these qualities into its cadre and supporters.

The concept of religiosity does not deny the influential reciprocity existing between ideology and organizational structures which motivate particular forms of behavior. However, as Marxist-

Leninist theorists point out, the problem of organizational structures supplanting ideological motivations by taking on an internal logic of their own is overcome by forming a small elite party that retains ideological purity and achieves objectives through other "instrumental" organizations.[106] The more important question is to what extent an ideology is capable of magnifying and propagating faith in a particular cognitive framework. While the effectiveness and internal consistency of an ideology's cognitive and evaluative functions may attract some adherents, it is the ability to evoke an image of "rightness" that motivates individuals to sacrifice personal interests for collective objectives.

With the addition of ideology, the combined Socio-Historical and Group Conflict model permit a more convincing explanation of the revolution in colonial Vietnam. The following chapters offer some indication of the potential value of combining these two approaches, and the superiority of this explanatory framework over other models used to explain revolutionary processes in Vietnam. I do not pretend to have answered the many theoretical problems confronting the study of revolutions. However, it is hoped that this thesis will demonstrate, at least to some extent, the feasibility of combining the strengths of two flexible models of revolution which are capable of accounting for the historical uniqueness of Vietnam, and can account for important aspects of the revolutionary process which are neglected by other theoretical frameworks.

NOTES

[1] For a more complete discussion of the difficulties of assigning relative causal weight to variables in an historical context see Raymond Martin, "Causes, Conditions, and Causal Importance", History and Theory, Vol. XXI, No. 1, 1982, pp. 53-74.

One area which will not be dealt with in this thesis is the studies of revolution based on statistically oriented empirical analysis. I do not wish to imply that these models are any less important. However, debates within this field indicate that there are still numerous problems with using the statistical approach and assessing the existing aggregate data sources. See chapter 2, "Inconsistencies and Inadequacies in Previous Analyses of Political Instability" in David Sanders, Patterns of Political Instability, (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1981). Cf. Ekkart Zimmermann, Political Violence, Crises, and Revolutions: Theories and Research, (Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1983); and Stephen J. Andriole and Gerald W. Hopple, Revolution and Political Instability Applied Research Methods, (London: Frances Pinter Pub. Ltd., 1984).

One of the difficulties stemming from various statistical interpretations of existing aggregate data is that it gives rise to contradictory conclusions over the role of important variables. For example, there is considerable disagreement over the implications of urbanization. According to Sanders, based upon a mutually consistent sample, Lipset found that increased urbanization produced "proportionately large increases in stability..." and the Feierabends' found the inverse where increases in urbanization resulted in a proportionately higher level of instability. Sanders, Patterns of Political Instability, p. 44 ff.. However, such problems are not confined to statistical analysis. The search for preconditions and precipitant factors leading to social upheaval in France in 1789 has resulted in numerous debates and disagreements among historians. For a summary of these differences see George Rude in Interpretations of the French Revolution, The Historical Association, General Series No. 47, rev. 1972, rpt. 1979.

[2] For a general overview and synopsis of the developments in the predominant theories of revolution see Jack A. Goldstone, "Theories of Revolutions: The Third Generation", World Politics, (April 1980), pp. 425-453. Goldstone provides a discussion of the most recent theorists on revolution, the "third generation", who have been at the forefront of the current developments in the Historical Sociological approach. Most of the models in this category draw to some extent from the Marxist/Neo-Marxist framework. This chapter will briefly discuss the principal representatives of each of these theoretical approaches. However, in the case of the Marxist conflict analysis approach, the plethora of differing Marxist and Neo-Marxist perspectives creates a difficult

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problem when attempting to designate representative models. Because of
this problem I will concentrate on the principal framework established
by Marx and Lenin, only alluding to other theorists from time to time.

[3] See Theda Skocpol (ed.), Vision and Method in Historical
Sociology, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[4] Peter Knap, in "Can Social Theory Escape from History? Views of
History in Social Science", History and Theory, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1984, p.
33, argues that some social scientists design models purporting to be
universal, "but are actually ideographic descriptions of aspects of a
society at a single time and place." He adds,

> Other models are so ahistorical that they are
> "general" only because they are tautological and
> vacuous. A few social theorists claim that human
> behavior can be [explained] without reference to
> historical developments. Others believe that history
> and social reality are ultimately inextricable, but
> they leave the problems of context to the historians
> or to practitioners of comparative studies. Finally,
> most practicing social scientists proceed with one or
> another view of history, yet never make their view
> explicit. (Ibid.).

Knap's critique of the social sciences is a fair assessment of much of
the theorizing about revolution in some of the current literature.
However, in the case of Historical Sociology, the emphasis on historical
context avoids many of the problems mentioned by Knap.

[5] Historical Sociology is simply a general term describing models
that emphasize the historical element of social processes, attempting to
explain broad developments in an holistic context that account for
historical uniqueness. Unlike the more behavioural-oriented models
proposed by Ted Gurr and Chalmers Johnson, Historical Sociological
approaches do not develop highly structured causal patterns fitting all
phenomena into one model. Rather, the approaches of Skocpol and Tilly
designate important variables or structures that are crucial to the
revolutionary process, but without attempting to separate these
variables from their historical setting. It should be noted that
Skocpol's socio-historical approach is not to be confused with
Historical Sociology. Skocpol's model is a subset of the broader
category of Historical Sociology.

[6] Goldstone, "Theories of Revolutions: The Third Generation", p.
425.

[7] Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution, (London: Jonathan
Cape, 1953), p. 19.

[8] Cf. Charles Tilly, Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984), pp. 100ff.

[9] Precipitant variables are the factors that begin a revolution. Preconditions are the circumstances that "make it possible for the precipitants to bring about political violence... ." Harry Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal Wars", Why Revolution?, eds. Clifford T. Paynton and Robert Blackey, (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Pub. Co., Inc., 1971, p. 127).

[10] The general systems approach identifies social conditions (ie. economic conditions, division of labour, social stratification and mobility, geographic and demographic factors), as the principal variables that determine revolutionary behavior. The social-psychological approach perceives attitudes, expectations, internal tension, and deprivation as being the determining variables of revolution. Cf. Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal Wars", pp.134f.

[11] Charles Tilly, "Food Supply and Public Order in Modern Europe", The Formation of National States in Western Europe, ed. Charles Tilly, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 390.

[12] Ivo K. Feierabend et. al.and James C. Davies offer other behavioral models that are premised upon psychological frustration-aggression constructs. For Davies, revolution is most likely to occur when a prolonged period of "objective" economic and social development is followed by a period of sharp reversal. This is incorporated by Gurr in one of his scenarios on patterns of deprivation leading to political violence. Feierabend et. al., on the other hand, shift their emphasis towards societal factors, using their concept of "systemic frustration" to conceptualize deprivation in terms of collectively experienced strain. Individual frustration is assumed to exist at an aggregate level, resulting from the social system's interference with the attainment and maintenance of social aspirations, values, and goals. In this context, systemic frustration is similar to Gurr's relative deprivation, although couched in terms that express a form of aggregate frustration created by the social system. Cf. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), rpt. 1974, pp. 56ff., and James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution", Issues in Comparative Politics, eds. Robert J. Jackson and Michael B. Stein, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 370-385. See also Ivo K. Feierabend et al., "The Comparative Study of Revolution and Violence", Comparative Politics, Vol. 5, No. 3, (April 1973), pp. 393-424. Cf. Roderick Aya's critique of the Feierabend's model in "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence", Theory and Society, Vol. 8, No. 1, (July 1979), pp. 55ff.. Neil Smelser, in his study Theory of Collective Behavior, (New York: The Free Press, 1962), takes a broader systems approach similar to Johnson's structural-functional model. While Smelser's framework differs in its application

of the Parsonian "social system", it is subject to many of the same criticisms directed at Johnson. See Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence", pp. 59ff..

[13] The similarities between Johnson and Gurr provide an example where the systems approach and social-psychological approach intersect conceptually. Gurr begins with an aggregate psychological state, then moves backwards to locate social determinants, and finally forward to the behavioral outcome. Johnson begins with social change as the determinant variable, and then goes directly to the behavioral outcome with limited reference to the intervening psychological variables. See footnote 51 in Aya's "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence".

[14] Cf. Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal Wars", pp. 134f.

[15] Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change, 2nd edition, Stanford: (Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 1. The basis of his definition is drawn from pp. 1-8.

[16] Ibid., p.8. Action is defined as the moment when an individual attaches subjective meaning to his behavior. Social action is action that takes others into consideration.

[17] Ibid., p. 62.

[18] Ibid., pp. 93f..

[19] Cf. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 41.

[20] Cited by Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers 1500-1660, Vol. I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 50.

[21] Cf. Ibid., p. 50.

[22] Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence", p. 61.

[23] Using a different argument, state repression may be coterminous with forced integration that does not remedy the condition of disequilibrium.

[24] Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 5.

[25] According to Lawrence Stone, loose definitions of revolution result in three difficulties:

> 1) There is a wide range of changes of government which are neither a mere substitution of personalities in positions of power nor a prelude to the restructuring of society.

2)   It is impossible to incorporate conservative counterrevolutions into the definition.

3)   It is difficult to distinguish between colonial wars, civil wars, and social revolutions.

Lawrence Stone, "Theories of Revolution", Why Revolution?, eds. Clifford T. Paynton and Robert Blackey, (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co, Inc., 1971), p. 264.

[26] The extreme form of political violence is identified as revolution, although a typology is never clearly outlined.

[27] Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 13, cf. p. 24.

[28] Ibid., passim; for a discussion on the Feierabends, see Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence", footnote 69.

[29] Karl Marx, the preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker, 2nd edition, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), pp. 4-5.

[30] Ibid., p. 5.

[31] Karl Marx, The German Ideology, The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd edition., ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), pp. 164f..

[32] Ibid., p. 165.

[33] Marx describes the historical transition from undeveloped to developed modes of production as a process of stages: beginning with Tribal ownership, to Ancient Communal or State ownership, to Feudal or Estate property relations, and finally to Bourgeois or Capitalist ownership. Ibid., pp. 151ff. However, in the preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Marx excludes Tribal property forms, describing the Asiatic mode of production as the initial stage of development. (p. 5).

[34] In The German Ideology, Marx clearly demonstrates that his analysis of revolution is from a world-historical perspective. In other words revolution, as social revolution or an epochal transformation of the existing mode of production, can only develop within a world context. Otherwise, a local or national revolution, by necessity, being bound to the intercourse of the international economy, finds its attempts to establish new socio-economic structures impeded and destroyed. (pp. 161f.) A similar argument, although in a different form, is advanced in the Critique of the Gotha Program, and the Manifesto of the Communist Party. Both works are found in the The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd edition., ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978).

[35] In the critical marginal notes on "The King of Prussia and Social Reform", Marx states, "Every revolution dissolves the old society and to that extent it is social. Every revolution overthrows the old power and to that extent it is political." (Emphasis in text). The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd edition., ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), p. 130.

[36] Cited by Robert C. Tucker, "The Marxian Revolutionary Idea", Why Revolution?, eds. Clifford T. Paynton and Robert Blackey, (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Pub. Co., Inc., 1971), p. 216. Cf. Perez Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers 1500-1660, Vol. I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 12f..

[37] Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction", The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), p. 62.

[38] Ibid., pp. 61-62.

[39] Alienation is the result of productive relations that project the illusion that individual and cooperative productive forces are independent of the will and action of man. For this to become an "intolerable" power influencing the generation of revolutionary activity, "it must necessarily have rendered the great mass of humanity 'propertyless,' and produced at the same time, the contradiction of an existing world of wealth and culture, both of which conditions presuppose a great increase in productive power...". Marx, The German Ideology, p. 161. Marx adds,

> this development of productive forces... is an absolutely necessary practical premise because without it want is merely made general, and with destitution the struggle for necessities and all the old filthy business would be necessarily reproduced. [emphasis in original]. (Ibid., p. 161).

For further discussion of the philosophical and psychological aspects of alienation see the section on "Estranged Labour" in Marx's Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978, pp. 70ff..

[40] Karl Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978, pp. 479-480. In the modern era, or the capitalist mode of production,

> The lower strata of the middle class -- the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants -- all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for

the scale for which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. (Ibid.).

[41] The acquisition of political power is an important factor in the Marxist perspective of revolution.

The state is a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state arises where, when and insofar as class antagonisms objectively cannot be reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable.

Quoted from Vladmir Lenin, "The State and Revolution", The Lenin Anthology, ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975), p. 314; cf. Marx, The Civil War in France, The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), p. 630.

[42] Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 481.

[43] Ibid., p. 481.

[44] Ibid., p. 481.

[45] Marx claims that these are the bourgeois intellectuals who have raised themselves to the level of theoretically comprehending the historical movement as a whole. Ibid., p. 481.

[46] See Marx, "Alienation and Social Classes", p. 134.

[47] Cf. Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 483.

[48] Ibid., pp. 482f.

[49] Cited by Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", p. 28.

[50] Ibid., p. 28.

[51] Ibid., p. 26 fn. 6.

[52] William Friedland et al., Revolutionary Theory, (Totowa, NJ: Allanheld, Osmun & Co. Pubs., Inc., 1982), p. 19.

[53] As stated above, the concept of the two stage or compressed stages of revolution was later developed in greater detail by Leon Trotsky. For Trotsky, in backward nations where the Bourgeoisie is too weak to carry out a revolution on its own behalf, it must align with the proletariat. The proletariat becomes the driving force in the

revolution, despite its numerical weakness, because of its concentration and strategic location in urban centers. It also provides leadership for the peasantry which he considered incapable of autonomous action. Once the revolution begins it continues uninterrupted as it passes through the bourgeois stage and onto the socialist stage. In this state of permanent revolution, conflict is manifested in civil war, changing class alignments, and other forms of struggle. However, Trotsky notes that the if the revolution is to succeed at the socialist phase it must be supported by corresponding revolutionary developments on the part of the proletariat in industrialized nations. See Ibid., pp. 21f..

[54] See the "Introductory Note" of chapter two, by M. Rejai, ed., in Mao Tse-tung, On Revolution and War, Selections from Mao's Writings, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 74ff..

[55] Perry Anderson argues that Marx oscillates between class struggle on the one hand, and contradictions between the forces and relations of production on the other, as the primary motor of historical change. Perry Anderson, In the Tracks of Historical Materialism, (London: Verso Editions, 1983), pp. 33ff.. While this disjuncture within Marx's writings is subject to debate, it is evident that Lenin and Mao definitely emphasize class struggle. Cf. John Bryan Starr, Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 99ff..

[56] Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", p.43.

[57] Ibid., p. 26 fn. 6, 27, 29.

[58] See George Rude, Ideology and Popular Protest, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 17ff. for a discussion of the ambiguity and lack of conceptual clarity in Marx's idea of class consciousness. Lukas and Gramsci are shown to have diverged from Marx's perceived intentions while Lenin has remained somewhat truer to the original context. For a scholarly discussion on Gramsci's concepts of ideology and class consciousness see Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), especially Chapter Six on "Hegemony, Historical Bloc, and Italian History".

[59] The necessity of controlling state power before society may be transformed is evident where Marx describes the State as a "public force organized for social enslavement" and "an engine of class despotism." Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 630; cf. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", p. 314.

[60] See George Lichtheim's discussion of the ambiguity and problems in the Marxist concept of the Asiatic mode of production, in "Oriental Despotism", The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays, (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).

[61] This is evident in Paige's analysis of revolutionary activity in colonial Vietnam. While this problem is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three under the subheading Structural Approach, it is also treated at various points throughout the thesis.

[62] One of the problems with class conflict, while theoretically determined in the context of the mode of production (See Marx, The German Ideology, p. 170), is that the struggle is often defined as one of antagonism between owners and non-owners. This results in an unrealistic dichotomization of society into two homogeneous classes. According to Marx, the system of appropriation that fuels modern industry, because of its competitive nature, creates a growing rift between those who own and those who do not. Another factor in class polarization is the changes and conditions wrought by modern industrialization that reduce the membership of one class while increasing the size of the other. In addition, modern industry and its system of appropriation create growing pauperism that supposedly exacerbates the tensions between classes. Nevertheless, these conditions and development are only used loosely when applied to Vietnam. There is often the failure to examine and account for the complex cultural and organizational relationships within heterogeneous groups such as the Vietnamese peasantry. This creates difficulties when attempting to apply class analysis that deemphasizes the unique characteristics of a peasant society

[63]Gary G. Hamilton, "Configurations in History: The Historical Sociology of S. N. Eisenstadt", Vision and Method in Historical Sociology, ed. Theda Skocpol, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 101,107.

[64]Mary Fulbrook and Theda Skocpol, "Destined Pathways: The Historical Sociology of Perry Anderson", Vision and Method in Historical Sociology, ed. Theda Skocpol, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 170.

[65]See Peter Gourevitch, "Review Article: The International System and Regime Formation", Comparative Politics, (April 1978), passim.

[66]Barrington Moore, Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp. 413ff.

[67]Ibid., p. 468.

[68]Ibid., p. 471.

[69]Charles Tilly, Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984), p. 106.

[70]The Moral Economy approach has a number of weaknesses that are discussed in Chapter Three. Interestingly, Moore has chosen to pursue the second emphasis in his most recent works. See Barrington Moore, Jr., Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt, (White Plains, NY: Sharpe, 1978).

[71]The theoretical frameworks of Skocpol and Tilly are the basis of the alternative approach to revolution formulated in this thesis. Because of the importance of both models, they are each dealt with in greater detail in Chapters Four and Five respectively.

[72]Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 4f..

[73]The notion of structures or structural analysis is often used, but frequently inadequately defined. The simplest and most concise definition I can offer is that structures in this context does not refer to concrete social institutions, but the relationships that exist between these institutions. See David A. Gold et al., "Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of the Capitalist State", Monthly Review, (October 1975), p. 36.

[74]Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pp. 23f..

[75]Ibid., p. 29

> State organizations necessarily compete to some extent with the dominant class(es) in appropriating resources from the economy and society. And the objectives to which the resources, once appropriated, are devoted may very well be at variance with the existing dominant-class interests. Resources may be used to strengthen the bulk and autonomy of the state itself -- something necessarily threatening to the dominant class unless the greater state power is indispensably needed and actually used to support dominant-class interests. But the use of state power to support dominant-class interests is not inevitable. (Ibid., p.30).

[76]Ibid., p. 4.

> Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below. Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflicts and transformative

> processes above all by the combination of two
> coincidences: the coincidence of societal stuctural
> change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of
> political and social transformation. (Ibid.).

[77]Multiple sovereignty is described most simply as a condition in which,

> ...mobilized political contenders -- be they dissident
> elites, popular movements, or a tactical coalition of
> the two -- are rebuffed in their bid for authority-
> sharing by incumbent power holders, and then obtain
> practical recognition for their claims to exclusive
> legitimacy from important segments of the population
> at large.

Quoted from Roderick Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence", Theory and Society, Vol. 8, No. 1, (July 1979), pp. 44-45.

[78]Tilly, Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons, pp. 104f..

[79]Tilly, "Revolutions and Collective Violence", Handbook of Political Science Macro-Political Theory, Vol. 3, eds. F.I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, (Don mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., Inc., 1975), p. 519, 520.

[80]Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1978), p. 52.

[81]Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker, 2nd edition, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1978), p. 595. It is interesting to note that according to Engels, interpreters of Marx often place too great an emphasis on the "economic side" of human events. However, it must be noted, that for Engels:

> The economic situation is the basis, but the various
> elements of the superstructure: political forms of the
> class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions
> established by the victorious class after a successful
> battle, etc., juridical forms, and then even the
> reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains
> of the participants, political, juristic,
> philosophical theories, religious views and their
> further development into systems of dogmas, also

> exercise their influence upon the course of the
> historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in
> determining their form.

Quoted from a letter to Joseph Bloch September 21-22, 1890, The Marx-
Engels Reader, 2nd edition, ed. Robert C. Tucker, New York: W.W. Norton
& Co., 1978, p 760.

[82]Principal actors in this context refers to individuals
functioning as leaders and cadre in revolutionary groups and individuals
affiliated with state institutions. While the concept of ideology will
be discussed later, it should be noted that ideology, in the context of
this study, is distinguished from the concept of culture. Political
culture denotes a Weltanschauung, a broad outlook; subsuming the
subjective, attitudinal, and emotional elements of the inchoate and
unarticulated "average man"; and, the objective, rational, and
articulated elements of philosophy and ideology. See Willard A.
Mullins, "Ideology and Political Culture", Ideology, Philosophy, and
Politics, ed. Anthony Parel, (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University
Press, 1983), p. 112ff..

[83]See Isaiah   Berlin, "Historical Inevitability", Four Essays
on Liberty, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), rpt. 1984,
passim.

[84]Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of
Social Revolutions", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.
18, 1976, p.176 f..

[85]Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, pp. 202f..

[86]See F.M. Barnard, "Accounting for Actions: Causality and
Teleology", History and Society, Vol. XX, No. 3, 1981, pp. 291ff..

[87]Implicit in this argument is the notion that the most effective
ideology will describe and evaluate its perception of reality in such a
way as to maximize the translation of its normative prescriptions into
effective policy or action.

[88]Trygve R. Tholfsen in Ideology and Revolution in Modern Europe,
(New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), discusses the conceptual
problems encountered when attempting to analyze the relationship between
ideas and events. In this respect, Tholfsen argues that cultural
(ideas) and social (structures) forces, combined with a significant
degree of freedom (choice) and creativity result in the historical
event. This "causal pluralism" attempts to understand the role of ideas
as "functionally and instrumentally" important for what they do rather
than for what they are. (p. 6). According to Tholfsen's thesis, the
relationship between ideas and events is viewed as being "significantly
different in many ways from the causal relations characteristic of the
natural world." (p. 2), consequently; "We are not dealing with a

separate 'cause' and 'effect', but rather with two interconnected
entities, one of which not only influenced the other, but also became an
essential component of it; moreover, the connection between them is
logical and conceptual in character, an intrinsic relation different
from the extrinsic relations of the world of nature." (p. 2).

[89]Willard A. Mullins, "On the Concept of Ideology in Political
Science", The American Political Science Review, Vol. LXVI, No. 2, (June
1972), p. 509. Cf. Gibson Winter, "The Conception of Ideology in the
Theory of Action", Journal of Religion, Vol. 39, (January 1959,) passim.

[90]It should be noted that while ideology, through the medium of
the human agent, may affect change in societal structures, structures
may in fact constrain developments in ideology. The interplay of these
two variables will differ depending upon the unique configuration of all
other elements influencing human action in the revolutionary process.

[91]Willard A. Mullins, "Ideology and Political Culture", in
Ideology, Philosophy, and Politics, ed. Anthony Parel, (Waterloo:
Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1983), p. 129. For a good summary and
critique of the predominant theorizing on ideology see John B. Thompson,
Studies in the Theory of Ideology, (Berkeley: University of California
Press, 1984).

[92]Willard A. Mullins, "On the Concept of Ideology in Political
Science", The American Political Science Review, Vol. LXVI, No. 2, (June
1972), p. 510.

[93]Ibid., p. 510.

[94]Mullins, "Ideology and Political Culture", p. 121.

[95]C.B. MacPherson, "Revolution and Ideology in the Late Twentieth
Century", Revolution (Nomos VIII), ed. C.J. Friedrich, (New York:
Atherton Press, 1966), p. 140.

[96]Winter, p. 48.

[97]Martin Seliger, Ideology and Politics, (London: George Allen &
Unwin Ltd., 1976), p. 113.

[98]Cf. ibid., p. 114; and Mullins, "Ideology and Political
Culture", p. 130.

[99]Mullins, "On the Concept of Ideology in Political Science", p.
506.

[100]Ibid., p. 508.

> In politics, however, it is necessary to understand
> situations in terms of their moral significance to

> human beings, and the normative language of ideology
> provides reasons for supporting one social arrangement
> rather than another, reasons why this or that
> political program should be instituted, defended or
> abandoned. Science may be the final arbiter of an
> ideology's "factuality." Ideology, however,
> comprehends situations in a way which science cannot
> for ideology, unlike science, is able to portray the
> "facts" in terms if their relevance for human wants
> and aspirations. (Ibid., p. 508).

[101]Ibid., p. 504.

[102]Ibid., p. 508.

[103]See Seliger, pp. 108ff..

[104]Cf. Ibid., pp. 123ff..

[105]Mullins, "On the Concept of Ideology in Political Science", p. 509. Cf. Colette Moreaux, La conviction idéologique, (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1978), passim.

[106]Samuel H. Barnes, "Ideology and the Organization of Conflict: On the Relationship between Political Thought and Behavior", The Journal of Politics, Vol. 28, 1966, p. 523.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS
IN COLONIAL VIETNAM

Introduction

The preceding chapter outlined the particular applicability of two theoretical approaches to the revolutionary process experienced by colonial Vietnam. Unlike models that emphasize the psychological elements of rebellions, the approaches of Skocpol and Tilly account for the function and impact of historical transformations and developments. The historical context is of particular importance to the analysis of Vietnam because of the duration of the revolution. The protracted nature of the Vietnamese revolution exemplifies the relative inability of frustration-aggression models and structural-functionalist frameworks to account for the complex and uneven development of revolutionary forces over an extended time period. For example, the psychological functions of relative deprivation and anomie do not account for the varying impact of changing international political alignments, international economic transformations, and group organization and resource mobilization. These latter factors are the hallmarks of Skocpol and Tilly respectively, and are the elements of their approaches that offer greater explanatory depth in the analysis of revolution in colonial Vietnam.

Studying the revolutionary process within a historical framework creates a number of difficulties for an analysis attempting to merge two separate perspectives. Despite their potential theoretical compatibility, Skocpol and Tilly focus on different aspects of the revolutionary process. However, because the critical variables in each approach are examined within a holistic framework, it is extremely difficult to avoid redundant discussions of political, socio-economic, and historical factors. In order to eliminate the repetitive tendencies of this multidimensional approach, the first section of this chapter will be devoted to the general historical development of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. This will provide the basic historical background necessary for later discussions of the detailed aspects of the movement.

Before analyzing the historical development of Vietnam one must first take into consideration the limitations of this study. By 1885, French Indochina consisted of five separate states, each with its own separate political institutions. Of the five, only Cochinchina, Annan and Tonkin will be examined in any detail. These three political states comprised the historical domain of Vietnam. Although Laos and Cambodia were also French colonial possessions and members of the Indochinese Union, they were not an integral component of the revolutionary process. Even though Laos was strategically important in the later military phase of the revolution, and Cambodia was the location of minor civil unrest, they were nonetheless peripheral to the revolution's focus on the populated delta areas and outlying regions of Vietnam. For this reason, there will be few references to Laos and Cambodia.

It should be noted that the historical scope of this study does not extend beyond 1954. While North Vietnam was radically transformed following the 1954 Geneva agreement, and revolutionary activity was soon resumed in the south, the main developments and salient features of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement were well established by the early 1950's.[1] The events following the partition of Vietnam are beyond the scope of this thesis.

In order to maintain historical continuity, it is helpful to locate particular historical periods that mark important transitions in the genesis and maturation of the principal anticolonial, and later, revolutionary organizations. Each period designates an important transformation in the nature and composition of these groups. This does not imply that the Vietnamese revolution was the determined culmination of an evolutionary progression; rather, each phase indicates an attempt by organizations to adapt to differing circumstances. In the long term, this means that some revolutionary organizations were better prepared than others to take advantage of particular situations, using past experience and ideological developments to determine the appropriate form and direction of collective action.

The development of revolutionary forces in Vietnam can be divided into three distinct phases. First, there is the prerevolutionary phase which is comprised of the early Nhgia Quan (Righteous Armies) resistance in Cochinchina and the subsequent Can Vuong (Aid to the King) movement in Annam and Tonkin. The second phase constitutes a transitional period during which anticolonial organizations such as the Duy Tan Hoi (Association for the Modernization

of Vietnam) and its offshoot, the Quang Phuc Hoi (Restoration Society),
began rejecting traditional political structures and the reactionary
ideology of its Can Vuong predecessors. The final phase is the actual
formation of groups committed to the radical transformation of
Vietnamese society.

The third phase, because of its complexity, is divided into
four stages with each encompassing a unique development in the
revolutionary movement. The first stage extended from 1925 to 1931, and
embodies the genesis of numerous revolutionary organizations. These
groups differed from their predecessors in their commitment to the
establishment of new political institutions. For the groups with
Marxist orientations, this revolutionary transformation included the
restructuring of economic institutions.

While the first stage marked a growing interest in ideology and
new methods of organization, the revolutionary movement was seriously
affected by colonial repression in the early 1930's. Revolutionary
activity was effectively hindered until the election in France of the
Front Popular in 1935. This second stage marked a renewed effort to
organize overt revolutionary operations that appealed to a broader
spectrum of Vietnamese society. However, the 1938 collapse of the Front
Popular resulted in increased colonial repression and an end to the
second stage of revolutionary development.

Although various revolutionary organizations had experimented
with the concept of a "united front", it was not until the mid 1940's
that this strategy was successfully implemented. This third stage
denotes the growing consolidation of revolutionary forces under the

direction of one organization. It also marks the first time
revolutionary forces could claim exclusive political control over a
significant portion of Vietnam.

In 1949, the victory of the Chinese Communists inaugurated the
final stage in the development of the revolutionary movement. Chinese
support permitted an increased emphasis on the development of a military
force that was capable of breaking the deadlock between revolutionary
and colonial forces. This stage involved the military build-up of
revolutionary forces and the adoption of a general offensive.

Prerevolutionary Phase

The prerevolutionary phase was a product of the dismemberment
and decline of the Vietnamese Empire. Beginning in 1862, following the
legal cession of three Cochinchinese provinces to the French, the Nghia
Quan which was led by former court mandarins attempted to harass French
forces through its guerrilla activities . Motivated by their
unwillingness to accept the French, this resistance successfully
hampered French activity until 1867 when the provinces harboring
guerrillas were annexed by French troops. The strategic annexation of
this territory effectively restricted guerrilla mobility. This enabled
the French to contain the various resistance groups, placing the
resistance movement in a vulnerable position.[2] Threats of further
annexations soon prompted the monarchy to abandon its moral and material
support of the guerrillas. The loss of this support led to the rapid
disintegration of the Nghia Quan.

While the collapse of the Nghia Quan in Cochinchina did not bring an end to popular insurrections, it did result in an important transformation. This marked the beginning of a long period where many of the Vietnamese in the south became resigned to French rule. The collapse of the anticolonial movement in this region also alienated the monarchy from many of the former governing elite in Cochinchina. The Cochinchinese elite felt abandoned by the Emperor. In the context of the prevailing Confucian culture, this permitted open questioning of the moral legitimacy of the reigning monarch.

While the loss of Cochinchina contributed to the Emperor's problem with legitimacy in the south, he was having a difficult time maintaining control in other parts of the Kingdom. The monarchy was confronted with continual tribal uprisings, tax protests, and popular revolts in Tonkin and Annam. In the North, a pretender of the former Le dynasty was garnering Catholic support and challenging the Nguyen dynasty's right to rule. Quiet probes by Siam threatened the Kingdom in the south. Rampant administrative negligence created general discontent among the peasant populations in many of the delta regions. The general instability of monarchical Vietnam has led some scholars to conclude that the Nguyen dynasty never really established its legitimate writ within Vietnamese society. This was particularly evident at the village level.[3]

The general malaise of the Vietnamese monarchy was frequently exploited by the French. Unable to mobilize its military reserves because of a decentralized and fragmented political structure, the monarchy was unable to capitalize on its numerical superiority.

Internal power struggles within the monarchy itself diverted attention from the primary task of defending Vietnamese territory. The first French expeditionary force was able to establish itself at Tourane (Da Nang) in 1854, and later in Saigon, while Emperor Tu Duc was executing members of his family in an attempt to maintain his throne. In 1883, the French stormed Hanoi and the Annamese fortress at Thuan An during a tragi-comical court struggle to find an heir at the death of Tu Duc.

The abandonment of the Nghia Quan and loss of the Mekong delta exacerbated the political difficulties already confronting the Emperor. The apparent weakness of the monarchy led many of the mandarins and scholar-gentry elite to question their moral obligation to remain loyal to a ruler who was unable or unwilling to mobilize resistance against the French. French forays into the Red River delta and Annam region in the 1870's and early 1880's contributed to the image of an inept and morally bankrupt monarchy. Military setbacks from 1883 to 1885 eventually forced the royal dynasty to sign protectorate agreements.[4] In 1884 and 1885, the terms of the protectorate agreement led to the division of the Vietnamese Empire into two separate states, Annam and Tonkin. While the Emperor remained the nominal head of the government, each state was subject to the controlling influence of appointed French officials. The establishment of the Annam and Tonkin protectorates concluded the final devolution of monarchical power and the dismemberment of Vietnam.

The existence of a subservient monarchy posed a significant problem for the Vietnamese wishing to resist the imposition of colonial authority. Like their predecessors in the Nghia Quan, many of the

intellectual elite were confronted with a royal family whose personal interests were incompatible with the nation at large. In other words:

> Up until then classical political theory had taught that the maintenance of the dynasty was synonymous with the preservation of the country. In the new situation, however, the dynasty had traded its own survival for national sovereignty. Having resigned its role, emasculated by its own ministers and by the monarch himself, it could no longer pretend to command the people's allegiance.[5]

While many Vietnamese were opposed to French colonialism, the Court refused to act in any manner that would jeopardize its position. Imbued with a deeply entrenched Confucian morality that demanded loyalty to the Monarch, many of the intellectuals began to nurture a form of "disembodied royalism". This permitted individuals to remain loyal to an idealized monarchical institution while rejecting the reigning puppet. The dilemma over colonial resistance and monarchical loyalty was resolved only by continuing to profess fidelity to a "theoretical monarch whose ideal image would not be tarnished by any accidental deviation... ."[6] It was in this context that Emperor Ham-Nghi was persuaded to leave the capital city of Hue in 1886 and become the "standard-bearer" of the "idealist and intransigent monarchism" of the Can Vuong movement.[7]

In 1885, one year after the French had successfully consolidated their political control over all of Vietnam, Emperor Ham Nghi fled the capital city in an attempt to resist the imposition of colonial rule. Convinced that only a monarchical figure could unify the Vietnamese elite, a number of leading mandarins used young Ham Nghi as a moral and political symbol designed to unite the fragmented and

disorganized resistance groups scattered throughout Annam and Tonkin. While the French immediately replaced Ham Nghi as the reigning Emperor, the Vietnamese elite were forced to choose between knowingly serving foreign rulers and defending a monarchical ideal that was deeply entrenched in the moral traditions of Confucianism. The latter meant that the protection of family tombs and elderly parents would have to be sacrificed. This was an agonizing decision because of the moral importance and "face-saving" role of filial piety. To relinquish responsibilities to one's ancestors and immediate family required the firm conviction that resistance was part of a greater ideal.[8]

The efforts to create a unified resistance were appropriately called the Can Vuong (Aid to the King). The movement coalesced around Ham Nghi who legitimized popular resistance and provided royal condemnation of the subservience exhibited by the Court in its collaboration with French administrators. According to David G. Marr, the Can Vuong polarized the Vietnamese elite, forcing its members to choose between resistance or collaboration.[9]

By the early 1890's, the French had successfully capitalized on the disorganization and lack of coordination among the different components of the Can Vuong. In 1892, the various resistance groups in the delta regions were defeated and by 1900, much of the resistance in the mountainous areas was brought under control. The anticolonial Vietnamese resistance did not find a way to placate the traditional animosity of the highland ethnic groups towards the Vietnamese. This was important because the resistance retreated into the more inaccessible areas where the ethnic minorities were strongest. The

French were able to use these tribal groups to locate and destroy the resistance forces seeking refuge in these regions.[10]

Transitional Phase

Despite the failure of the Can Vuong movement to seriously challenge the colonial regime, this early Vietnamese resistance did provide a "crucial moral and spiritual continuity" in the struggle against the French.[11] While the next generation grew up in an entirely different political setting, many of the "positions they argued and the actions they took were in large part conditioned by the tactical failures and the spiritual successes [the moral sacrifices and patriotic martyrdoms] of their predecessors."[12]

The Can Vuong became the historical watershed for the Vietnamese elite who were faced with three alternatives: remaining faithful to the monarchical tradition and thus accepting its historical inability to defeat the French; accepting French-superiority and willingly collaborating with the French; or finally, searching for viable alternatives outside the traditional Confucian and monarchical context. For the those seeking alternatives, new ideas coming from China, Japan, and the West promised possible success in restoration of Vietnamese independence.

It was the group looking beyond the traditional framework that provided the initial impetus for later revolutionary thought in Vietnam. Yet, even those seeking external answers to Vietnam's problems were divided on the fundamental issue of force. There were those who

proposed a peaceful route to independence through reform and gradual democratization. Others felt that change could only be accomplished through the violent overthrow of French colonialism. This was to be achieved by adopting western technology and the ideology of pan-Asianism which refuted the notion that the Vietnamese were inherently inferior to the French. However, this same contingent felt that Vietnam must retain some vestige of its monarchical institutions, albeit modified through the adoption of a constitutional form. The monarchical elements of their ideology were not eliminated and replaced with republican concepts until their movement was successfully routed by colonial authorities in 1910.

The defeat of the Can Vuong and the dispersion of the few rebels that escaped French pacification brought an end to the prerevolutionary phase of anticolonialism. The middle of the first decade of the twentieth century marked the beginning of the transitional phase of Vietnamese anticolonialism. During this phase, ideological cleavages became more acute among militant Vietnamese. The principal divisions, as mentioned earlier, were based on disagreements over the use of violence and the role of the monarchy. The traditional ideology of the prerevolutionary phase was being rejected and there was a growing awareness of the numerous alternatives coming from the West and the East. Such an influx created an intellectual environment where traditional notions of resistance were being replaced by ideas that were more revolutionary in nature. During this period, the call for education was a common theme in all of the anticolonial groups whether they espoused violent or peaceful methods of change.

In early 1904, a small group of former members of the Can Vuong and other militant proponents of anticolonialism gathered together in the Quang Nam province of Annam. This meeting formalized and provided the organizational basis for the future expansion of a new anticolonial movement.[13] The creation of the Viet Nam Duy Tan Hoi (Association for the Modernization of Vietnam) established a loosely structured organization with two primary objectives. The first was to procure arms and prepare partisan forces for an armed struggle against the colonial regime. The second was the creation of educational facilities and commercial associations which would meet the intellectual and financial needs of an armed struggle.[14] Of these objectives, the educational component of the Duy Tan Hoi was the most successful, permitting a number of Vietnamese students to study in Japan at various military schools established for Chinese revolutionaries.

As the principal force behind the Dong Du educational movement (Eastern study) in Japan, the Duy Tan Hoi and its chief spokesman, Phan Boi Chau, introduced new ideas to the Vietnamese intelligentsia, they challenged the traditional interpretations of Confucianism. While still primarily monarchical in their orientation during this period, Phan Boi Chau and other spokesmen for the Duy Tan Hoi propagated new ideas on constitutional government and Japanese Pan-Asianism. But more importantly, the writings of men such as Phan Boi Chau identified the existing system of social status as the major stumbling block to the unification of the Vietnamese elite. These men advocated a return to the moral fervor of traditional Confucianism, and the adoption of Western technology and skills. Finally, they argued the need to replace

identification with one's class by identification with one's entire land and people.[15] According to the Duy Tan Hoi, without these attributes the Vietnamese elite could not successfully challenge the French administration and restore the Vietnamese monarchy to its former independence.[16]

However, by 1910, the military section of the Duy Tan Hoi had been virtually destroyed through the effective measures of colonial Vietnam's central police and intelligence agency, the French Sûreté. Colonial repression successfully overwhelmed former pockets of resistance that had been reactivated by proponents of the Duy Tan Hoi. The ensuing imprisonment and deaths of numerous members of the domestic organization severed links with elements of the Duy Tan Hoi who were organizing support abroad.

In 1912, following the encouraging signs of the Wuhan uprising which signalled the end of the Chinese dynastic system, scattered remnants of the Duy Han Toi gathered in South China and formed a new organization that attempted to unite exiled Vietnamese nationalist groups. Under the intellectual direction of Phan Boi Chau, the newly formed Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi (Restoration Society) adopted a republican platform. This alienated many of the former Duy Tan Hoi financial supporters in Cochinchina. Many of these southern property holders, who had provided the majority of funding for the Duy Tan Hoi, were still committed to the idea of monarchical rule. The resulting loss of funds, and alienation of the more conservative components of the Duy Tan Hoi, impeded the Quang Phuc Hoi's attempts to create an organizational network within Vietnam.

Political instability in China led to Phan Boi Chau's arrest in
1914. The loss of Phan was a serious blow to the morale of the Quang
Phuc Hoi. One year later, ill-conceived attacks on French border posts,
led by Phan Boi Chau's successor, resulted in the capture and execution
of most of the organization's leaders. Although virtually destroyed
during this period, the Quang Phuc Hoi was later rebuilt in 1939 and
renamed the Viet Nam Phuc Quoc Minh Hoi. While the offspring of the
Quang Phuc Hoi was noted for its role in the Lang Son uprising in 1940
and pro-Japanese orientation, it never regained the prominence among
militant Vietnamese attained prior to 1914.

Despite its failure to organize a lasting anti-colonial force,
the Quang Phuc Hoi represented an ideological transformation that was to
have important repercussions on the development of revolutionary
organizations in the 1920's.   While a detailed discussion of the
ideological impact of the Quang Phuc Hoi must be reserved for a later
chapter, it is important to note the principal thrust of these
ideological modifications. First, there was a clear rejection of the
traditional political system. No longer were the monarchical symbol and
mandarin elite viewed as sufficient vehicles for generating a successful
anticolonial movement. While the principal spokesmen of the Quang Phuc
Hoi, such as Phan Boi Chau, had blamed Vietnam's decline on the moral
bankruptcy of the monarchy and its mandarin entourage, later criticisms
focused on the monarchical institution as the significant cause for
Vietnam's inability to defeat the French.[17]

The second important development in the Quang Phuc Hoi's
ideology was the call for the incorporation of all Vietnamese into the

anticolonial struggle. This was a radical departure from the traditional notion of an elite based movement. Accordingly, independence could only be won through the mass participation of all Vietnamese regardless of one's station in life. This was a departure from the traditional elitist orientation of the early resistance movements. Although members of the Quang Phuc Hoi never devised an organizational mechanism capable of broadening their struggle against the French, in the long run the ideas they propagated "... profoundly influenced subsequent more sophisticated anticolonial organizations."[18]

Apart from the Duy Tan Hoi and Quang Phuc Hoi, there was another group active in the anticolonial effort. This group espoused Western democracy and its orientation towards reform set it in opposition to other anticolonial groups espousing violence. It was composed of reformers who were vehemently critical of the monarchy and the traditional mandarinate system of government. Its spokesmen, such as Phan Chu Trinh, viewed the French as an "instrument of reform as much as a force to be resisted."[19] Unlike their militant compatriots, these individuals believed that reform and eventual independence could be achieved through peaceful means. In 1907, these progressive elements of the scholar-gentry founded a non-tuition school in Hanoi called the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc. While militant activists wished to use the school as a vehicle for propaganda, others such as Phan Chu Trinh and founders Luong Van Can and Nguyen Quyen "hoped that the school would create conditions for social and political change and thus eliminate the need for political revolt."[20] There was a firm belief that education and enlightenment would lead to peaceful change.[21]

The Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc was short-lived. In 1908, tax revolts
in central Vietnam and a threatened invasion of Hanoi by an ally of the
Duy Tan Hoi, the old Can Vuong resistance leader De Tham, motivated
French officials to close the school and arrest its leadership.
Regardless of whether their attitude was reformist or militant, all of
the school's leaders were promptly tried and imprisoned. While this
only served to further alienate many of the more ardent reformers, it
also tended to impel some reformers to willingly collaborate with the
French in the hope that they could influence French administrators at a
later date. With the slightest hint of anticolonial sentiment being
sufficient reason for arrest and deportation during the frequent
occurrences of civil disorder, many of the moderate anticolonialists
became quiescent and often self-serving in their political ambitions.

Despite the limited duration of the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc, it
had an important influence on cultural and intellectual changes. These
changes prepared many radical Vietnamese to eventually adopt
revolutionary ideologies. According to David G. Marr, the Dong Kinh
Nghia Thuc posed the first direct challenge to official Confucian
thought, putting the traditional position into a defensive posture from
which it never recovered.[22] The school also rendered much of Western
learning "psychologically respectable" to many of the scholar-gentry.
This factor alone lowered many of the barriers that inhibited the
intelligentsia from utilizing western ideas and technology. The
subsequent efforts of many of the anticolonialists to seek solutions
from abroad led to the gradual investigation of Western revolutionary
ideas.

Following the dismantling of the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc and the neutralization of the Quang Phuc Hoi, there were only a few isolated revolts. These were only marginally related to former anticolonial activities. For example, the Man highland uprising from 1914-15 was primarily the result of former leaders of previous local revolts organizing new armed bands. These bands attempted to challenge colonial forces that were protecting the administration in its continual harassment and heavy taxation of peasants in the Yen Bay area. This region was particularly sensitive to colonial taxation policies after having suffered a series of bad harvests and a smallpox epidemic.

One year following the suppression of the Man uprising, the young Emperor Duy Tan and some highly placed mandarins throughout central Annam attempted to incite a general rebellion against the French. Following the tradition of their Can Vuong predecessors, Duy Tan and his supporters organized attacks on various French installations. Unable to coordinate their attacks or mobilize their forces, the supporters of Duy Tan were quickly defeated and imprisoned. Duy Tan was subsequently dethroned and many of the principal leaders of the revolt were summarily executed.

In 1916, the Mekong delta spawned a rebellion led by a mystical society with loose ties to a number of Cochinchinese secret societies. Poorly organized and underarmed, the rebels met with quick failure in their attempts to seize military installations and terrorize urban centers. Likewise, in 1917, the northern region of Thai Nguyen was the location of an uprising among native troops. They successfully overpowered their French officers and established a guerrilla base. The

rapid mobilization of Colonial forces led to the quick defeat of the
guerrilla forces. In an effort to demonstrate the futility of their
rebellion, the French meticulously sought the capture or death of every
individual involved in the revolt, claiming in the end that only five
men eluded colonial "justice".[23]

The years following these various uprisings were relatively
calm. The promises of Governors-General such as Albert Sarrault (1911-
13, 1917-19), and later, the socialist Alexandre Varenne (1925-28),
convinced many of the opponents of colonialism that the French were
willing to modify existing political institutions. The prospect of
increased Vietnamese participation in the governing process led to a
resurgence in support for moderate political activity. Despite
electoral reforms and changes in the structures of the principal
legislative bodies, such as the Colonial Council of Cochinchina,
political decisions were still controlled by French interests. The
disproportionate power of the French electorate and its representatives
remained a permanent barrier to Vietnamese aspirations.[24] The entire
political structure was designed in such a manner as to ensure French
dominance while giving the appearance of Vietnamese participation.

The lack of real progress on promised reforms only increased
the frustration of moderate Vietnamese seeking non-violent change. In
Annam and Tonkin, all forms of political parties were considered illegal
and subject to police repression. Attempts to legalize parties such as
the Viet Nam People's Progressive Party were summarily dismissed by the
Governor General. While indigenous political activity was less
circumscribed in Cochinchina, permitting the legal formation of the

Constitutionalist Party in 1923, it was only tolerated as long as French interests were not threatened.[25] Members of the Constitutionalist Party who were frustrated at finding their repeated attempts at reform blocked by the Colonial administration soon looked beyond the existing political framework for viable alternatives.[26] Disenchanted with the prospects of peaceful reform, many of members of the Vietnamese elite turned their backs on the reform movement. Many were attracted to the alternatives presented by the burgeoning revolutionary and militant organizations forming throughout Vietnam in the late 1920's.

The years following World War I were noted for the relative decline in anticolonial activity. It was a period of economic growth and resurgence in the activities of moderates seeking political reform.[27] As the only sanctioned political organization in Vietnam, the Constitutionalist Party became the rallying point for many of the Vietnamese elite seeking political changes. Nevertheless, while the party lobbied for increased indigenous political participation, it simultaneously argued that large segments of the Vietnamese population be excluded from the electorate.[28] While this was justified on the basis of the inability of the general peasantry to understand political matters, it would also conveniently protect the status quo of the Vietnamese elite.

As the reformist movement became increasingly discredited because of its lack of success, a new generation of nationalists were embracing the revolutionary doctrines coming from China and the West. This generation was different from its predecessors. Lacking the formal Confucian foundation of the former anticolonialists, many of these

individuals had grown up under French tutelage and had been educated in the Western oriented schools established by the Colonial administration. Some of the early radical socialists, such as Nguyen An Ninh and Phan Van Hum, had even studied at the prestigious Sorbonne.[29] However, the majority of Vietnamese attracted to the growing number of revolutionary organizations were of more modest educational backgrounds.

The western orientation of this new educated elite rendered revolutionary western ideologies more acceptable as viable alternatives to traditional Confucian thought and Japanese Pan-Asianism.[30] This became more apparent as the last remnants of Phan Boi Chau's Quang Phuc Hoi gradually disappeared. As the organization disintegrated, it was replaced by a growing "number of new and ideologically disparate political groupings in all three areas of Vietnam."[31]

Revolutionary Phase: Stage One

Following a period of relatively little political agitation, there was a renewal of anti-colonial activity throughout Vietnam in the mid-1920's. This marked the beginning of the revolutionary phase of Vietnamese anticolonialism. The groups and organizations espousing elementary forms of Western and Chinese revolutionary thought were rapidly spreading throughout Vietnam. In Cochinchina, a loosely organized group was beginning to coalesce around Nguyen An Ninh. Initially called the Cao Vong Thanh Nien Dang (Hope of Youth Party), after an inflammatory speech given by Nguyen An Ninh in October 1923, it

was later formally organized under the direction of two young nationalists, Tran Huy Lieu and Bui Cong Trung.[32]

Changing its name to Dang Thanh Nien (Youth Party), the organization began to propagate an agrarian-socialist program. It was to become one of the few early organizations that made any efforts to enlist mass support.[33] Nevertheless, its membership never extended beyond 800 supporters, many of whom were minor functionaries and ordinary workers.[34] In 1929, the Dang Thanh Nien's intellectual mentor, Nguyen An Ninh, was arrested and many of its members were imprisoned. Following its destruction, a large number of the remaining members joined the Indochinese Communist Party or Communist controlled trade unions and mutual aid societies.[35]

Another group in Cochinchina, the Cao-Dai sect, was also competing for support during this period. While formed in 1925, French sources estimated that by the end of 1926 this political-religious organization "counted no less than 20,000 adherents, many of whom were of high standing in the French colonial administration."[36] By 1930 the membership had increased to 500,000. While considered anti-French by colonial officials, it was not until the 1940's that the Cao Dai transformed its anti-colonial rhetoric into militant opposition by using Japanese aid to expand its control in the Mekong delta.

In Annam, the Tan Viet Cach Menh Dang (New Vietnam Revolutionary Party) was formed from amongst the intellectual secret societies formerly aligned with the Duy Tan Hoi and Quang Phuc Hoi.[37] Organized in late 1926, the Tan Viet was composed of both radicals and reformists who were vaguely committed to Marxism. The organization's

initial platform maintained that violence was to be used only as a last resort. They did not anticipate the socialization of Vietnam until the advanced industrial nations in Europe had been transformed into communistic societies.[38]

Despite consensus over the support and organization of demonstrations protesting the trial of Phan Boi Chau, the Tan Viet exhibited serious ideological cleavages. For example, there was disagreement over the role of armed struggle and peaceful reform. The party's persistent vacilation over doctrinal issues was often the result of constant changes in a membership that never counted more that a few hundred. Failing in their attempt to establish a successful revolutionary nationalist party that was free from the Soviet and Chinese influences which some members felt would jeopardize Vietnamese independence, many of the radical elements of the Tan Viet were eventually absorbed into the Indochinese Communist Party in 1929.

In northern Vietnam, a non-communist revolutionary organization was created by a number of Vietnamese intellectuals, teachers, and low-level colonial administrators, who gathered in Hanoi in the mid-1920's to discuss the possibility of restoring Vietnamese independence. Committed to the idea of revolution as the only road to nationalist aspirations, these individuals formed the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (VNQDD) in 1927. Two years after its inception, the VNQDD had "gained more sympathy and financial support among the Vietnamese middle class than any previous nationalist movement."[39] It attracted some former followers of Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chu Trinh, small tradesmen, minor officials, commercial employees, and junior officers in the

army.[40] Hoang Van Chi notes that during this period the composition of the VNQDD contained a wider sample of Vietnamese society than any of the communist organizations.[41]

The VNQDD adopted the political thought of the Chinese Kuomintang, and proclaimed Sun Yatsen's principles of nationalism, democracy and socialism as formulated in the Kuomintang's doctrine of the Three People's Principles as the guiding program of the party.[42] Convinced that national independence could only be won by force, and that such an overthrow could be organized in a short period of time, the VNQDD naively concentrated their strategy on recruiting among the Vietnamese military in urban areas.[43] Assuming that urban terrorism would sufficiently weaken the will of Vietnamese collaborators and French authorities, the VNQDD failed to organize "workers for strikes and peasants for uprisings," or prepare "other forms of sabotage and mass action against the regime; what they had in mind was a military coup."[44]

Though less inhibited intellectually than their predecessors, the VNQDD retained a "reckless impetuosity that was so characteristic of early nationalism in Vietnam, a lack of understanding of how to involve the masses in a struggle for independence, and an insufficient realization of the economic basis of the discontent in Vietnam."[45] The last two weaknesses were clearly reflected in the VNQDD's failure to take note of the Sun Yat-sen's emphasis on social and economic reform. Their emphasis on civil rights overlooked the concepts of social and economic justice that were an important part of the Three People's Principles. According to Truong Buu Lam, the exclusion of these points

in the VNQDD's platform distanced the party from the needs of the
peasantry, giving the VNQDD little appeal to the hard working peasant
concerned with high taxes, land problems, and subsistence.[46] The
consequence of this ideological framework was to divert attention from
potential support in rural areas and concentrate on urban sectors of
society, especially those groups such as teachers and civil servants
that could relate to the abstract notion of individual rights.

While the VNQDD became one of Vietnam's most powerful
revolutionary groups by the late 1920's, an unfortunate incident led to
its early demise. In 1929, the murder of a prominent member of the
French community led to the quick arrest of the entire overt section of
the VNQDD. The clandestine section of VNQDD operations, fearing the
suppression of their movement, hastily ordered preparations for the
overthrow of the French regime. Due to the network of informers working
for the French, and a series of accidents that tipped off authorities,
security forces were able to keep "abreast of party plans ... and when a
planned rebellion broke out in Yen Bay and other military posts in the
upper Red River valley in February 1930, the authorities were able to
quell it in a day or two."[47] The subsequent repression that followed
the Yen Bay revolt effectively destroyed the VNQDD, and those remnants
able to save themselves were forced to take refuge in China. Though the
remnants of the VNQDD eventually returned to Vietnam under the
protective wing of the Chinese Nationalists in 1945, they were no longer
a serious contender for exclusive control of the Vietnamese
revolutionary movement.

In early 1925, Ho Chi Minh (Nguyen Ai Quoc) arrived in Canton
to begin organizing the nucleus of a Vietnamese Communist party.[48]
First contacting an exiled remnant of Phan Boi Chau's Quang Phuc Hoi in
Canton, called the Tam Tam Xa, Ho proceeded to form an elite core
converted to the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism.[49] This
group became the guiding influence in the creation and establishment of
the Viet Nam Thanh Nien Cach Menh Dong Chi Hoi (Revolutionary Youth
League). When sufficient members had been trained, they were sent to
establish the Thanh Nien in each region of Vietnam.

The influence of nationalism was a prevalent factor in the
ideology permeating the Thanh Nien. As Woodside succinctly states,
"Nationalism, rather than the cloudy influence of Hegel supplied the
Vietnamese communists with their hopeful faith in their own
prevision."[50] While a secret inner core maintained communist direction
of the movement, outwardly the Thanh Nien attempted to train and attract
adherents based upon nationalist precepts and patriotic strategies.

The Thanh Nien, with its emphasis on nationalism, attracted the
bulk of its membership from the intellectual levels of society. The
primary motivations for joining such an organization were fundamentally
one's love for Vietnam and its people.[51] This meant the underlying
ideology did not a explain the evil of colonialism, nor did it provide a
plausible alternative. Finally, the Thanh Nien did not outline a
program of action capable of results. Communist critics of the Thanh
Nien argued that the focus on nationalism and the predominance of the
petty bourgeoisie[52] in the organization created internal contradictions
with the real aims of the movement. Ho's attempts to form an "organic

relationship" between the revolutionary role of the peasantry and proletariat provoked further conflict among the more orthodox Marxist-Leninists, who insisted that the proletariat could not share its leading position in the revolution.[53]

In its early stages, the organization had expanded via personal contacts, but, by 1928, the Thanh Nien had not significantly established its position among workers and peasants. This was, in part, the result of an undisciplined approach to ideology. Without a unified political line, an efficient and harmonious organization could not be maintained, nor could individuals be disciplined for political deviations. It was at this point that the inner cadre began to transform the expression of the Thanh Nien's ideological content and demand stricter adherence to its basic principles.

The convening of the Sixth Comintern Congress in Moscow in the Summer of 1928 and the subsequent reports that were eventually circulated among the Communists in Vietnam had a profound impact on the Thanh Nien. Stalin's statements provided critics of the Thanh Nien with justification for purging the bourgeois elements of the movement, the discontinuation of a nationalist emphasis, and a new concentration on issues directly confronting labor. The ideological stance of the Comintern increased the inner fragmentation of the Thanh Nien over the question of forming a distinct communist party and disbanding the existing organization. While increasing the criticism of the Thanh Nien's patriotic platform, militant members also pushed forward a program of proletarianization, a program that was to have an important impact on the future support base of the communist movement.

With the conflict between the KMT and the CPP becoming more acute, forcing setbacks to the Chinese Communist Party in 1927, the inner cadre of the Thanh Nien became increasingly influenced by Comintern policy formulated in the Soviet Union. During this period, Stalin controlled the Comintern and Vietnamese communists were being influenced by a new emphasis on ideological purity and organization. Vietnamese Communists became increasingly concerned with "the question of the class backgrounds of Party members."[54] The problem they faced was, "Could they adequately serve the masses if they themselves came from an elite background?"[55] The subsequent policy of proletarianization resulted in a significant shift in the composition of the movement. This meant that individuals belonging to the intellectual or petty bourgeois sector of society were required, as part of membership stipulations, to enter the workforce; sharing the misery of the workers, while at the same time disseminating propaganda and organizing Communist cells.[56] Proletarianization resulted in a dramatic increase in the proportion of members belonging to the peasantry and the proletariat.

By 1929, internal disputes exacerbated regional schisms in the Thanh Nien.[57] The resulting formation of splinter groups required the direct mediation of Ho Chi Minh in 1930, and resulted in the subsequent formation of a unified Indochinese Communist Party (ICP). The ICP continued to place equal emphasis on recruiting peasants and workers. In spite of Comintern emphasis on the proletarian nature of the revolution, the socio-economic structure of Vietnam was comprised of overlapping relationships between the working class and the

peasantry.[58] This accounts for the lack of serious criticism of Ho's concept of the worker peasant revolutionary strata.

Although the Communist movement had been unified under one nation-wide organization in 1930, and had successfully broadened its base of support, a series of events in the early 1930's resulted in a serious setback. The Vietnamese Communists who attempted to marshal the unrest in the Nghe-Tinh region of northern Annam in 1930 used this period to apply their revolutionary ideology and organizational skills with the peasants that were rebelling because of severe economic conditions. The cadre directed and organized the peasantry in its attacks on village and colonial institutions, providing the peasants with a semblance of order and strategic objectives. Despite abject economic conditions that created discontent among the general population, "it seems a reasonable assumption that the protest movement in the Nghe-Tinh region would not have reached the proportions it did without the ICP's ideological and organizational activity."[59] Working within a "framework of nationalist resentment of French rule.", the ICP sought to "unite nationalist feeling with a program of profound social change."[60] During this period, the formation of the Nghe-Tinh Soviets, while unsuccessful as a movement, proved to be a valuable learning experience for the ICP.

While the Communist cadre was able, in some respects, to organize the uprising at both urban and rural levels (for example, the Ben Thuy match factory and the Ky Vien land concession), the uprising's strength lay in its rural organizations. Even during the suppression of the uprising, the formation of rural soviets permitted the ICP to carry

out land reform (land redistribution), distribute rice to the needy, and
meet the expenses of families who had lost members during French
reprisals. Despite this moderate success, the Communist-led
organizations were eventually defeated by colonial forces.

The defeat of the VNQDD at Yen Bay and the ICP at Nghe-Tinh
was followed by a long period of colonial repression. This brought to a
close the first stage of revolutionary development. Police activity in
the early 1930's led to the arrest of many of the principal
revolutionary leaders throughout Vietnam. The repression was so
effective that the remnants of the ICP were, for the first time,
completely isolated from the international communist community.
According to William Duiker:

> The party's [ICP] ties with the Comintern were
> ruptured as a result of the arrest of many
> Comintern agents in the Far East .... Ties with
> the fraternal parties, the FCP [French Communist
> Party] and the CCP [Chinese Communist Party],
> were virtually nonexistent.[61]

The repression that devastated the VNQDD in 1930 and the ICP in
1931 resulted in the complete destruction of the Tan Viet and the Dang
Thanh Nien (Youth Party). Of the four groups, only the communists
managed to safeguard portions of their domestic organization.
Consequently, they were able to absorb members of the Tan Viet and Dang
Thanh Nien (Youth Party) with Marxist sympathies. As for the VNQDD, the
few members that escaped colonial authorities fled to China. While the
ICP was temporarily in a position to assume control over the
revolutionary movement, it lacked the ideological depth and
organizational strength to unify and direct revolutionary forces.

Despite mass arrests, the tenacity of the revolutionary movement soon became apparent to the Colonial regime. French intelligence reports increasingly complained that the central police agency, the Surete, was "powerless to counteract the resurgence of revolutionary forces in Indochina."[62] However, it was not until the election victory of the Popular Front in 1935 that the political activity of revolutionary groups began to increase significantly.

Second Stage

The period extending from 1936 to 1938 constitutes the second stage of revolutionary development in Vietnam. It was the first time revolutionary groups began to seriously experiment with broad coalitions. While the traditional animosity between nationalist and communist forces hampered the formation of a countrywide united front, there were two developments that significantly enhanced the image of the ICP and its direct competitors, the Trotskyites. In the south, the ICP and Trotskyites played a prominent role in establishing a broad popular front called the Indochinese Congress. The purpose of this front was to provide an organized forum where all of the progressive elements and political parties of Vietnam could unite, formulate grievances, and suggest reforms to the Socialist government in France and colonial authorities. Expecting a sympathetic ear from the newly elected Blum government, because of its stance on social and political issues, the Indochinese Congress became a representative body voicing the grievances of the Vietnamese. In the north, where the Trotskyites were less

powerful, the ICP figured prominently in the creation of the Indochina
Democratic Front, which was an organization similar to the Indochinese
Congress but designed to facilitate the organization of smaller groups
implementing rural educate programs and generating mass support for
reforms to the economic and political structure of Vietnam. According
to David G. Marr, the Indochinese Democratic Front was able to mobilize
20,000 workers in 1938 to protest the slow implementation of reforms.[63]

Despite the initial coalition of various radical and moderate
factions, the fall of the Blum government in 1938 brought an end to the
overt united front tactics of the mid 1930's. By 1939, the leaders of
both the Indochinese Congress and Indochina Democratic Front were being
arrested by colonial authorities. The growing colonial opposition to
radical elements resulted in the banning of all communist organizations.
The various left wing organizations that came into prominence under the
Popular Front's liberalization of the right to organize political
associations were rapidly destroyed by colonial authorities.[64] This
was true of the schismatic Trotskyites as well as the moderate
Vietnamese Socialist Party which was relatively small but linked to its
French counterpart. Concessions won during the Front Popular period
were quickly reversed as the colonial regime became increasingly
repressive. New tax reforms, labor laws, relaxed censor restrictions,
and the right to organize unions, were suddenly withdrawn.

A new era of repression, beginning in 1939, reversed many of
the advances made by various revolutionary groups. However, in the south
another religio-political sect was being formed. Subsequently known as
the Hoa Hao, it was "a far more explicitly millenarian, anticolonial,

and egalitarian religion than [its rival] Cao Dai."[65] The simplicity

of its emphasis on internal faith, eliminating the expensive pomp and

rituals of the traditional village religions, enabled the Hoa Hao sect

to rapidly attract an estimated 100,000 adherents.[66] It soon became a

significant factor in the anticolonial activities throughout

Cochinchina. Similarly, the Cao Dai began to lauch armed reprisals

against the colonial administration, following an attack on its

principal temple by colonial forces. Although the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai

sects competed with one another and the predominant revolutionary groups

over the conversion of adherents, this served the function of forcing

colonial authorities extend their resources; balancing the need to

suppress the various revolutionary groups and keep the sects in check,

ensuring that they did not become too active in inciting members to

resist and harass colonial authorities.

Despite the failure of the popular front in the late 1930's,

this period did have some positive effects on the future involvement of

the ICP in the revolutionary movement. The ICP's visible role in the

formation and functioning of the Indochinese Congress and the Indochina

Democratic Front exposed its organization to a wide spectrum of

Vietnamese society. The relaxed restraints on political activity,

following the election of the Popular Front, permitted the ICP to turn a

portion of its clandestine operation into quasi-legal mutual aid

associations. This enabled the ICP to enter into mainstream Vietnamese

politics, and change its image among a majority of Vietnamese.

Communists were no longer viewed as "wild-eyed fanatics but patriotic

Vietnamese struggling to build a better Vietnam."[67] This image was

extremely important in the eventual formation and legitimization of the Vietminh, and the ICP's ability to unify other groups and factions under its direction.

Third Stage

The next stage in the development of the revolutionary movement occurred during World War II and the years preceding the Chinese Communist victory in 1949. During this period, the ICP was instrumental in forming a broad coalition among principal organizations involved in the revolutionary movement. It also developed a powerful network in Vietnam and was successful in its attempt to broaden its base of support. Other revolutionary groups, such as the VNQDD and the recently revived Quang Phuc Hoi, were without a significant domestic organization and relied heavily on the respective support of the Chinese and Japanese.

Following the abortive mass based insurrections in Cochinchina and the Bac Son region of northern Tonkin in the early 1940's, the ICP was forced to reassess its strategies and ideological orientation. This led to the adoption of a program that combined the formation of a broad national front that would attract the progressive elements of the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia while continuing efforts to mobilize rural peasants and urban workers. This would be accomplished under the auspices of the Vietminh (Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi or Vietnam Independence League). As Marr states:

> It [Vietminh] was designed to represent all
> social classes via a range of national-salvation

> associations, each of which would be guided from within by clandestine ICP members. In each village the various salvation associations (of peasants, youth, women, elders, etc) would elect representatives to a Viet Minh village committee. Eventually village groups would elect representa-tives to a district committee and so on.[68]

While these interlocking horizontal and vertical hierarchies included leadership positions for other national independence organizations, and despite the democratization of the Vietminh's structure, the ICP was able to control key positions and influence the decisions in areas where non-ICP members were nominally in control. This ability of the ICP to organize numerous groups and coalitions among all sectors of society, and remain in control of these associations will be explained later in Chapter Five.

The ICP continued to develop the organizational structure of the Vietminh at the local level, while simultaneously attempting to create a united front with the nationalist elements of the revolutionary movement. Although the details of this arrangement must be reserved for later discussion, it will suffice to state that the ICP formed an uneasy alliance with the VNQDD and Quang Phuc Hoi. The domestic strength of the ICP, and in many respects its superior leadership, gave it a powerful role in the coalition.

The Japanese threat in the early 1940's convinced the Kuomintang in south China to support the Vietnamese revolutionary movement, even at the expense of aiding a communist organization. While the central governing body of the united front was composed of representatives from each of the revolutionary groups, the ICP remained

in control of the domestic structure of the Vietminh. Subsequent Chinese aid permitted the establishment of two ICP controlled guerrilla bases near the Chinese border.

The Japanese occupation of Indochina in 1945, following the March coup, created a favorable situation for the Vietminh. With the French temporarily preoccupied, the Vietminh expanded its "liberation zones". In addition, the Vietminh's attacks on Japanese forces reinforced the claim that it was aligned with Allied forces. This resulted in some military aid from the Allies, although this support was primarily in exchange for intelligence activities. The closer affiliation with Allied forces also helped remove the stigma placed on the ICP during the Soviet-German alliance at the beginning World War II. It demonstrated to those questioning the integrity of the ICP that its objectives were patriotic and nationalist in orientation. All this strengthened the Vietminh's military and political position in the outlying areas of Vietnam.

The recognition of the dual importance of a political and military struggle, and the establishment of a military force capable of securing regions offering political support, placed the Vietminh in a position of readiness. When political conditions were favorable, the Vietminh could act effectively in its seizure of political institutions. The strategy underlying Vietminh planning was to adopt a revolutionary program that permitted mass participation at various levels and in each aspect of the revolutionary movement. As the Vietminh consolidated its position in each new area, the "network of organizations provided new opportunities for peasants to participate in a changed social order; by

so doing, new patterns of authority were instituted that linked village
and villager into the centralized political order [Vietminh's ruling
committees]."[69]

The period just prior to the actual seizure of political power
by the Vietminh in August 1945, was one of substantial growth in the
revolutionary movement. The Japanese had abolished the French colonial
administration and had permitted the establishment of a Vietnamese
puppet regime. This weakened the French, who under influence of
individuals supporting Charles de Gaulle and the French liberation of
Vietnam from Japanese control, were planning to attack Vietminh
positions in the North as well as oust Japanese forces. The ICP
realized that when Japan surrendered to the Allies a temporary political
vacuum would be created. This would enable the Vietminh to contend with
the weak puppet regime installed by the Japanese. Just prior to the
surrender of Japan, the Vietminh began intensive preparations to permit
the rapid mobilization of its resources and the quick takeover of the
dominant political institutions. The Vietminh would have to establish
its legitimacy before the French were in a position to reassert their
former dominance in Indochina.

At the close of World War II, the French had lost control and
the Japanese forces were in disarray. From regions where the Vietminh
had secured its position, particularly in the Viet Bac area of northern
Tonkin, it began to advance its position. It sent out guerrilla units
to prepare for the takeover of administrative posts and government
buildings in anticipation of the Allied victory. Five days after the
surrender of the Japanese, the Vietminh was able to establish itself as

the legitimate governing power in Vietnam. Days after the surrender, the Vietminh staged mass demonstrations convincing the majority of Vietnamese that it was backed by popular support. The support that it was able generate in mass demonstrations convinced many nationalists and former government officials that the Vietminh had considerable backing.[70] Vietminh guerrilla forces were able to enter the capitals of Hanoi and Hue without meeting resistance. The Japanese-supported Kim Government quickly collapsed and Emperor Bao Dai resigned at the Vietminh's request. Pro-Japanese nationalist groups in Cochinchina, who were in a position to challenge the Vietminh, relinquished claims to political power when they saw the strength of the Vietminh, and immediately opened negotiations with its leading committees, hoping to avoid future political isolation.[71]

As a result of its success, the Vietminh drew increased support from all levels of society. For example, the Catholic hierarchy joined with the Vietminh, as did many important landowners and industrialists.[72] While some of these alignments were temporary, the Vietminh was able to incorporate these factions into its overall group structure, thus increasing its influence and power. The growing strength of the Vietminh was evident in its ability to arm approximately 100,000 men and women in 1946. This can be compared to the 2,000-3,000 military force that existed fourteen months earlier.[73]

The events and circumstances that led to the Vietminh's formation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi and its subsequent defeat in Cochinchina will be discussed in the following chapters. However, it will suffice to say that the Vietminh's initial

rise to power was followed by a number of setbacks. Unable to match the military superiority of the French, and abandoned by the Nationalist Chinese following the 1946 Sino-French Agreement, the Vietminh chose to withdraw to its former strongholds in northern Tonkin while strengthening their position and waiting until circumstances permitted a major offensive.

Fourth Stage

The latter half of the 1940's led to a stalemate between the Vietminh, who controlled the mountainous and forested regions, and the French, who maintained their presence in the urban regions.[74] The victory of the Chinese Communists in 1949 marked the beginning of the final stage in the Vietnamese revolutionary process. By 1950, the support of Communist China permitted the Vietminh to adopt a military strategy that would eventually enable the Vietnamese to defeat the French on the battlefield.

Prior to 1946, the ICP adhered to Ho Chi Minh's concept of the three stage political revolution: "political struggle, a balance of political and military struggle, and a final phase of predominantly military struggle."[75] This concept of revolution was very similar to the Maoist doctrine of withdrawal, equilibrium, and general offensive. However, the ICP emphasized the role of "active popular support" and a "disciplined people's army led by the Communist Party...".[76] This minimized the importance of geographical factors favouring the guerrilla war, and the strength of the colonial institutions. In addition, the

ICP viewed external factors as critical elements in the success of the

protracted war. French public opinion and shifting international

alliances were viewed as mediating variables influencing the willingness

of colonial forces to continue the fight. The ICP was convinced that

the French did not have the "psychological and political means to fight

a long drawn-out war."[77]

The ideological proximity of the ICP and CCP gave a

psychological boost to the Vietminh:

> The triumph of the forces of Mao Tse-tung
> stiffened the Vietminh will to fight. They were
> reassured that they were riding with the tide of
> history, and that their cause would win.[78]

More importantly, the three stage strategy of the Maoists had succeeded

for the Chinese. This gave the Vietminh greater assurance in the

implementation of a similar three stage strategy.

By 1950, Chinese assistance enabled the Vietminh to organize

"battalion and regimental level operations sufficient to undertake

large-scale attacks against French positions."[79] This signaled the

Vietminh's willingness to engage French forces in open battle. After a

series of strategic forays, the Vietminh successfully defeated French

forces at Dien Bien Phu. The resounding loss prompted French authorities

to seek a quick resolution to the Indochinese conflict. In 1954, the

French Chamber voted overwhelmingly to accept the terms of the peace

talks set out in the Geneva Agreement.

While the preceding historical summary greatly simplifies the

events and processes that culminated in the defeat of French

colonialism, its purpose is to offer an account of the principal groups

involved in the revolutionary movement. This provides an element of historical background for subsequent examination of socio-economic developments, changing transnational relations, and group conflicts. It also provides a basis for the analysis of the role of ideology and its function in the revolutionary process.

NOTES

[1] Theorists focusing on socio-economic structural transformations rather than political changes may wish to examine transformations that follow the revolutionary party's acquisition of political power. However, this thesis is primarily concerned with the formation of revolutionary movements, thereby justifying the omission of the developments following the 1954 partition of Vietnam.

[2] Revolts continued sporadically throughout the Mekong delta from 1872 to 1878. In February 1872 there were uprisings in Bentre, Tra Vinh, and Vinh Long. In April uprisings broke out in Camau. Similar revolts occurred in Long Xuyen in March 1873, Traon in February 1874, Chaudoc in March 1875, and Mytho in 1878. See Paul Isoart, Le Phenomene National Vietnamien, (Paris: R. Pichon et R. Durand-Auzias, Librairie Generale de Droit et de Jurisprudence, 1961), p. 129.

[3] David G. Marr., Vietnamese Anticolonialism, 1885-1925, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 24.

[4] The Monarchy was counting on the support of China until the 1884 Sino-French armistice excluded the possibility of a conflict between France and China.

[5] Nguyen The Anh., "The Vietnamese Monarchy Under French Colonial Rule 1884-1945", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1985, p. 155.

[6] Ibid., p. 155.

[7] Ibid., p. 155.

[8] Marr, Anticolonialism, p.48.

[9] Ibid., p. 69.

[10] Of the Can Vuong groups, the resistance of De Tham's organization continued in the Tonkin countryside until 1912.

[11] Marr, Anticolonialism, p. 76.

[12] Ibid., p. 76.

[13] William Duiker, The Rise of Nationalism in Vietnam, 1900-1941, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 36.

[14] Marr, Anticolonialism, p. 131.

[15] Cf. ibid., p. 133.

[16] David G. Marr, "Vietnam: Harnessing the Whirlwind", Asia - The Winning of Independence, ed. Robin Jefferey, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 188.

[17] Marr, Anticolonialism, p. 129f..

[18] Ibid., p. 219.

[19] Duiker, Nationalism, p.51.

[20] Ibid., p. 56.

[21] This reflected the attitude of many of the intelligentsia who felt that the failure of the Vietnamese was the result of their culturally based ignorance and backwardness. While some of this attitude may have been influenced by the influx of European notions of social darwinism, it is more likely that it was rooted in the fact that the French had effectively beaten the Vietnamese, imposed their version of colonialism, and any attempts to revolt using traditional means had failed.

[22] Marr, Anticolonialism, p. 182.

[23] Ibid., p. 236.

[24] Duiker, Nationalism, p.179ff..

[25] Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger., Pub., 1967), p.200, 202. (Hereafter cited as Buttinger, Vol.I).

[26] See Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), p. 78f..

[27] While this may be in part the reason for the decline in anticolonial activity, another factor was that no anticolonial alternatives had developed following the successfull repression of the anticolonial movement in the first decade of the twentieth century.

[28] Hue-Tam Ho Tai, "The Politics of Compromise: The Constitutionalist Party and the Electoral Reforms of 1922 in French Cochinchina", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1984, pp. 371-391.

[29] Ralph B. Smith, "Some Vietnamese Elites in Cochinchina, 1943", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 6, No. 4, (Oct. 1972), p. 465.

[30] Jean Chesneaux, "Stages in the Development of the Vietnam National Movement 1862-1940", Past and Present, No. 7, (April 1955), p. 70; cf. Buttinger, Vol. I, p. 196.

[31] William Duiker, "The Revolutionary Youth League: Cradle of Communism in Vietnam", China Quarterly, No. 51 (July-Sept. 1972), p. 483.

[32] Cf. Duiker, Nationalism, p. 143; I. Milton Sacks, "Marxism in Vietnam", Marxism in Southeast Asia, ed. Frank N. Trager, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 120; and Buttinger, Vol I, p. 202.

[33] Duiker, Nationalism, p. 184.

[34] Sacks, "Marxism in Vietnam", p. 120.

[35] Ibid., p. 120.

[36] Bernard B. Fall, "The Political-Religious Sects of Viet-Nam", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 28, 1955, p. 238.

[37] The Tan Viet went through a number of name changes. See Buttinger, Vol. I, footnote 102 p. 202.

[38] Ibid., p. 155.

[39] Ibid., p. 207.

[40] Cf. Ibid., p. 207; Duiker, Nationalism, p. 165.

[41] Hoang Van Chi, From Colonialism to Communism: A Case History of North Vietnam, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pub., second printing, 1964), p. 22. Cf. table on occupations of VNQDD members arrested February 1929, John T. McAlister, Jr., Vietnam: The Origins of Revolution, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pub., 1969), p. 89.

[42] Ibid., p. 23.

[43] McAlister argues that one of the principal reasons for the VNQDD's program of "overt militancy" was to "demonstrate what power it had, with the vain hope of winning wider support by proving itself to be the vanguard party in overthrowing the French." Ibid., p. 88. While this may be partially correct, one must not ignore the concept of elite based revolution predominating the VNQDD. In this respect, the VNQDD was similar to previous anticolonialist ideologies that ignored the revolutionary role of the masses. This point is developed in Chapter Five.

[44] Buttinger, Vol. I, p. 207.

[45] Duiker, Nationalism, p. 165.

[46] Truong Buu Lam, Resistance, Rebellion, Revolution: Popular Movements in Vietnamese History, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1984), p. pp. 34f..

[47] William Duiker., The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1981), p. 14.

[48] By this time Ho Chi Minh had been an active participant in the International Communist movement for a number of years, first working with the French Communist Party and later studying in the Soviet Union and participating in the Kresintern dealing with peasant and colonial issues.

[49] The building of a new organization on the foundations of an old organization is a theme constantly repeated in the history of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. In this case, Ho Chi Minh employed the Tam Tam Xa (Association of Like Minds) as his organizational base. See Duiker., "The Revolutionary Youth League", p. 479.

[50] Alexander Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), p. 224. While researchers such as Woodside, Duiker, and Young emphasize the ideological continuity between Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism, Marr rejects this position and criticizes Woodside in "Nationalism and Revolution in Vietnam", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 1, No. 4, (Winter 1977-78), p. 89, for arguing that "nationalism rather the the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic supplied Vietnamese communists with faith in the future...." Though Marr is partially justified in his criticism, for the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic was an integral part of the faith of the inner cadre, nevertheless, the lower echelons of the ICP (ie. the uneducated peasants and workers) had only a vague comprehension of the abstract concept of dialectics. Instead, freedom from exploitation and national independence were the keystones of their faith.

[51] See James P. Harrison, The Endless War: Fifty Years of Struggle in Vietnam, (New York: The Free Press, 1982), p. 43.

[52] Gareth Porter, "Proletariat and Peasantry in Early Vietnamese Communism", Asian Thought and Society, Vol. I, No. 3. (Dec. 1976), p. 336f.

[53] Ibid., p. 336. The orthodox members of the ICP felt that the "organic relationship" down played the important role of the proletariat and failed to account for the reactionary and conservative nature of the peasantry.

[54] Harrison, p. 141.

[55] Ibid., p. 141.

[56] See Porter, "Proletariat and Peasantry in Early Vietnamese Communism", passim for an informative discussion on the application of the Proletarianization policy of the ICP.

57 A number of Vietnamese communists were dissatisfied with the Thanh Nien, feeling that it was incapable of mobilizing the support of the urban worker on the basis of "vague patriotic slogans". At the First Congress of the Thanh Nien, these radical proponents proposed that it be disbanded and a communist party be established in its stead. Being rebuffed, they left the Congress and formed a separate Communist party, later recruiting members from the Thanh Nien. Other members of the Thanh Nien formed their own communist parties in order to preserve their regional membership. This resulted in a fragmented Thanh Nien. See Duiker, Communist, p. 30f..

58 Porter, p. 342.

59 Milton Osbourne., "Continuity and Motivation in the Vietnamese Revolution: New Light from the 1930's", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 47, No. 1, (Spring 1974), p. 46

60 Ibid., p. 49.

61 Duiker,"Revolutionary Youth League", p.497

62 Duiker, Communist, p.47

63 David G. Marr, "Harnessing the Whirlwind", p. 180.

64 The most prominent of these organizations was the Vietnamese chapter of the French Socialist Party. However, the defeat of the Blum government brought a rapid decline in the popularity of the Socialist Party. In addition, some of the Vietnamese branches of the Socialist Party were effectively infiltrated by the ICP. See Ibid., p.180.

65 Samuel L. Popkin., The Rational Peasant, (Berkeley: Universtiy of California Press, 1979), p.202.

66 See Bernard B. Fall, "The Political-Religious Sects of Viet-Nam", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 28, 1955, p. 244f..

67 Duiker, Communist, p. 55.

68 David G. Marr, Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p.402.

69 Paul Berman., Revolutionary Organization, (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1974), p. 3.

70 It is difficult to say how much of this mass exuberance represented actual support for the Vietminh. It should be remembered that the ICP cadres directing the Vietminh were expert agitators and frequently manipulated mass meetings advantageously. Their succcess at infiltrating, provoking, and directing mass meetings. See Masaya Shiraishi, "La Présence Japonaise en Indochine (1940-1945)", L'Indochine

Française 1940-1945, ed. Paul Isoart, (Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1982), p. 241.

[71] See Buttinger, Vol. I, pp. 296-298.

[72] See ibid., p. 345f.

[73] Marr, "Harnessing the Whirlwind", p. 204.

[74] In the early summer of 1945, the Tonkin mountain provinces of, Cao Bang, Lang son, Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, and Bac Kan formed the Free Zone. This area was partially controlled by the Vietminh in the early 1940's. By 1945 it was able to maintain political hegemony in the area and it later became its support base in 1946 when the French regained control of the Red River delta.

[75] Duiker, Communist, p. 128.

[76] Ibid., p. 130. According to McAlister, the distinctive element of the ICP's ideology was its commitment and emphasis on nationalism. McAlister, Vietnam, p.144.

[77] Vo Nguyen Giap, cited in Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, 3rd revision, (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Company, 1963), p.31.

[78] J.J Zasloff, The Role of the Sanctuary in Insurgency: Communist China's Support to the Vietminh, 1946-1954, (Santa Monica, California: The Rand Corporation, 1967), p. 13.

[79] Ibid., p. 26.

CHAPTER THREE: SUBTHEORETICAL APPROACHES
TO COLONIAL VIETNAM

Introduction

While Chapter One discussed current universal theories of
revolution, there is another theoretical category which attempts to
develop constructs designed for particular empirical circumstances.
Rather than postulate broad all encompassing models, this sub-theory
approach is comprised of analytical frameworks that have been
specifically designed for the study of particular revolutionary
phenomena. The approaches concerned with colonial Vietnam are primarily
intended to explain peasant based agrarian revolutions. While this
chapter does not claim to examine all of the sub-theoretical approaches
focusing on Vietnam, it does examine the models that have been
influential in the study of revolutionary movements during the colonial
period.

This chapter focuses on four primary sub-theoretical
approaches; the Traditional Sociological approach of Paul Mus and John
T. McAlister; the Moral Economy approach employed by James C. Scott and
Eric R. Wolf; the structural model proposed by Jeffery Paige; and
finally, the Public Choice framework utilized by Samuel Popkin. As
mentioned earlier, there are a number of approaches that could not be
included in this chapter. Most noticeable, is the exclusion of the more

stringent Marxist analyses. This is excusable, in part, because the various Marxist approaches to revolution are discussed in the sections on ideology, and in a broader sense, in chapter one under general approaches to revolution.[1] This was necessary, given the close link between Marxism as a theory of society and Marxism as a revolutionary ideology.[2] It may be argued, that in the case of colonial Vietnam it is extremely difficult to distinguish between these two conceptual perspectives, given the heated debates over the historical influence of Leninism, Stalinism, Maoism, and Trotskyism.[3] However, in the case of studies conducted by Jean Chesneaux and Martin J. Murray, the Marxist explanation of structural transformations and revolutionary processes will be discussed briefly in the following chapter.[4] It should be noted that there are many other studies, which draw from particular theoretical frameworks, but fail to deal with theoretical issues per se. This is true of the group approach employed by Alexander Woodside and William Duiker.[5] Other works, such as the historical tomes of Joseph Buttinger, employ theory implicitly but provide no overall perspective that explains the revolutionary process. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss this category from a theoretical perspective.

Before examining each sub-theoretical approach separately, it is helpful to distinguish the broad conceptual framework under which each sub-theory is subsumed. In the Traditional Sociological approach, Paul Mus draws on the theoretical foundation of systems theory. This means that Mus' framework is derived from the same intellectual sources as Chalmers Johnson, with one important distinction. Mus does not focus on the Durkheimian concept of anomie and its role in disequilibrated

society. Rather, he focuses on the Parsonian notion of social and cultural systems developing norms that regulate social processes and relationships. Like Parsons, Mus emphasizes the important role of cultural orientation systems which provide the major source of legitimacy for a community's political, economic, and social order.[6] For example, the predominant impact of the Confucian system in Mus' analysis is important in the transition from traditional society to the acceptance of a revolutionary Marxist organization. While Mus' approach has a strong affinity to systems theory, McAlister's framework is more akin to the frustration/aggression models of the social psychological approach. Without denying the impact of traditional institutions, McAlister is more inclined to view revolutionary activity as a function of relative deprivation than an attempt to act according to the dictates of a Confucian model of order.

The Moral economy approach is more eclectic and consequently, more difficult to categorize. James Scott draws from the historical sociological works of Barrington Moore Jr. and Eric R. Wolf. However, there is a tendency to extend the analysis beyond the realm of political economy and examine the psychological elements that drive peasants to revolt. In this respect, it is often difficult to differentiate the role of frustration and the historical cultural context of moral outrage which Scott uses to explain the nature of peasant reactions. Unlike Scott, Eric R. Wolf extends the historical sociological framework and political economic focus to examine power relations within society. Of all the sub-theories, Wolf maintains the closest resemblance to Theda Skocpol's work, primarily in his attempt to incorporate the influence of

the state and class developments into the analysis of revolution. The structural approach utilized by Paige also resembles Skocpol's framework in its focus on the formation of classes and the development of class relations. However, unlike Skocpol and Wolf, the model employed by Paige stresses economic determinism to the exclusion of international and domestic political developments. Finally, the Public Choice model modified by Samuel Popkin is derived from Choice theory and related investment and decision-making models designed by economists such as Mancur Olson.

Traditional Sociological Approach

The earliest approach applied to Vietnam was the traditional Sociological method employed by Paul Mus, and later adopted, in part, by John T. McAlister, Jr.[7] According to Mus, traditional Vietnamese society represented a fragile balance between the internal autonomy of the "autarchic village" and the coordinating role of the "ritualistic state".[8] The village remained collectively responsible for the payment of tax assessments, fulfilling corvee allotments, and furnishing men and supplies for the state army. Once these obligations were fulfilled, except in the case of criminal offences, the village and its ruling body (the council of notables) were no longer accountable to the State. For Mus,

> l'État n'avait pouvoir que sur le produit global des impositions. L'autorité centrale n'était pas aux prises avec les individus, les dâns, - toujours sauf affaire criminelle portée devant elle, - mais seulement avec les collectivités.[9]

The traditional *Sociological* approach viewed the pre-colonial Vietnamese state as being relatively aloof from local affairs. Although commissioning and coordinating public works projects, the State deferred the task of building and financing projects to villages affected by the new development. For example, water management projects required each village to build and maintain its portion of the dikes and canals within its territory. The limited involvement of the State resulted in relatively small national budgets.[10] This limited the need to increase extractions from the peasantry.

Despite the limited domain of state interference at the local economic level, the traditional state acted in the capacity of religious, judicial, and military overseer; coordinating activities and ensuring that its subjects did not stray from the "Confucian model". The State reserved for itself the right of verification and eventual repression of deviations from the Le code established in the fifteenth century. However, the power of detailed enforcement remained in the hands of the village ruling body, the council of notables. Although the state was limited in its enforcement role, according to the Traditional Sociological approach, it effectively penetrated village life through its imposition of rituals, attitudes, and standards of deportment that regulated individual and group behavior.

This is a crucial element in Mus' concept of societal breakdown in colonial Vietnam. It is argued that the behavioral norms imposed by the state, dictated the nature of one's relationship to society and to other individuals. This maintained the social harmony which is so crucial to Mus' understanding of traditional Vietnamese society.

Subsequently, the introduction of colonialism destroyed this "Confucian balance" which had established harmony between the various sectors of Vietnamese society.

While a more complete discussion on Confucianism is reserved for the following chapter, it is necessary to discuss the basic elements of this social context and how Mus sees Vietnamese Confucianism as the stabilizing force in pre-colonial Vietnam. According to Mus, Vietnamese life was shaped in accordance with two orders of duty: first, the individual must be diligent in the fulfillment of obligations to the local community, the family, and the village; second, one must strictly conform to the standards, attitudes, and intentions embodied in traditional rites. Thus, for example, the rural peasantry was "brought up to believe that the success of their labors and their survival itself depended on ritualistic observations...."[11] It is through the fulfillment of duty that each individual contributed to the balance and harmony of nature. Those who stepped outside the bounds of prescribed behavior were considered to be "gambling with fate"; they were venturing beyond the realm of duty and thus no longer belonged in any "natural" relationship.[12]

The concept of harmonious nature was considered crucial for the survival of individuals and society. In this context, the introduction of French colonialism destroyed the sovereign power of the Vietnamese state, thereby disrupting its harmonizing role in society. Mus argues that the inability of the monarchical and mandarin system (partially retained in Annam and Tonkin) to impose its Confucian model on the society, and the subsequent introduction of colonial policies affecting

village economic and political institutions, led to the destabilization of traditional society.

In the context of the traditional social framework, the Vietnamese perceived the revolutionary movement as an attempt to restore the harmony of nature by means of a new system of thought and authoritarian political structures.[13] The former regime, and its failure to prevail against colonialism, constituted the absence of divine legitimacy. In the absence of an alternative system, Mus argues that Vietnamese society remained passive in its reaction to the abuses and deficiencies of the ruling colonial regime. But, with the introduction of a revolutionary ideology this apparent docility was rapidly transformed into revolutionary zeal:

> A l'instant où une vertu (nous dirions un système) paraît épuisée et où l'on en voit une autre qui se prépare à s'y substituer, les abus précédents, jusque là supportés, s'éclairent d'une lumière nouvelle. C'est alors le moment, et c'est seulement alors le moment, où à l'aide du nouveau principe, il s'agit de leur porter remède. A une extrême patience succède ainsi un comportement d'intolérance.[14]

It is at this point that Mus describes the population as being animated "d'un esprit qui, a certains egards, reste proche de l'esprit traditionnel."[15] In the face of conflicting political powers, individuals begin to ask themselves "si tel chef, tel type d'homme et d'action conforme..." to the will of heaven.[16] Mus adds,

> Ce qu'il y a de réel dans ces puissants mouvements d'opinion, et ce que le talent des philosophies chinoises de l'Etat a été de mettre en formules, c'est que le peuple aux heures décisives, a ... la conviction profonde et quasiment relig-euse de porter en lui-même cette voix du Ciel, qui, à ce moment, est sa voix.[17]

This process of social reaction attempts to explain, in part, the mass support obtained by the principal revolutionary organization challenging the hegemony of the colonial regime. For Mus, the success of the Vietminh was primarily the result of their ability to personify the Confucian concept of "mandat céleste" (Thien minh),[18] thus aquiring a quasi-religious legitimacy among the majority of the population.[19] This resulted from unsuccessful attempts by the colonial regime to restructure village institutions from above[20], and the ability of the Vietminh to establish an opposing political and social system from below.

Unlike Mus, McAlister places greater emphasis on the frustration produced by colonial policies that transformed village institutions, and created new indigenous elites whose political and social mobility was significantly circumscribed by French economic and political dominance.[21] This minimizes the relationship between the development of mass support for the revolutionary movement and Confucianism. Thus, McAlister describes four socio-economic changes affecting Vietnam during the inter-war period as the principal factors influencing revolutionary developments prior to and following 1945:

> 1) the formation of an industrial labor force; 2) the emergence of an indigenous wealthy class whose holdings were in newly developed agricultural lands; 3) the creation of an educated elite whose instruction had been exclusively in the French language and had included the assimilation of French cultural values as well as training in technical specialities, with the promise of employment in the French sector of society; and 4) the deterioration of cohesive social institutions in the rural areas.[22]

McAlister views the development of a frustrated elite with acquired political skills as crucial for the development of an organized revolutionary movement. But, he also states that the breakdown of cohesive social structures "was as pervasive an influence for the future of Vietnam as was the mobilization of a small upper class."[23] It is argued that societal breakdown was the result of socioeconomic instability, which in turn was caused by colonial taxation policies that demanded payment in money rather than in kind. McAlister argues,

> the monetary sector of the economy was neither large enough nor efficient enough to permit extensive peasant employment for wages or a market for an agricultural surplus at stable prices. This situation produced two important results: a decline in peasant welfare and, because communal institutions had been superseded in administration and tax collection, the absence of meaningful mutual assistance beyond the family.[24]

While colonial attempts to modernize traditional structures are credited with creating a mobile and frustrated population, McAlister concludes that it is the emergence of a colonial educated elite that provides the essential political skills for organizing a revolutionary movement and creating an alternative political structure. This provides the "stimulus and a rationale for popular participation in politics."[25] In other words, societal breakdown provided the basis of popular dissatisfaction with the colonial regime, but it was the effective mobilization of this discontent by a frustrated indigenous elite that ultimately led to the defeat of French colonialism.

As for the nature of societal breakdown, both Mus and McAlister maintain that colonial policies were primarily responsible for

destabilizing the harmony of traditional political and economic

institutions. For Mus, three colonial reforms undermined the

traditional patriarchal system, and the administrative and financial

latitude of the village:

> (1) the institution of regular registration of
> births and deaths, which permitted the
> composition of more accurate tax rolls; (2) the
> imposition of tighter French control over the
> Council of Notables, particularly in tax and
> budgetary matters; and (3) the substitution of
> election for co-optation of council members.[26]

On the basis of these reforms, it is argued that the traditional balance

and harmony of Vietnamese society was disrupted, forcing members of

society to seek alternative social institutions. This rendered large

segements of Vietnamese society susceptible to revolutionary

organizations presenting an attractive alternative to existing socio-

economic structures.

Moral Economy Approach

Unlike the traditional Sociological framework employed by Mus

and McAlister, the Moral Economy approach focuses on the introduction

and penetration of the colonial market system and its subsequent

restructuring of traditional agrarian society.[27] It is argued that the

capitalist nature of twentieth century colonialism,

> cut through the integument of custom, severing
> people from their accustomed social matrix in
> order to transform them into economic actors,
> independent of prior social commitments to kin
> and neighbors. They had to learn how to maximize
> expenditures, to buy cheap and to sell dear,
> regardless of social obligations and social
> costs.[28]

The transformation of men and produce into marketable commodities endangered the social institutions that traditionally ensured the peasant of a minimal livelihood. The commercialization of the agricultural community liberated the peasant from the restrictions of traditional social structures and norms, but did not provide alternative institutions for protecting the peasant from market fluctuations and crop failures.[29] While colonial capitalism liberates the peasant from the economic restraints of traditional institutions, it also forces the peasantry to react against the elimination of its traditional sources of security.

Within the Moral Economy approach there are two interpretations of agrarian commercialization and resulting reactions from the Vietnamese peasantry. James Scott maintains that the "explosiveness" of the agricultural community is a function of four factors: demographic changes, production for the market, state growth, and the degree to which state and elite claims to peasant production violate what Scott calls the peasantry's moral claim to subsistence.[30] Population growth and increased dependence on market production reduce the bargaining power of the peasantry, increasing the competitive advantage of those controlling land and capital.[31] State growth enables colonial administrators to increase extractions from the peasantry while maintaining the colonial market system through coercion. The successful penetration and maintenance of colonial capitalism results in the erosion of the traditional risk-sharing mechanisms and the secondary subsistence resources of peasants.[32] Peasants plagued by land shortages, price fluctuations, and demands for cash payments become

increasingly susceptible to the exactions of landlords and large property owners willing to take advantage of the peasantry's economic dependence on market vagaries.

According to Scott, it is the communities with their traditional structures still intact that demonstrate the greatest solidarity and explosiveness. Economic shocks are felt with greater uniformity within the traditional village as redistribution mechanisms supposedly spread the impact more uniformly throughout the various sectors of the peasantry.[33]

In essence, the disruptive element of colonialism threatened the peasantry's claim to a minimal livelihood, formerly guaranteed through traditional village institutions. This subsistence ethic becomes the moral principle by which peasants evaluate claims on their produce. When state and landlord exactions violate what peasants regard as their basic social right to subsistence, they forfeit, in the eyes of the peasantry, any right to peasant production. Infringement of paternal obligations on the part of the elite produces moral outrage that fuels violent attempts by the peasantry to "restore customary interclass relations."[34] While the peasantry is viewed as a political force capable of generating extensive internal upheaval, it is considered a reactionary element in the revolutionary movement.

Unlike Scott, who views the peasantry as a reactionary force, Eric R. Wolf argues that peasants may also choose progressive solutions to counteract the destabilizing effects of colonialism. Thus, the

peasantry has the choice of either,

> cleaving to their traditional institutions,
> increasingly subverted by the forces which they
> were trying to neutralize; or they could commit
> themselves to the search for new social forms
> which would grant them shelter.[35]

In the case of Vietnam, Wolf views the revolutionary process as a

combination of defensive reactions and a "search for a new and more

humane social order."[36]

Rather than rely on the concept of moral outrage, Wolf contends

that the decisive factor in mass-based revolutions is the "relation of

the peasantry to the field of power which surrounds it."[37] This refers

to the potential tactical power of peasants, and their ability to

maintain a certain level of economic and political independence.[38] For

this reason, Wolf focuses on the strategic role of middle peasants and

peasants located in peripheral areas where landlord and government

control is weak.[39]

Although Wolf maintains that poor and landless peasants are

potential actors in revolutionary movements, they are nonetheless

considered dependent on "some external power to challenge the power that

constrains them."[40] Also, it is not assumed that a revolutionary

movement will unfold spontaneously. Rather, the organizational skills

and the ideologically motivated "new vision" or teleology of the

"rootless" intelligentsia are a necessary component of the revolutionary

movement. This requires the fusion of intellectuals and rural

supporters.

It is important to note that the revolutionary potential of the

middle and peripheral peasants is dependent on their respective

physical, cultural, and communal political autonomy.[41] With these

factors taken into account, Wolf considers the middle peasant as the

most vulnerable to economic changes, even though social relations may

change very little. It is the middle peasant's relative independence

and simultaneous exposure to threatening market developments that

increases his receptivity to radical ideologies and revolutions.[42]

Structural Approach

Another theoretical approach to the Vietnamese revolution is

Jeffery Paige's structural model of agrarian upheaval. Dividing

agrarian society into two predominant classes of cultivators and non-

cultivators, Paige states that agrarian revolution occurs in societies

where cultivator incomes are highly dependent on wages and non-

cultivators derive their principal source of income from land. It is

argued that the nature of land and wage dependent incomes determine

particular class characteristics and relationships which greatly

increase the irreconcilability of class antagonisms.

In the case of agrarian revolution, the land dependent non-

cultivator class bases its economic existence on its ability to maintain

control over a static economic structure. Unlike a capital dependent

income, the land dependent cultivator cannot increase productivity

through increased capital investment. Rather, land based incomes require

political coercion in order to maintain constant access to servile

labour supplies and hegemonic control over property rights. This means

that any compromises in political participation and political rights

jeopardizes the economic status of non-cultivators, to the economic advantage of cultivators.[43]

With respect to cultivators, Paige argues that wage dependence increases the attractiveness of radical ideologies that promote revolution through class solidarity and collective action.[44] This is the result of an economic structure that rewards risk acceptance and cooperation among cultivators, while reinforcing interdependence within the class itself. In this context, Paige focuses on the revolutionary role of tenant and landless peasants, assuming that this sector of peasant society provides the revolutionary movement with its principal social support. Furthermore, he argues that in the case of sharecropping systems, the economic characteristics of this class leads to the establishment of an "organized class-conscious proletariat" that demonstrates a "pronounced attraction to left-wing, particularly Communist, ideologies and a surprising potential for powerful political organizations."[45] This is combined with the notion that the political organization of this sector of peasant society is not entirely dependent on urban-based parties, but is capable of organizing itself to "self-consciously" seek the restructuring of existing class relations and political institutions.[46]

Public Choice Approach

The Public Choice approach to colonial Vietnam is the final theoretical framework to be discussed in this chapter.[47] The basic assumption of this approach is that individuals act on the basis of

maximizing personal welfare, and will not act to advance group

objectives *unless coerced; unless, some "separate incentive, distinct*

from the achievement of the group or common interest, is offered to the

members of the group individually on the condition that they help bear

the costs or burdens involved in the achievement of the group

objectives."[48]   From this context, Samuel L. Popkin argues that the

ability of revolutionary organizations to attract support and mobilize

the population depends primarily on their ability to recruit

participants on the basis of individual cost/benefit calculations.[49]

These calculations are based upon the estimated credibility and

capability of the revolutionary cadre:

> Whether the entrepreneur [ie. revolutionary
> cadre] is directly exchanging immediate benefits
> for peasant inputs or trying to convince the
> peasant that his actions can have a perceptible
> and profitable impact on the collective good, he
> must be concerned with increasing the peasant's
> estimates of the efficacy of his contributions
> to secure the promised returns. This means the
> peasant's subjective estimates of the would-be
> entrepreneur's capability and credibility will
> directly influence the entrepreneur's ability to
> organize peasants....[50]

For Popkin, this approach focuses on the decision-making

processes of individuals within the political and economic structures of

Vietnamese society. This involves the underlying assumption that

society can be reduced to the behavioral patterns of individuals, and

that individuals make decisions based upon the necessity and desire to

invest personal resources in order to maximize present or future

utility. By examining the investment strategies of Vietnamese peasants,

Popkin attempts to explain peasant reactions to colonialism and

motivating factors precipitating peasant involvement in revolutionary activity.

This approach assumes that the decision-making process in peasant society functions on the same basis as cost/benefit analysis in market society. In other words, patron-client relations, societal norms, and intravillage relationships are considered variable and endogenous to the economic system; they are not considered culturally determined and fixed. Peasant concerns with short-term and long-term investments, with highest priority being given to investments for old age security, constitute the basis for decisions as to whether individuals contribute resources to the revolutionary movement, remain "free riders", or oppose revolutionary developments.

In a situation of economic decline, where the survival of village members is threatened, Popkin maintains that the village will function less effectively as a protective institution. As individuals become worried about future payoffs on resources invested in village welfare and insurance schemes, personal resources are diverted to short-term investments that are more likely to offer quicker personal returns. This in turn exacerbates the already difficult position of village institutions that rely on individual investments. In this case, the revolutionary organization must establish its credibility as a secure investment. In other words, it must provide some form of assurance to the peasantry that it is capable of securing future payoffs in return for active support and involvement in the revolutionary movement.

The generation of mass involvement in the revolutionary movement requires that returns for participants are significantly higher

than the benefits accrued by non-participants. The peasant must decide whether it is worthwhile to invest valuable resources in the revolutionary movement at the risk of being punished if the revolution fails, or whether sufficient benefits will accrue without participation. Overcoming this free rider problem is crucial to the successful mobilization of mass support.[51]

When applied to colonial Vietnam, the Public Choice model focuses on the characteristics of the communist-led revolutionary movement that provided tangible incentives for peasant involvement and support.[52] For example, Popkin emphasizes the effective use of technical cadre, educational programs, and popular economic policies that required little enforcement or investment. After assuming temporary control of the State in August 1945, the Vietminh were able to reduce the tax burden on the peasantry, restore communal property rights for families whose male head was absent, temporarily relieve the interest burden on loans, and promote agricultural investment through Vietminh financing and coordination. This permitted the Vietminh to establish a high degree of credibility amongst the peasantry and provide some form of tangible reward for individual support and participation. Popkin asserts that the general acceptance of the Vietminh permitted the cadre to gradually restructure village government to "increase productivity and taxes and to create a positive system of exchange between village leaders and peasants that could be tapped for the resources and manpower necessary to build an army."[53]

Despite the increased power base of the Vietminh in Tonkin and Annam following its initial seizure of the State apparatus, Popkin

attributes its lack of success in Cochinchina to an inability to
effectively compete with the predominant politico-religious sects in the
South. He argues that the Cao Dai successfully attracted numerous
adherents because of the organization's ability to "offer peasants
protection against the inequities of French courts, marauding notables,
and large landlords who manipulated the system to keep their tenants in
a state of dependency."[54] In an area where colonial administrative
control had collapsed during the Japanese invasion in the early 1940's,
Hoa Hao developed wide popular support and strong village-centered
organizations by,

> offering peasants resources which lessened their
> dependence on and control by the large
> landowners; guaranteeing and adjudicating local
> property rights and disputes; and collecting
> substantial local taxes, which were then used to
> provide both insurance and welfare benefits.[55]

By focusing on the various ways in which organizations maintain
credibility and ensure exclusive rewards for participants, Popkin
attempts to explain the nature of collective action in colonial Vietnam.
From this basis he concludes that it is not the decay of traditional
institutions, nor the penetration of market structures that generates
revolutionary activity. Rather, it is the drive to find a better
alternative to the existing system and the ability of organizations to
present a plausible return on the investment of personal resources.
Once this credibility is established, revolutionary activity becomes a
function of organization, an extension of communication and coordination
capabilities.[56]

Critique of Traditional Sociological Approach

The emphasis on broad cultural and societal generalizations in the Traditional Sociological approach fails to differentiate between disparate socioeconomic and political structures and their respective impact on revolutionary developments in different areas of Vietnam. Arguing that the destabilizing influences of colonial policies were a principal force generating revolutionary activity, Mus and McAlister are unable to account for differences in regional revolutionary developments. This is particularly true of Annam where French policy had much less of an impact than in Tonkin and Cochinchina. The approach also faces difficulties when attempting to differentiate between peasant uprisings under traditional and colonial regimes, and in explaining the nature and extent of peasant involvement within revolutionary organizations. In addition, there is criticism as to the extent to which colonial policies per se did in fact transform traditional Vietnamese institutions. While administrative changes may give the appearance of change, many of the underlying relationships between various sectors of society remain the same.[57]

One of the major problems inherent in the framework utilized by Mus and McAlister is lack of theoretical cohesion. This is particularly evident in McAlister's work, where his discussion of various theories of revolution is only a secondary consideration. He does not discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the various theoretical models, nor does he assess their respective ability to account for the various revolutionary developments in colonial Vietnam. None of these theories

are discussed critically or assessed as to their explanatory merits regarding revolutionary processes in Vietnam. Rather than attempt to apply any of the theories in any systematic fashion, McAlister is content to draw historical parallels that superficially corroborate the models he discusses. Similarly, Mus does not provide a detailed discussion of his concept of the cultural system and its relation to socio-economic factors. The argument that Vietnamese culture was imbedded in the life and thinking of the Vietnamese fails to explain the process of cultural transformation and its impact on the revolutionary movement. The assumption that the similar authoritarian nature and teleological framework of Confucianism and Marxism permitted a cultural bridge between the old and the new world does not account for the appeal of non-marxist nationalism or the failure of non-marxist organizations to capitalize on their domestic support. This is also applicable to Vietnamese Catholics and members of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai.

Critique of Moral Economy Approach

Before examining the various weaknesses of the Moral Economy approach, it is necessary to discuss some of the theoretical differences between James C. Scott and Eric R. Wolf. While both agree that the fundamental propulsion of the agrarian revolutionary movement is the penetration of colonial capitalism and the subsequent transformation of traditional institutions, they disagree over the structural mechanisms that permit revolutionary developments. Scott asserts that the revolutionary basis of the peasantry is its cultural framework and its

traditional redistribution structures. In other words, when economic threats to subsistence are rapidly and uniformly distributed through traditional institutions, thus contributing to the spontaneity and explosive indignation of the peasantry, rural uprisings are immediate reactions to moral and economic wrongs within a particular cultural context. Conversely, Wolf maintains that the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry resides in the available material and organizational means that permit it to act collectively against threats to its security.[58] While Scott perceives peasant reactions as attempts to restore or maintain former institutions guaranteeing subsistence, Wolf argues that peasants are not necessarily reactionary and may seek new institutions offering viable alternatives to traditional and colonial structures.

Given these differences, it may be argued that the criticisms commonly applied to the Moral Economy approach are not equally relevant to each framework. Samuel Popkin, as one of the leading critics of Moral Economy studies on colonial Vietnam, describes four pertinent weaknesses: 1) peasant movements are antifeudal and not restorative as Moral Economists presume; 2) there is no relation between threats to or declines in subsistence and collective responses; 3) group antagonisms result from differentiated access to and control of bureaucracy and ancillary market institutions, not markets themselves; and finally, 4) the harmony and cooperation of traditional society is greatly exaggerated.[59]

The argument that peasant movements seek to remake rather than restore traditional practices and institutions is a pertinent indictment of Scott's position concerning the reactionary nature of the peasantry.

Scott's argument does not explain peasant attempts to change from
sharecropping to riskier fixed-rent contracts in eastern Cochinchina,
the support for the Hoa Hao in western Cochinchina,[60] Communist
successes in Annam where traditional institutions were still intact, and
in the Tonkin highlands, where market penetrations had less of an impact
on ethnic subsistence economies.[61] This criticism does not apply to
Wolf, who accepts the peasant's capacity to accept new institutions and
structures that offer an improvement over traditional society.

The emphasis on the causal relation between threats to
subsistence and collective action is another weak element in the Moral
Economy approach.[62] For example, Scott explains peasant uprisings in
Cochinchina during the "credit crisis" of 1907 and depression of 1930-31
on the basis of deteriorating rural class relations.[63] During these
periods of economic crisis, low rice prices meant that indebted
landholders could not meet the demands of creditors and were "swept from
a comparatively secure subsistence into the class of tenants or wage
laborers."[64] In many respects, Scott is arguing that market
penetration polarized economic life in the Mekong delta and permitted
class mobility and solidarity during periods of economic crisis. This
is inconsistent with his earlier argument concerning the function of
traditional distribution mechanisms and the sense of moral outrage which
disperse and accentuate the subsistence threat. While these factors are
emphasized in Scott's analysis of the 1930-31 peasant revolts in Nghe-
Tinh, they are not developed in his examination of the peasant uprisings
in Cochinchina. Furthermore, despite Scott's discussion of the role of
taxes and state claims on the peasantry as elements of the subsistence

threat in both cases, he never deals with the fundamental role of power

relations within colonialism. This is even more perplexing given

Scott's position that the primary difference between peasant revolts in

Cochinchina and Annam was the relative weakness of the state, not a

difference in motives or incentives.[65] This explanation of the

relevance of the strength of the state is inadequate, and when applied

to later developments in the revolutionary movement, it fails to explain

the variation in the success of the Vietminh in various regions of

colonial Vietnam.

Unlike Scott, Wolf's notion of "open" and "closed corporate"

village systems implies different processes of upheaval in different

rural areas.[66] In the traditional localities of Annam and Tonkin, the

closed corporate community, with its traditional defensive wall or

bamboo hedge[67] and highly integrated social institutions, becomes

increasingly unified when threatened by external forces, thereby

retaining a relative degree of autonomy and internal solidarity.[68]

This was particularly evident during efforts by French and Vietminh

forces to win the support of traditional peasant communities in the

north and central regions of Vietnam.[69] Conversely, the open system in

Cochinchina became increasingly fragmented as external and internal

forces attempted to consolidate their power. In other words, rather

than producing a spontaneous increase in intracommunity solidarity,

conflict and unrest in Cochinchina served to fragment Southern

communities as individuals, families, and social and political factions

sought to increase their power vis a vis local competitors by forming

alliances with extracommunal forces such as guerrillas, colonial officials, and politico-religious sects.[70]

The third criticism of the Moral Economy approach is directed towards its focus on the negative impact of market institutions, and thereby excluding the negative impact of changing peasant relations with bureaucracy and ancillary market institutions. This is particularly evident in the failure of Scott and Wolf to offer sufficient analysis of the impact of the colonial judicial system and the legalization of land claims. The peasant's unfamiliarity with French legal and administrative procedures enabled knowledgeable and influential individuals to defraud peasants, invalidating land claims and preventing legal redress. Ngo Vinh Long cites numerous examples where peasant lands were lost through procedural and administrative manipulation. For example,

> French colonial authorities sent out notices stating that peasant families could clear up to ten hectares of virgin land each, with the stipulation that after the land was turned into paddy fields their names would be put down in the land registers as permanent owners. However, when the land was turned into paddy fields, powerful village officials or landlords put in applications for free land concessions, claiming that those peasants working on the land were merely their hired hands.[71]

According to Ngo, these tactics contributed to changes in landownership patterns throughout colonial Vietnam. It is argued that two fifths of all cultivated land, including plantations, belonged to Vietnamese and French concessions.[72] The introduction of a property market may account for some of the changes in ownership patterns, but it is quite probable that the administrative and procedural advantages of

certain sectors of society permitted the expropriation of numerous

developed properties that normally would have remained in peasant hands.

Conversely, areas under Catholic control or dominated by various

politico-religious sects provided some protection against this form of

expropriation, offering channels whereby peasants could influence local

administrators.[73]

The final criticism is equally applicable to Wolf and Scott, as

well as the Traditional Sociological approach. The assumption that

traditional society was harmonious and based on cooperative patron-

client relations fails to account for the evidence of social unrest and

discontent prior to the introduction of colonialism. This in turn leads

to erroneous conclusions about the nature of class antagonisms and group

conflicts following the implanatation of colonialism. While

traditionally the general poverty of peasants and village notables

minimized the extent of inequality and social stratification, agrarian

exploitation still existed "sous forme de rentes, de corvées, de

préstations féodale de toute sorte, au bénéfice des propriétaires

fonciers et à la charge des paysans pauvres."[74] However, these forms

of exploitation were tempered by the numerous dangers threatening

survival and the need to maintain unity. In the traditional developed

areas of Annam, Tonkin, and early Cochinchina, villages required

collective solidarity in order to defend against piracy and maintain the

dikes and irrigation system on which their crops depended. There was an

uneasy balance between the state and village elites which restricted the

degree to which either could exploit the peasantry or one another.[75]

French rule introduced a new set of institutions and power relationships

that permitted village elites to exploit the peasantry without fearing the affects of increasing disunity. In other words, colonialism introduced measures that enabled village elites and mandarins to circumvent the former balance of power and exploit the peasantry through the manipulation of colonial policies, which were often intended to help and protect the peasants.[76] The need to examine shifting power relations, as well as market and policy developments, is important for any explanation of changing group, state, and class relations. While colonial policies and market penetration influenced revolutionary developments, it is shifting power structures that opened the way for new alliances and acceptance of revolutionary ideologies.

Critique of Structural approach

Despite the meticulous nature of Paige's research, one encounters a number of difficulties when applying his theoretical framework to colonial Vietnam. First, the model does not account for the fact that the revolutionary movement in colonial Vietnam was more prominent in areas that theoretically should have been more conservative. Both Annam and Tonkin lacked the particular economic structure that supposedly produces agrarian revolution. Nor, does this model explain the existence of powerful reactionary politico-religious organizations, such as the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao, which drew wide support from wage dependent cultivators in the Mekong delta. According to Paige's model, this region should have been the center of a revolutionary socialist movement.[77]

Another major weakness in Paige's approach is the assumption that a wage dependent class is capable of internally generating a revolutionary movement. This neglects the crucial fact that Vietnamese communist and non-communist revolutionary groups were consistently led by urban-educated middle class elites.[78] Nor does it account for the fact that the only truly spontaneous peasant organization, the Hoa Hao, was not revolutionary in its orientation.[79]

Finally, Paige's emphasis on the important role of income sources embodies a number of assumptions that inaccurately explain the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. Margaret R. Somers and Walter L. Goldfrank are correct when they fault Paige for deriving the complex dimensions of economic and political behavior from income sources.[80] Paige does not take into account the political and organizational resources of the dominant economic class, nor does his model incorporate the impact of political and economic changes at the international level. This factor is extremely important, given the role of foreign aid supporting the ICP and the impact of international developments that severely weakened the colonial regime.

The assumption that land dependent cultivators are not prone to collective action or class solidarity fails to explain village solidarity in Tonkin and Annam, where peasants banded together in opposition to government officials and absentee landlords.[81] Nor does this explain the varying impact of middle and rich peasants that were land dependent but participated in the revolutionary movement. Unlike Wolf or Popkin, Paige excludes middle and rich peasants as likely participants in the revolution. However, this means that Paige is

unable to explain the hesitancy of the ICP to promote policies affecting peasant property rights and other measures attempting to gain the support of the land dependent sectors of the peasantry. This suggests, that minimally, the middle peasant was an important source of support for the ICP.

Critique of Public Choice Approach

Although Popkin claims to have sufficiently modified the general Public Choice approach to meet the particular circumstances surrounding collective behavior in colonial Vietnam, there are still a number of serious theoretical problems that limit its ability to explain revolutionary phenomena. First, the very nature of Public Choice theory, as Mancur Olson so willingly admits, has difficulty explaining what he describes as irrational/nonrational behavior in mass movements.[82] In this respect, Popkin is forced to explain commitments to revolutionary movements as a function of potential or perceived benefits. Reliance on this perception of motivation fails to account for the influence of social pressures and social esteem factors motivating peasants to forego material benefits in return for intangible benefits. In other words, the concept of benefits must take into account the religious or cultural context.[83] Such is the case where peasants forego economic investment advantages and incur substantial expense in order to faithfully observe the appropriate village rites and ceremonies. While it may be argued that the fulfillment of religious obligations protecting ancestral spirits, securing community esteem

through the manifestation of virtue, and maintaining a harmonious balance with nature are to be considered benefits; this minimizes the ability of Popkin's materially oriented investment logic to account for various peasant behaviors.

With its primary emphasis on economic gain and security, investment logic can only account for religious motivation by transforming it into something that it is not, ie. a material advantage. This is apparent in Popkin's efforts to focus on the material benefits provided by membership in the predominant politico-religious sects in the Mekong Delta and the Catholic church in Annam and Tonkin. While material advantages are an important factor, neglecting the spiritual *commitment to a particular organization results is a serious* underestimation of the willingness to act collectively with individual material sacrifice. This problem is even more critical when attempting to employ the Public Choice criterion to explain the initial development and formation of revolutionary organizations. Investment logic does not explain the creation of a dedicated cadre.[84]

Another problem in Popkin's approach is its tendency to examine individuals apart from their social and community context. For example, *between 1925 and the early 1940's, the colonial administration attempted* to resolve the overpopulation problem in the Red River and Annamese deltas by implementing a resettlement program with land concessions in the highland areas. The program offered ownership of parcels of land suitable for single family cultivation in the Yen Bai, Phu Tho, and Thai Nguyen provinces. Despite the apparent attractiveness of the program,

very few peasants applied for migration, and those who did relocate often returned to their original villages.[85]

Following the Public Choice model, Popkin argues that the failure of the resettlement program was largely due to the inability of peasants to find adequate resources to finance start-up costs.[86] However, this was not the case for middle peasants who were capable of investing and benefiting materially from the relocation program. While it is quite true that the penury of many peasants did not permit the purchase of tools, cattle, and food that were necessary expenses when migrating, Popkin does not account for the fact that "few Vietnamese families wished to abandon their ancestral villages all by themselves to move to the lonely, malarial highlands."[87] In addition, those peasants who "acquired permanent rights to small concessions tried to sell them, take the capital, and return to their lowland villages, where they no longer felt like 'vagrants' cut off from a vital supporting milieu, from the graves of grandparents, and from traditional mutual-help organizations."[88] In Popkin's cost/benefit calculus, the peasant's attachment to the community and its religious and social importance is not taken into account. The failure to include these socio-religious elements such as the function of village rites which symbolically reiterate the social rank and the appropriate role of individuals in society,[89] and the importance of village shrines and pagodas in daily life, poses difficulties for explanations based on material cost/benefit analysis.[90]

This does not mean that peasants fatalistically accepted the dictates of fate, or rejected technological advances that offered

reasonably secure economic advantages.[91] Rather, it is extremely important to avoid theoretical frameworks that minimize the social context of the peasant. Given the importance of ancestral tombs and kinship ties, it is not surprising that so few peasants with the financial capability to take advantage of resettlement programs refused to relocate. Nor is it surprising that pre-revolutionary anticolonial movements had difficulty convincing potential followers to leave their villages, shrines, and tombs.[92]

The question of social context and revolutionary involvement must be answered if one is to explain the success and failure of ICP recruiting practices in rural areas. While Popkin notes that ICP successes among the peasantry commenced when the cadre began to utilize cultural themes, he fails to elaborate on the nature of this success.[93] He does not explain why this new strategy created a credible vision of the future, and how it related to committed participation and collective action in general. It is at this point that Popkin fails to harmonize his concept of credibility and investment logic. This in turn weakens the explanatory value of his model.

Conclusion

The sub-theory models discussed in this chapter have all contributed to the study of revolutionary developments in colonial Vietnam. The Traditional Sociological approach accented the role of culture and impact of colonial policies. The Moral Economy approach introduced the function of economic developments and class formations,

and analyzed these factors in the normative context of Vietnamese society. Furthermore, Wolf pointed to the importance of structures offering tactical and organizational advantages. Although socio-economic factors are an important element of Wolf's theoretical model, he also attempted to incorporate military and political influences. However, while the basic principles underlying Wolf's model are valuable, they are not applied in any systematic manner in his treatment of Vietnam.[94]

The Structural approach provides a systematic analysis of economic development and the extent to which particular classes were affected by market institutions. Finally, the Public Choice approach enriches our understanding of the socio-economic interplay between numerous actors in Vietnamese society. It also presents serious criticism of the explanations provided by other models. In this respect, it suggests that many of the models focusing on societal developments often fail to account for discrepancies in developments at the individual and regional level.

The Sub-theory models examined in this chapter, despite their many theoretical and empirical weaknesses, provide the basis for an alternative theoretical framework that is capable of embracing a broader number of international and domestic factors influencing revolutionary developments. While Wolf is closest in his attempt to present a more expansive model of revolution, his framework is not systematic in its

analysis of the role of the state and international circumstances. It is the task of the following chapters to develop the basis of an alternative model which will improve, in some respects, earlier explanations of the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam.

NOTES

[1] In order to include the various schools of thought that have found their source of inspiration in the original works of Karl Marx, Marxism is used here as an all inclusive term.

[2] William H. Friedland et al. argue that revolutionary theory and theories of revolution are distinguishable on the basis of their respective emphasis on praxis. While commonly interested in understanding past revolutions, revolutionary theory is primarily concerned with effecting revolutionary transformation. In this context, revolutionary theory is subsumed under the heading of ideology. See William H. Friedland et al., Revolutionary Theory, (USA: Allanheld, Osmun & Co., Pubs. Inc., 1982), p. xii.

[3] This is true of the debates and contentions within and among the various Marxist organizations. The most evident was the theoretical/ideological conflict between the Trotskyites and the Stalinists of the ICP. Another important theoretical debate involved the role and importance of the peasantry in the revolutionary movement within the ICP itself and later, the relative importance of political and military emphases. The ideological aspect of these conflicts will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

[4] While Martin J. Murray devotes a substantial section of The Development of Capitalism in Colonial Indochina, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), to the discussion of Marxist theories of capitalist development, there is little critical analysis of the concept of revolutionary transformation. Samuel L. Popkin in "Colonialism and the Ideological Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution - A Review Article," Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XLIV, No. 2, (Feb. 1985), passim, is also critical of Murray's attempt to integrate theory and empirical developments. On the other hand, the numerous works of Jean Chesneaux are lacking in theoretical discussion but are definitely Marxist in orientation, particularly his emphasis on the role of an indigenous bourgeois class and its development in colonial Vietnam. This is the basis of a debate where David G. Marr and Joseph Buttinger argue that the middle class in colonial Vietnam was a negligible factor in political and economic developments during the colonial period. Cf. Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 196ff.; David G. Marr, Vietnamese Anticolonialism 1885-1925, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 201ff.; and Jean Chesneaux, "Stages in the Development of the Vietnam National Movement 1862-1940", Past and Present, No. 7, (April 1955), p. 68. For a discussion of class polarization and the applicability of the Marxist concept of the Asiatic mode of production, see Jean Chesneaux, Le Vietnam, (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1968), pp. 48, 52ff..

[5] The group approach is particularly relevant to Alexander Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, (Boston: Houghton

Mifflin Co., 1976), and two principal works by William Duiker, The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981) and The Rise of Nationalism in Vietnam 1900-1941, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976).

[6] Cf. Larry Brownstein, Talcott Parsons' General Action Scheme: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles, (Cambridge: Schenkman Pub. Co., 1982), p. 251.

[7] Samuel L. Popkin maintains that Paul Mus initially developed this approach for the analysis of the relationship between colonialism and societal breakdown in Vietnam. He adds that this approach was later adopted by John T. McAlister, Jr. in Vietnam: The Origins of Revolution, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969). However, there are differences between Mus and McAlister and these points are discussed in the following analysis of the Traditional Sociolgical approach. For discussion see Samuel L. Popkin, "Corporatism and Colonialism", Comparative Politics, (April, 1976), p. 436f..

[8] Mus considers the traditional village autarchic because its economy is based primarily upon local consumption. The state is described as ritualistic because of the preponderant role of state decreed rituals in everyday village life.

[9] Paul Mus, Viet-Nam: Sociologie d'une Guerre, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952), p. 23.

[10] Mus maintains that European experts examining pre-colonial state budgets were "struck by their modesty." Paul Mus, "Viet Nam: A Nation Off Balance," The Yale Review, Vol. XLI, No. 4, (June 1952), p. 530.

[11] Ibid., p. 533

[12] Ibid., p. 534.

[13] This portion of Mus' argument is quite similar to Stephen B. Young's position on the role of Confucianism in the transition to Marxism. This is described as the search for the Chinh Nghia (righteous cause), a process whereby the former prescriptions of social order and rule no longer prevail. Because only one first principle or intellectual system is considered possible at any given moment, and the former system is no longer divinely validated because of its failure to maintain hegemony within society, a new Chinh Nghia must be found. See Stephen B. Young, "Vietnamese Marxism: Transition in Elite Ideology," Asian Survey, Vol. XIX, No. 8, (August 1979), p. 775.

[14] Paul Mus, Viet-Nam: Sociologie d'une Guerre, p. 27.

[15] Ibid., p. 30.

[16] Ibid., p. 32.

[17] Ibid., p. 32.

[18] Mus states:

> Selon la manière de voir locale, ils [Vietminh]
> étaient, de ce fait, crédités d'une `vertu', c'est à
> dire d'un système politique et social, en antagonisme
> avec le principe monarchique, tempéré par un
> protectorat étranger, qui était au pouvoir: ce jeu de
> bascule, procédant non par des comprommissions ou
> coupages, mais par les remplacements du tout au tout,
> est l'exacte façon dont l'esprit confucéen, toujours
> vivace au sein des campagnes, a coutume de se
> représenter l'histoire et d'anticiper sur elle.
> (Ibid., p. 26).

[19] Mus frequently emphasized the quasi-religious nature of the
popular support for the revolutionary movement after 1945. (Ibid., pp.
26ff., 116). He argues, that in the context of Confucian thought, the
collapse of the traditional system in the face of colonialism, and the
prominence of a new opposing system, hailed the restoration of "virtue"
and the mandate from heaven in Vietnam. The role of Confucianism will
be discussed in greater detail in another chapter.

[20] Mus notes that throughout the entire colonial period, the
customary village councils "...n'ont point cessé d'opposer une
résistance sourde aux réformes de l'Administration française, qui
pourtant ne s'est point privée d'user d'eux." He adds,

> Chaque fois qu'ils l'ont pu, ils ont rétabli leurs
> position anciennes, contre les innovations inspirées
> de nos idées démocratiques, et cela en particulier dès
> que les autorités coloniales, s'écartant de ces idées,
> ont -- sous Vichy -- rendu leur faveur au
> traditionalisme. (Ibid., p. 26).

[21] McAlister, Vietnam, p. 48f.

[22] Ibid, p. 66.

[23] Ibid., p. 75.

[24] Idem.

[25] Ibid, p. 343.

[26] Paul Mus, "The Role of the Village in Vietnamese Politics,"
Pacific Affairs, Vol. XXII, Sept. 1949, p. 266, cited in McAlister,
Vietnam, p. 48.

[27] The traditional sociological approach places greater emphasis on the role of colonial policies affecting societal disintegration rather than the effects of commercialization on agrarian institutions. Cf. Paul Mus, Viet-Nam: Sociologie d'une Guerre, pp. 24-25. However, similar to the Traditional Sociological approach, the Moral Economy model emphasizes the stabilizing role of traditional agrarian society and its function in the revolutionary process.

[28] Eric R. Wolf, Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century, (New York: Harper and Row, Pubs., 1969), p. 279.

[29] Wolf argues that the penetration of individualism, through the development of commodity markets, breaks down the functional role of traditional mechanisms that required social rather than individual action. In contrast, the Traditional Sociological approach maintains that the introduction of a western legal and tax system encouraged peasants to act and think in the context of individualism. However, this system did not guarantee adequate legal and fiscal protection for the autonomous individual.

[30] James C. Scott, The Moral Economy of the Peasant, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 189, 196.

[31] Wolf argues that the development of world markets, transportation, and communication systems provided increased access to food supplies in deficit areas throughout the world (Wolf, p. 281). In Vietnam, colonial attempts to control piracy and disease outbreaks decreased mortality levels and contributed to population increases. See Philippe Devillers, Histoire du Viet-Nam de 1940 à 1952, 3ie édition, (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1952), p. 52 and Paul Isoart, Le Phénomène National Vietnamien, (Paris: R. Pichon et R. Durand-Auzias, Libraire Generale de Droit et de Jurisprudence, 1961), p. 253ff..

[32] The risk-sharing mechanisms were the communal properties and local rents that were controlled by the village. The removal of this property and rents from the control of villagers, often through the expansion of absentee landlordism, significantly reduced the amount of resources that could be redistributed during crop failures. Secondary subsistance resources constituted all produce that was subsidiary to rice production, usage of local forests and common pasturage, and part-time employment as artisans. The markets for subsidiary products "tended to recede before larger scale specialization or imports from the metropole." (Scott, Moral Economy, p. 62) This rendered the peasants increasingly dependent on primary crops and market price fluctuations.

[33] See ibid., p. 202. This argument is less apparent in Scott's earlier work. Here he argues implicitly that structural transformations in non-traditional sectors may develop class subcultures where agricultural labourers and sharecroppers can be hit uniformly by downturns in the market. This contributes to the suddeness and scope of peasant unrest in areas without traditional village redistribution

structures. See James Scott and Ben Kerkvliet, "The Politics of Survival: Peasant Response to `Progress' in Southeast Asia," Journal of Southeast Asia, Vol. IV, No. 2, (Sept. 1973), pp. 241-268. Note in particular the discussion on class developments, Scott, Moral Economy, p. 250ff.

[34] Ibid., p. 89. In other words, peasant-based rebellions represent an attempt "to force elites to do what peasants see as their duty, or alternatively, to block their infringement of peasant rights." Ibid., p. 89. Scott attempts to distinguish moral indignation from relative deprivation and frustration-aggression models by stating that the social psychological approach ignores the social context of peasant actions and fails "to do justice to the moral indignation and righteous anger that characterize most peasant explosions." Ibid., p. 188. In other words, they fail to understand the nature of peasant expectations concerning their rights in society. While I think that Scott is correct in attempting to locate a moral dimension motivating peasant behavior, his model is often unclear as to the extent to which this moral dimension is only one of many factors influencing behavior, and the degree to which it differs from the concept of "relative deprivation" in Ted R. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970). See also James Scott, "Hegemony and the Peasant", Politics and Society, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1977, p. 271, where Scott states that because the social values of the peasantry are pre-capitalist, peasant revolts may have a "quality of tenacity and moral cohesion - in the sense that the struggle to restore or defend customary rights may evoke a more passionate commitment than the struggle to create a new order." However, this does not provide a satisfactory argument demonstrating the theoretical superiority of the concept of "moral outrage", nor does this explain how or why it produces greater incentives than economic or political motivations.

[35] Wolf, Peasant Wars, p. 282.

[36] Ibid., p. 282.

[37] Ibid., p.290.

[38] Scott does not exclude the function of power relations within society, but, his emphasis is on the context of state coercion and its ability to maintain the economic status quo at the expense of the

peasantry. See Scott, Moral Economy, p. 196. However, in terms of
subsistence alternatives, Scott maintains,

> that the main deterrent to revolt is not the survival
> alternatives open to the peasantry but rather the
> risks of rebellion. These risks are largely
> proportional to the coercive power of the state (and,
> of course, its willingness to use that power); the
> more overwhelming its power, the more likely the only
> alter-native to an uncertain subsistence will be
> death. (Ibid., p. 194).

[39] Class analysis of peasant society generally divides the
peasantry into three sectors: the rich peasants, who own substantial
arable property, and unlike landlords, directly supervise the investment
of capital and exploitation of wage labourers and sharecroppers
(tenants);the middle peasants, who own land that they farm themselves
without exploiting the labour of others; and the poor peasants who do
not own sufficient land to earn a livelihood and thus cultivate the land
of others for wages or a portion of the crop. The poor peasant is often
divided into the landless agricultural labourer and the
tenant/sharecropper who owns some form of agricultural capital. For
further discussion see Hammza Alavai, "Peasants and Revolution", The
Socialist Register 1965, eds. Ralph Miliband and John Saville, (New
York: Monthly Review Press, 1965), p. 244f. and Truong Chinh and Vo
Nguyen Giap, The Peasant Question (1937-1938), trans. Christine Pelzer
White, (Cornell University Southeast Asian Program, 1974), pp. 16-18.

[40] Wolf, Peasant Wars, p. 290.

[41] Cf. Scott's discussion of Gramsci in "Hegemony and the
Peasantry", pp. 267-296.

[42] In addition, Wolf notes that the unique position of middle
peasants enables them to act as links between a developing industrial
work force and the rural village:

> The poor peasant or landless laborer, in going to the
> city or factory, also usually cuts his tie with the
> land. The middle peasant, however, stays on the land
> and sends his children to work in the town; he is
> caught in a situation in which one part of the family
> retains a footing in agricultural, while the other
> undergoes "the training of the cities". This makes
> the middle peasant a transmitter also of urban unrest
> and political ideas. (Wolf, Peasant Wars, p. 292).

[43] Paige argues that the focus of conflict in this instance would
center around political and property issues rather than economic and
income interests, as would be the case in a capital based economic
system. However, in this case political and property issues have

important economic ramifications (ie. redistribution of production, lower rents, and decreases in land monopolies). See Jeffery Paige, Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World, (New York: The Free Press, 1975), pp. 18, 21.

[44] According to Paige, structural differentiations of socio-economic institutions also determine the type of revolution most likely to occur. In the case of a wage dependent cultivator class, a migratory estate system is more likely to result in a nationalist revolution, whereas, a decentralized sharecropping system, as was the case of Cochinchina, is more conducive to revolutionary socialist movements. This follows Paige's concept of the different nature of class antagonisms under each of the above systems. In the migratory estates system capital dependent non-cultivators can make up losses incurred through increased cultivator wages and rights by increasing capital investments. In contrast, land dependent non-cultivators in a decentralized sharecropping system cannot expand their static source of income. This means that all wage increases and the establishment of cultivator rights must be done at the expense of non-cultivator incomes. In this respect, the zero-sum relationship between the cultivator and non-cultivator classes in the decentralized sharecropping system leaves little room for class compromises, thereby necessitating a social revolution and the destruction of the land dependent non-cultivator. Ibid., p. 359.

[45] Ibid., p.62.

[46] Ibid., p. 62. Cf. Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes a Peasant Revolutionary", Comparative Politics, Vol. XIV, No. 3, (April 1982), p. 358f..

[47] Popkin's theoretical approach is only one of many rational choice models that attempt to explain behavior on the basis of a cost/benefit calculus.

[48] Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965 and 1971), p. 2. This assumption excludes small groups where there is one to one contact and greater social interaction. See ibid., pp. 62-63.

[49] Popkin expands Mancur Olson's by-product theory to include ethical, conscientious, and altruistic contributions to collective activity. However, Popkin's constant references to peasant investment logic underlines his primary emphasis on the economic basis of peasant decision-making. See Samuel L. Popkin, The Rational Peasant, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 17-27, 253ff., passim.

[50] Ibid., p. 259.

[51] Popkin criticizes the Moral Economy approach for assuming that free rider problems are easily overcome by "proper socialization to

norms placing a high value on voluntarism." Ibid., p. 25. Furthermore, Popkin asserts that unless an organization is able exclude non-participants from the results of its activities, it is probable that individuals will not contribute to collective action, believing that they will receive gain or security even if they do not participate.

[52] Popkin discusses the recruitment of popular support amongst the peasantry by other organizations such as the Cao Dai, Hoa Hao, and the Catholic church. These groups are not considered revolutionary in orientation despite periodic anti-French sentiments. See ibid., Chapter Five.

[53] Ibid., p. 229.

[54] Ibid., p. 196.

[55] Ibid., p. 210.

[56] Ibid., p. 248.

[57] Popkin criticizes Mus' concern with colonial policies aimed at developing accurate and complete tax rolls, tighter fiscal controls on village councils, and substituting elections for co-optation of council members. He argues that villages retained a significant cushion on their tax rolls, and finally, there were few differences between areas subjected to village reforms and those that maintained traditional institutions. (Tonkin was the region principally affected by village reforms.) Popkin, "Corporatism and Colonialism", pp. 437ff..

[58] Cf. Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes Peasants Revolutionary?", p. 354.

[59] Popkin, The Rational Peasant, pp. 28f., 245ff.. Other criticisms directed at the Moral Economy approach are its tendency to emphasize class threats rather than threats to individuals, and disregard peasant interests in market production even when their subsistence base is secure. The first criticism is only valid if one holds that society can only be studied in terms of its constituent parts (ie. an atomistic framework) rather than aggregate social structures. This point is discussed in the critique of the Public Choice approach. The second criticism is somewhat spurious and fails to acknowledge that the Moral Economy approach accepts peasant willingness to enter into market relationships and take risks that offer potential economic or social gains. However, the Moral Economy approach also argues that the peasant will not willingly jeopardize traditional security.

[60] The religious structure of the Hoa Hao transformed the traditional forms of worship by emphasizing simple faith rather than the extravagant rituals that imposed heavy financial burdens on the participating peasants. According to Popkin, the original leader and prophet of the Hoa Hao sect, Huynh Phu So, attacked the waste, ritual,

and superstition in daily peasant life; castigated monks who preached that offerings and sacrifices were ways to earn merit and favour from spirits and gods; exhorted the peasantry to prepare for the millenium through good deeds; and finally, So urged that funerals be simple affairs, that marriages be based on free choice, and individuals abjure from alcohol, opium, and gambling. (See Popkin, The Rational Peasant, pp. 204-207.) This was a radical change from traditional religious forms, many of which were financially onerous. However, one must be wary of Popkin's emphasis on the economic benefits of affiliation with the Hoa Hao. Bernard Fall argues that the leaders of the Hoa Hao used the organization to build profitable economic enterprises. This was true where various Hoa Hao leaders controlled milling and purchasing operations in the Bassac area, buying crops below market prices and then holding them until the end of the season and thereby reaping huge profits in sales to large enterprises in Saigon. In addition, other leaders operated successful gambling and protection businesses. Nevertheless, some of these leaders invested a portion of their profits in schools, road- building, and reduced the rents charged to their own farmers. Fall, "The Political-Religious Sects of Viet-Nam", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 28, 1955, p. 249."

[61] Cf. ibid., p. 246.

[62] Popkin argues that Scott does not explain why peasants in the Nghe-Tinh region failed to revolt at the turn of the century, during a famine that was worse than that of the early 1930's. For Popkin, the difference between these two reactions was not in the level of misery, but rather, "it was organization, particularly communication and coordination." (Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 248.) Similarly, one could argue that signs of spontaneous revolt were also less evident during the famine of the mid 1940's, at least until the Vietminh became actively involved in organizing protests and attacks on rice depots.

[63] Scott, The Moral Economy of the Peasant, p. 88.

[64] Ibid., p. 86. While the colonial government rescued many of the larger landholders with emergency credits and negotiated settlements, these measures seldom reached small landholders and tenants who lost capital and savings when creditors pressed for payment on crop and land loans. In addition, the contracting economy meant fewer jobs for agrarian labour, as formerly cultivated marginal land was left fallow because the price of rice was plummeting. However, while many Cochinchinese peasants faced economic decline, they were not confronted by the same life- threatening circumstances as were facing peasants in the famine areas of Annam and Tonkin.

[65] Ibid., p. 144.

[66] Wolf's concept of the "open" peasantry is aptly described by A. Terry Rambo in "Closed Corporate and Open Peasant Communities:

Reopening a Hastily Shut Case", Comparative Studies in Society and
History, Vol. 19, 1977, pp. 179-188:

> Truly open peasants do not live in village communities
> at all but rather are most often found living in
> scattered settlements of homesteaders in under-
> populated frontier areas. These pioneer farmers engage
> almost exclusively in the production of cash crops for
> national and world markets and are dependent in turn
> on these markets for many of their most basic needs,
> just as, lacking organic local defensive institutions,
> they are dependent on the police institutions of the
> state to provide their personal security. (Ibid., p.
> 181.)

[67] While the bamboo hedge served as a protective barrier, it also
symbolized the corporate nature of the community. It formed,

> a kind of sacred boundary of the village community,
> the sign of its individuality and its independence.
> When in times of dissension [and] a village has been a
> party to agitation or has given asylum to rebels, the
> first punishment inflicted upon it is to cut down its
> bamboo hedge. This is a serious blow to its pride, a
> stamp of dishonor. The village feels as uncomfortable
> as a human being would were he undressed and marooned
> in the middle of a fully dressed crowd. (Gourou, cited
> in Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 90.)

[68] The "closed corporate" community is defined as,

> a village in which there is a common body of rights to
> possessions, pressures to redistribute surplus in the
> operation of a religious system, controls which
> prevent or impede outsiders from becoming members of
> the community, and limits on outside communication and
> alliances. (Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 88.)

[69] According to Rambo:

> In the red River Delta in the period 1945-54, the
> peasants came under intense pressure from both the
> Vietminh guerrillas and the French to take sides. The
> response of numerous villages in the contested areas
> was to accept weapons supplied by the French .... [The
> subsequent formation of village militias permitted]
> `...the expression of the wish of each

village to take a position of armed neutrality and, thanks to its militia, be simultaneously freed from French searches and Vietminh incursions.' (Rambo, p. 186.)

[70] Ibid., p. 187.

[71] Ngo Vinh Long, Before the Revolution: The Vietnamese Peasants under the French, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1973), p. 17. Ngo describes this form of land expropriation as being typical. On another occasion Ngo relates an incident where a plantation owner successfully muted protests over the expropriation of a number of peasant plots. After three months without local protest, government land concession regulations stipulated that the land become the permanent property of the plantation owner. This was accomplished because the affected peasants were not familiar with the concession regulations, and failed to protest the expropriation of their plots. See ibid., p. 14f..

[72] It should be noted that the property figures for colonial Vietnam are prone to numerous errors. For example, wealthy property holders often "hid their wealth by dispersing it in many villages under different names...." Also, there were a large number of women that owned land, but as females they were not registered on the village property rolls. In other cases, some peasants were only nominal owners of their property, actually being sharecroppers for landlords avoiding higher taxes. See ibid., pp. 19f..

[73] Popkin states that Catholic priests and the Church hierarchy often interceded directly with the administration on behalf of members of their parishes. They were capable of blackmailing the corrupt and exerting pressure on local leaders that were using their power for personal gain. In addition, land takeovers by outside landowners were often prevented through the Church's ability to manipulate bureaucracy and organize alliances within the community. Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 191f..

[74] Jean Chesneaux, Le Vietnam, (Paris: François Maspero, 1968), p. 47.

[75] It was essential that village elites keep internal disputes from the attention of the mandarin. Peasant complaints about unfair practices, if brought to the attention of the Mandarin, could affect village tax rolls. There was also considerable pressure from village elites to prevent individual members from aligning with Mandarins, thereby disrupting the internal power relations of Village notables. See Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 109ff.. Cf. the development of internal adjudication processes where high levels of distrust and envy prevailed in village relationships, ibid., p. 108.

[76] Popkin, "Corporatism and Colonialism", p. 434.

77 According to M. Sarkisyanz, the "post-war expansion of Caodaism in Southern Vietnam outdistanced in the years of 1946-1954 that of the Communist-led Vietminh." M. Sarkisyanz, "On the Place of Caodaism, Culturally and Politically", Journal of Asian History, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1984, p. 184.

78 Cf. Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes Peasants Revolutionary", p. 358.

79 Ibid., p. 359. This criticism becomes more evident in the following chapters where the characteristics of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai are discussed in greater detail.

80 Margaret R. Somers and Walter L. Goldfrank, "The Limits of Agronomic Determinism: A Critique of Paige's Agrarian Revolution", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 21, 1979, p. 452f..

81 Skocpol discusses Barrington Moore's distinction between "conservative solidarity" and "radical solidarity". In the latter case, peasants share village resources and mutually control village organizations, which in turn can be used to protect peasants from state and landlord demands. In the former, village resources and organizations are dominated by rich peasants or landlords. This distinction is important if one is to understand the possible solidarity among land- owning peasants in Tonkin and Annam. However, these distinctions are not made by Paige, and therefore limit his concept of solidarity to wage dependent peasants in the Mekong delta. See Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes Peasants Revolutionary?", p. 359.

82 Olson, The Logic of Collective Action, p. 161f.

83 Olson also admits that his model of decision-making has problems accounting for and explaining religious motivation. Ibid., p. 160.

84 The problems confronting Public Choice theorists attempting to account for the commitment of revolutionaries is evident in David Braybrooke's efforts to expand the "entertainment" and "aspiration" variables of Tullock's Public Choice calculus in order to account for motivations unrelated to material based cost/benefit equations. Paradoxically, Braybrooke is eventually forced to include a "conscience" variable. This creates serious problems when the theorist is required to weigh the respective impact of non-material and material motives, rendering the equation axiomatic and non-predictive. See David Braybrook, "Self-Interest in Times of Revolution and Repression", Revolutions, Systems, and Theories, eds. H.J. Johnson et. al, (London: I. Reidel Pub. Co., 1979), passim.

85 For a discussion of the resettlement program, see Woodside, Community and Revolution in Vietnam, pp. 154-155.

[86] Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 191.

[87] Woodside, Community and Revolution in Vietnam, p. 155.

[88] Ibid., p. 155.

[89] Gerald Cannon Hickey, "Social Systems of Northern Vietnam", Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958, p. 64.

[90] The predominant religious system in colonial Vietnam was the amalgamation of the Mahayana Buddist-Taoist-Confucianist tradition with the popular beliefs and practices of the early oral tradition. This syncretic religious system resulted in a cosmology focusing on universal forces which affected life's fortunes and one's ability to maintain harmony within the existing universal order. If one was wary of the various good and bad periods dictated by universal patterns, and careful to follow the prescribed path to harmony, the individual would experience health, happiness, and prosperity. For this reason, rituals and norms were a central part of peasant life. See Gerald Cannon Hickey, Village in Vietnam, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), Chapter 3, p. 55ff.. Failure to curry the favour of good spirits and harmonize with cosmic forces increased the likelihood of misfortune. In the case of ancestor worship, immortality lay in the undying lineage of one's ancestors, but bliss in the afterlife could be attained only in proper cult veneration, without which the deceased became a malevolent errant spirit. See ibid., p. 88. The rituals and sanctuaries associated with ancestor worship were therefore central to individual activities and took on enormous importance with respect to kinship relations and community structures. Cf. Popkin, The Rational Peasant, p. 94, on the dinh or house of worship for the village's guardian spirit. Lineage cohesiveness was highly valued among villagers, and sought at great expense. According to Hickey:

> The patrimony, the ancestral house, and the stone tombs are symbols of lineage longevity, and lineage solidarity is perpetuated by prescribed reunions to venerate the ancestors. Members of the patrilineage gather at the lunar New Year and during Thanh Minh, an annual period specified for visiting and refurbishing family tombs. On these occasions they [family members] reconfirm their kin bonds and introduce new members to the group. (Hickey, Village, p. 89).

[91] Ibid., p. 57.

[92] See discussion on pre-revolutionary phase in preceding chapter.

[93] According to Popkin:

> So long as the Communists argued only in terms of
> material incentives and neglected to add an ethnic,
> Vietnamese content to their discussions of the future,
> they were unable to present a credible vision of the
> future consonant with peasant beliefs. The religious
> movements [Cao Dai, Hoa Hao, and in some respects
> Catholicism], on the other hand, brought visions of
> the future consonant with peasant beliefs, and
> peasants were able to relate these visions to their
> contemporary actions. (Popkin, The Rational Peasant,
> p. 261.)

This concept of "vision" is particularly relevant to the function of
teleological elements in ideology discussed in Chapter One.

[94] Cf. Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes Peasants
Revolutionary?", p. 361.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIO-HISTORICAL MODEL

Introduction

The following two chapters are an attempt to build upon the
work of the subtheoretical models discussed in the preceding chapter.
In order to improve upon their respective analysis of the revolutionary
process in colonial Vietnam, it is necessary to incorporate some of the
valuable theoretical concepts found in the socio-historical and group
conflict approaches to revolution. This chapter will focus on the
application of Theda Skocpol's socio-historical model to the historical
development of the revolutionary movement in Vietnam and the factors
influencing the emergence of a revolutionary situation. The
combination of these two factors permits a careful assessment of the
relative influence of domestic and international political and socio-
economic structures and their impact on revolutionary processes.

The following chapter utilizes Skocpol's socio-historical
approach with one important modification. With the principal focus of
Skocpol's work emphasizing the role of transnational and world
historical structures in the emergence of revolutionary situations, the
influence of ideological transformations is often neglected. This
limits the capacity of the socio-historical model to account for gradual
changes in the traditional cultural framework or Weltanschauung in
Vietnamese society,[1] and how these changes resulted in conceptual

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transformations permitting revolutionary organizations to effectively adopt modern technology and organizational strategies.[2] Without these general conceptual transformations occurring at the grassroots level, as well as among the intelligentsia, it is unlikely that revolutionary organizations such as the Vietminh could have effectively carried on a "people's war" which required a certain degree of political and social awareness among the rural elements of Vietnamese society. This was apparent in the inability of some revolutionary groups to effectively apply modern organizational concepts to populations that clung to the anachronistic concepts of traditional Vietnamese society. Where the traditional ideals of the permanence of social hierarchies and the limited personal influence in historical change prevailed, revolutionary organizations had little success mobilizing support.[3]

Leaving the subject of ideology for later discussion, it is important to clarify the principal theoretical elements in the Socio-historical approach before applying this model to colonial Vietnam. The central focus and strength of this model is its ability to explain the emergence of revolutionary situations. Skocpol's attempt to uncover the structural factors affecting the state's capacity to combat challenges to its political dominance reveals certain variables that generate politico-military crises for incumbent regimes. These crises constitute the principal element of the revolutionary situation permitting revolutionary organizations to capitalize on the weakened position of the State. For, as Skocpol notes, revolutionary vanguards do not create the revolutionary situations they exploit, but are dependent on factors beyond their control for the generation of politico-military crises.[4]

Unlike Tilly's Group Conflict approach, which offers a
theoretical framework for understanding the variables enabling
revolutionary organizations to take advantage of politico-military
crises, Skocpol's model provides a framework for understanding the
crisis itself, and the factors that lead to the crisis. For Skocpol,
revolution begins with a politico-military crisis which is followed by
struggles between organized factions and parties attempting to control
primary political institutions. However, these crises are not viewed as
"epiphenomenal indicators of more fundamental contradictions or
strains", nor are they considered "incidental triggers".[5] Rather, the
organizational collapse of the incumbent regime and its subsequent
inability to maintain its hegemony are related to two important
structural variables.

The first variable encompasses the world capitalist economy and
the international states system and their influence on class and state
development. Described as transnational variables, the unequal and
competitive nature of these economic and political structures is capable
of undermining "existing political authorities and state controls, thus
opening the way for basic conflicts and structural transformations."[6]
In a situation where international political and military relationships
immobilize the resources of a given regime, impeding its ability to
suppress subversive movements, revolutionary forces are able to
consolidate their support, acquire strategic positioning, and enhance
their military effectiveness at the expense of the state. This was the
case in the 1940's when both the Japanese and Chinese on different

occasions effectively hindered the ability of colonial authorities to suppress revolutionary activity.

The second important variable is the world historical context, described by Skocpol as historical events, technological advances, and organizational innovations that establish a unique set of structural conditions. The ideologies and historical patterns of past revolutions, in addition to changes in geopolitical configurations and technological developments, influence the nature and form of the revolutionary situation and the manner in which revolutionary forces react to this situation. For example, both the Bolshevik and Chinese communist revolutions influenced the ideological framework and the extent to which external aid and support affected the strategic position of the revolutionary forces in colonial Vietnam.[7]

Including the concept of ideology in the world historical variable adds another dimension to the structural emphasis of Skocpol's approach. While Skocpol's model offers important insights into the institutional framework of the revolutionary process, it neglects a crucial component that affects the nature and orientation of conflict in Vietnamese society.[8] Analyzing the influx of ideas from throughout the world, and their impact on the intelligentsia's perception of domestic conditions, provides some understanding of different forms of collective actions occurring within a given structural configuration. This is relevant given the colonial regime's preoccupation with the suppression and control of subversive ideas. However, without disregarding the importance of structural and institutional determinants, ideology is

used as a general concept that helps explain different patterns of group activity occurring within similar structural circumstances.[9]

Due to the limitations of this thesis, it is impossible to conduct a complete examination of the historical context of the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. However, in order to demonstrate the potential efficacy of using the socio-historical approach as one component of the proposed alternative model of revolution outlined in this thesis, the following chapter will briefly examine the impact of transnational and world historical influences on the development of a revolutionary movement and the emergence of a revolutionary situation. The chapter is divided into three parts. First, the international context of the general historical development of colonial Vietnam is discussed. This includes a section on transnational and world historical factors, and a section on general ideological developments. Unlike part three, this section examines the extent to which world events influenced developments in Vietnam without creating a revolutionary situation. Second, there is an analysis of the transformation of socio-economic and political structures in colonial Vietnam. This analysis examines the impact of this transformation on groups and classes within Vietnamese society, and their relation to one another and the State. There is discussion of the economic burden of taxation, changing landownership patterns, administrative developments, and colonial political institutions, all of which provide some indication of the changing relationships in colonial Vietnam. Finally, the third part discusses the transnational and world historical developments contributing to the emergence of a revolutionary situation.

This is the crucial component in the analysis of the revolutionary process. It is the factors contributing to the weakening of the colonial regime that permits revolutionary groups to aquire a base of support and challenge the political hegemony of the state.

Part One: The International Context of Early Structural Developments

A. Transnational and World Historical Factors

Since 1625, France had maintained some form of contact with Vietnam through the activities of French missionaries and minor trading arrangements. However, it was not until the late 1850's that the French government embarked on a policy of active military involvement.[10] The original reasons underlying French activity in Vietnam was the Second Empire's fear that unless it entered the race for Asian possessions it would be reduced to a second-rank power, both economically and politically.[11] During the second half of the 19th century, Asia was viewed as the "future pivot of the world's economics and as spelling world-power for the nations securing predominance there."[12] Consequently, it was not the persistent lobbying of Catholic missionary societies that influenced the government's interest in Vietnam, but the realization that Vietnam was strategically located and of economic and political value. It was thought that control of Vietnam would aid France in its competition for East Asian markets.

During the lengthy period required to annex and pacify Vietnam, there were substantial changes and much vacillation in the colonial policy of the French government. At one point, prior to the cession of three Cochinchinese provinces to France in 1862, the French government almost chose to withdraw entirely from Vietnam. Later, the drain of the Franco-Prussian War and the ensuing cost of war reparations generated interest in the economic potential of Vietnam as a gateway to the "hidden riches" of South China. Nevertheless, the fall of the Second Empire and the restoration of a republican government resulted in a wave of anticolonial sentiment. Enthusiastic support for French control of Vietnamese waterways in the late 1860's was followed by attempts on the part of the newly established Chambers in 1873 to stop any efforts at further colonial penetration.[13]

The anticolonial influence in the government was later tempered by powerful business lobbies in the Metropole after the Mekong River was found unsuitable as a trade route into China's Yunnan region. Chambers of Commerce and mercantile circles in Bordeaux, Lyons, and Marseilles began to pressure government to gain control of the Red River in Tonkin in order to explore the potential profitability of another trade route into the Yunnan.[14] It was believed that this would give the French an economic advantage over European rivals in the Orient. In addition to the pressures of business interests, the Third Republic was concerned about the growing strength of the Germans and the British, and feared possible military and economic encroachments in Tonkin[15]

The subsequent failure to find a suitable water route into Yunnan along the Red River required colonial administrators to justify

the onerous cost of maintaining French hegemony throughout Vietnam.[16]
In the south, the resistance of the Nghia Quan required the maintenance
of a large military force and French administration. The unwillingness
of many Vietnamese to collaborate with French authorities necessitated a
costly administration staffed entirely by French nationals.[17] In the
north, French forces were forced to confront Chinese irregulars (Black
Flags) who had been called into Tonkin by the Vietnamese monarchy in an
effort to elicit Chinese support in its war against French colonialism.
After a peace treaty was signed with China in 1885, effectively
isolating the Vietnamese empire, French forces were still required to
deal with local remnants of the Can Vuong movement.[18]

Faced with the fiscal burden of maintaining the colonial
administration, and lacking the economic promise of viable and
worthwhile trade with South China, defenders of the French presence in
Vietnam were forced to adopt a political and economic policy that
promised to render the Vietnamese economy profitable and independent of
metropolitan financial support. This would justify continued
metropolitan subsidization of the economy and safeguard the vested
interests of the French already established as administrators and
colons.[19] This was important given the growing number of civil service
positions and ex-patriate French business interests that were dependent
on colonial economic and political institutions. This dependency
exacerbated class conflicts as the state was used to support and
maintain a colonial economy based upon the exportation of agricultural
and mineral products. Economic interests in the metropole ensured that
any industrialization of Vietnam remained minimal so as not to threaten

the metropole's monopoly on manufactured goods. Consequently, the economy was extremely susceptible to world market fluctuations in rice and rubber prices and dependent on French diplomacy in the case of interstate conflicts. During periods of depression, the colonial administration was often required to aid the economic elite directly, shifting the burden of falling prices and bankruptcy onto the peasantry. When the burden became too great, the military was used to maintain order and protect administrative institutions.

International developments have always had an important effect on the orientation of French colonial policy and its involvement and commitment to the economic and political control of the Vietnam. The pressure to be competitive in the international political and economic sphere influenced many of the policies that transformed Vietnamese society. However, it was not until after World War I that international market conditions motivated large increases in capital investment in colonial Vietnam.[20] From 1924 until the world depression in 1930, powerful French investment organizations directed metropolitan capital into Vietnam as a temporary haven until the French franc recovered its pre-war stability. While the war effort had forced the Metropole to rely on the labour and material resources of its colonies,[21] and later, their bargaining value during peace negotiations with Germany,[22] the post war era witnessed a new emphasis on colonial development.

Under the nationalist orientation of the Chambre bleu horizon (1920-1924), the resurrected colonial party successfully promoted a policy of mise en valeur.[23] The prospect of developing and exploiting the wealth of the colonies had great appeal for a country that was faced

with a growing trade deficit, increasing foreign loans, and a rapid decline in the value of its currency.[24] The strength of the piaster in relation to the French franc, and the willingness of the colonial government to support investments with special grants and concessions resulted in a period of general prosperity.[25]

This period witnessed a resurgence in political activity. Many of the prospering Vietnamese elite began to clamour for more political power. The prominence of the Constitutionalist Party indicated a willingness on the part of many prominent Vietnamese to work for change within the colonial system. Conversely, a growing number of intellectuals were seeking alternative means of achieving change and were beginning to examine the various revolutionary ideologies coming from the West. However, when the World economic crisis struck Vietnam in the early 1930's, many of the indigenous economic elite were still willing to accept only nominal political gains in return for continued maintenance of the economic status quo. The World Depression forced many of the elite to recognize "how tenuous, even ephemeral" their economic gains were, and later, the futility of hoping to achieve political or cultural equality within the colonial system.[26]

During the world economic crisis, many large and small property holders were forced into bankruptcy. The former prosperity had induced many to extend their investments, expecting increasing returns to cover incurred debts. The collapse of the international rice and rubber markets meant that many property and concession holders could not meet their financial requirements, even by squeezing tenants and sharecroppers to the maximum. The government instituted a moratorium on

debts secured by land in order to reduce the number of foreclosures and stabilize the economy; ensuring that its tax base would not be irreparably damaged. This was an economic bonanza for the large Metropolitan agricultural societies and major banking institutions which acquired land and capital at minimum prices. The enormous profit of the Bank of Indochina and the Great Societies during this period resulted from their ability to buy productive plantations and concessions from owners who were unable to meet high interest demands on original investment and yearly operating loans. Also, for example, the Bank of Indochina's large capital assets and great liquidity permitted the transfer of large sums of money to New York where it was loaned at premium world interest rates.[27]

While the large financial institutions profited during the depression, many tenant and small landholding peasants were required to choose between "resigned acceptance of further prolongation of their debt bondage and either absconding or making common cause with the bandits, secret societies, and political movements for whom the crisis was a godsend."[28] Although Vietnam had regained economic stability by 1937, this was due to a general recovery in the world economy and not changing colonial policy or socio-economic structures. It was not until shifting transnational relations in the 1940's, that the colonial administration was confronted with a politico-military crisis and an emerging revolutionary situation. After 1939, French colonial policy became increasingly influenced by external forces. During this period revolutionary forces began to capitalize on growing political and economic instability.[29]

B. Ideological Developments

The revolutionary movement in Vietnam did not develop within an ideological void. While the transformation of socio-economic and political structures was an important factor in rendering many sectors of Vietnamese society more amenable to revolutionary organization, it was world events and ideas that encouraged radical elements of the Vietnamese intelligentsia to continue their support of the revolutionary movement. The Japanese victory over Russian forces in Manchuria startled the Vietnamese intelligentsia with the realization that Western powers were not invincible. Activist groups in Japan, demanding that Asia be ruled by Asians, were attracting prominent Vietnamese dissidents like Phan Boi Chau. In 1907, the Asian Peace and Friendship Society was formed by Japanese republicans and socialists. Its membership included Vietnamese, Philippine, Indian, and Chinese nationals.

The Bolshevik revolution in 1917 introduced an entirely new concept of social change. The Marxist-Leninist model of revolution was quickly heralded by a number of Vietnamese intellectuals as an answer to the problems confronting Vietnam. A number of young Vietnamese, such as Ho Chi Minh, enthusiastically embraced Leninism as an analytical tool that explained colonialism and the path leading to national independence.[30] In addition, the newly formed Soviet Union saw the liberation of Europe's colonies as a way of weakening the economic and industrial potential of Western capitalism.[31] It actively sought to disseminate revolutionary ideas throughout the Orient and train colonial

revolutionaries in schools that instructed students in their native
language.

In the 1920's, Vietnam was surrounded by countries embroiled in
political unrest. Anticolonial riots and civil disobedience in India
signaled broad protest against British colonial rule. Islamic groups
and communist cells were challenging Holland's authority in Indonesia.
The Americans had invaded the Philippines on the pretext of preparing
the indigenous inhabitants for future liberation. China was engaged in
civil war and the prominent nationalist party, the Kuomintang, was vocal
in its attack on Western domination of Chinese affairs. According to
Isoart, "la jeune Chine ne voulait plus accepter le statut d'infériorité
qui lui imposaient 'les traités inégaux' signés, sous la contrainte,
avec les puissances européenes."[32]

Despite being surrounded on all sides by political upheaval,
the colonial regime in Vietnam effectively controlled subversive
activities. The restructuring of the educational system in 1917
impregnated the young intellectual elite with western ideas and
methods.[33] Attempting to generate a positive orientation towards
France among the indigenous intelligentsia, the colonial regime
inadvertently provided a segment of Vietnamese society with the
intellectual tools necessary to adopt Western revolutionary ideologies.
The emphasis on Western education was a principal force in the changing
orientation of the Vietnamese elite. The concepts of democracy and
scientific methodology were being used to criticize the analytical
framework of traditional Confucian thought. Among the radical elements
of Vietnamese society, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the

Confucian ideology of former anticolonial movements and of the traditional Vietnamese elite was not an effective revolutionary tool. While Confucianism generated "moral ardor and perseverance against great odds, which were useful in a revolution," it also "discouraged even the most rudimentary utilitarian calculations, political and economic."[34] In addition, the Confucian notion of practicing personal self-cultivation was frequently transformed into a philosophy of "non-action" by a number of Vietnamese intellectuals. Thus, it was thought that "action or organized activism" led to struggles and finally to chaos, which was anathema to the valued Confucian principles of order and harmony. According to Woodside, the Vietnamese elite involved in the early anticolonial movements were constantly frustrated by the "intellectual tendency on the part of some scholars to make personal cultivation, and even non-action, ends in themselves."[35] This often resulted in "bureaucrats who preferred to commune with nature, in the extreme Taoist non-action manner, instead of fighting the French ... ."[36]

Although traditional Confucianism did not narrow the Vietnamese elite's receptiveness to change, its cultural and philosophical disposition did not question the value of the "eternal political form" of traditional Vietnamese political institutions.[37] Nor did Confucian thought foresee the historical transformation of political structures. Consequently, debates among traditional reformers revolved around methods of rendering the essential concept of government, or Chinh giao, more effective rather than changing the fundamental principles upon which the traditional state was founded.[38] However, by the early

1920's, the influx of Western ideas and Western education led to a decisive questioning of the validity and usefulness of the Confucian ideological framework. It was during this period, and into the 1950's, that the Vietnamese underwent a "qualitative transformation"; evolving from the narrow perceptions of political reality entertained by the Can Vuong and early revolutionary groups, to the more sophisticated analytical framework of the Vietminh which emphasized contradictions within the global and colonial system.

This transformation was not limited to the leadership of the revolutionary movement, but also included the peasantry who gradually discarded the traditional "forlorn and depleted awareness of the peasants' relative powerlessness, and of the bleakly timeless interchangeability of the higher national crises which most ravaged village life."[39] The propaganda and organizing tactics of the ICP attempted to demonstrate to peasants the possibility of affecting change and influencing national affairs through active participation in revolutionary organizations. The importance of the ideological transformation of the peasantry was evident in Vo Nguyen Giap's address to the newly formed Vietnam Liberation Armed Propaganda Brigade in 1944:

> The mission which the Organization [ICP] has entrusted to us [is] an important mission, a heavy mission. Politics is more important than military activities, propaganda more important than combat; that mission had the characteristic of being a mission of a transitional period; employ propaganda to appeal to the entire people to stand up, preparing political and military bases for the general uprising later on [sic].[40]

Despite the decline in Confucianism, the concept of a unified
Vietnam ruled by one central absolute state remained a persistent theme
throughout the colonial period. Milton Osborne argues convincingly that
neither the geographical diversity and regional differences, nor the
attempt by colonial officials to reinforce and accentuate these
differences, diminished Vietnamese attachment to the idea of a sovereign
unified Vietnam.[41] However, there was general disagreement as to the
manner in which this should be accomplished. While many of the
Vietnamese elite recognized the failure of the monarchical system, there
was no cultural or historical predisposition towards the acceptance of
any one particular form of central political institution.[42] However,
this entire process increased indigenous receptivity to radical
proposals offering beneficial forms of change.

**Part Two: The Socio-Economic and Political Transformation of
Colonial Vietnam**

In order to understand the numerous factors involved in the
historical development of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement, it is
necessary to examine the corresponding development in the class
structure of society and the institutional framework of the state. This
requires an analysis of the changing state apparatus, class
configurations, relationships between various classes and the State, and
the extent to which changing relationships between classes themselves
form important conflictual relationships which can be exploited by
revolutionary groups at the emergence of revolutionary situations.

These factors also help create an environment conducive to the initial formation of revolutionary organizations.

Unlike many of the subtheories which focus on socio-economic transformations as the primary causal factor determining colonial agrarian revolutions, Skocpol's "state-centered" analysis stresses both political and socio-economic historical developments.[43] The capitalist development often accompanying the political ascendancy of a colonial regime is viewed as "a motor of interstate competition, and as a propellant of changing relations between states and classes... ."[44] Rather than rely on the process of agrarian commercialization for an explanation of revolutionary processes, Skocpol envisions socio-economic transformations as only one of many factors creating favourable conditions for revolutionary upheaval. Many of the prominent studies on the Vietnamese colonial revolution have focused on societal and economic factors without explicitly recognizing the important role of the state and changing relations between classes and the state. The Socio-historical model rectifies this problem, in part, by examining the development of class structures and changing political institutions.[45] This provides insights into the conflictual nature of society and permits an assessment of two important categories: 1) the transformation of socio-economic structures and the resulting effect on relationships between various classes and the State; and 2) the changes in domestic political institutions and their impact on power relationships between various sectors of Vietnamese society.[46] The analysis of institutional changes in political structures involves a discussion of the power

relationships between various groups and classes within Vietnamese and colonial society.[47]

A. Direct and Indirect Taxation

Historically, the pacification of Vietnam proved to be a costly endeavour for France. So also was the administration of these newly acquired territories.[48] In order to quell the various revolts following the Nghia Quan uprising in Cochinchina and the Can Vuong rebellion in Annam and Tonkin, the colonial regime was forced to spend a large proportion of its revenue increasing administrative control over the indigenous inhabitants. Continued support for the French presence in Vietnam depended on colonial officials being able to increase revenues generated through taxation. This would pay for administrative costs and subsidize the creation of an economic infrastructure capable of competing for investment capital on the world market.[49] The primary concern of the colonial regime was to increase its independent source of revenue "in order to calm metropolitan opinion, which no longer wanted to support the new colony financially."[50]

The colonial administration needed constant increases in tax revenue in order to fund public works projects and continue with the pacification and economic development of Vietnam. At the time of the French conquest of Cochinchina, the region produced three million gold francs in taxes. By 1885 it was generating twenty-eight million gold francs. In the same region, between 1913 and 1929, tax receipts increased from 5.7 million to 15.7 million piasters. Similarly, the

colonial regime collected 1,235,000 piasters in Tonkin in 1888. Eight years later the total had increased to 2,995,000 piasters.[51]

The introduction of an administrative and military organization more effective in its implementation of state policy than its traditional counterpart permitted colonial officials to exploit the indigenous population to an unprecedented extent. When it became politically feasible to modify the traditional system of taxation, colonial administrators began to increase the taxes through various means.[52] In 1897, the head tax for registered villagers was increased from .5 piaster to 2.5 piaster. This new tax formula included a .4 piaster tax for all unregistered villagers who were formerly exempt under the traditional system. The head tax was once again modified in 1920 for Tonkin and 1928 in Annam. The new policy required that every male citizen pay 2.5 piasters regardless of whether he was a registered or unregistered member of a village; and, in 1937 the rate was raised to 4 piasters in Tonkin and 3.95 piasters in Annam. In Cochinchina, the head tax was fixed in 1880 at 2.25 piasters for each male peasant. By 1937, this tax had been elevated to 4.5 piasters for all peasants.[53] When it is noted that horse and buffalo taxes, the soldier tax,[54] the corvee tax, and a land tax (which often amounted to 10 percent of a peasant's income)[55] were added to the head tax, peasants paid a substantial portion of their income in direct taxes. This economic burden immiserized a large segment of the population whose gross income was often barely above subsistent levels.[56]

While the tax burden increased significantly during French rule, so also did the tax base. From 1897, the colonial regime

attempted to reduce the number of individuals exempted from direct taxation.[57] These exemptions were gradually reduced until 1937, when all traditional exemptions were finally abolished except for "those awarded to grant-holding students and soldiers."[58] However, Ngo Vinh Long notes that while fewer Vietnamese were eligible for tax exemption, "all those who worked for or collaborated with the French were completely exempted from [the head] tax."[59]

One of the more oppressive aspects of colonial tax policy was its ineffective efforts to lessen the impact of regressive taxation and regulate fraud and embezzlement. Colonial policies attempted to reduce the tax burden on poor peasants while simultaneously increasing revenue drawn from wealthier peasants. Without increasing administration costs by becoming directly involved in the affairs of the village, the colonial regime introduced tax receipts as a means of regulating individual tax payments.[60] With tax cards used as necessary identification, village notables entrusted with issuing receipts to the registered and unregistered village members were able to demand payments in excess of the legal tax assessment in exchange for a tax card stating that the individual had paid the legal amount.[61] In areas where peasants were forced to engage in seasonal migration to supplement their incomes, the tax receipt was essential for travel. Without this card peasants could be imprisoned as bandits or subjected to large fines.[62] Consequently, the need for tax cards made these peasants victims of a program intended to stop tax abuses.

Another important tax was the corvee, which in pre-colonial Vietnam, was comprised of a set number of days (forty eight) during the

year in which the peasant worked in nearby provinces and received a fixed salary and living allowance. Colonial efforts to make corvee days purchasable resulted in labour shortages, forcing the government to reduce the number of purchasable days and requiring peasants to work a fixed number of days. When the corvee was finally abolished and incorporated into the personal tax, villages were required to raise local tax assessments in order to pay for the maintenance of roads and canals traditionally repaired with the local corvee. Poor peasants who formerly earned extra money by voluntarily fulfilling the corvee requirements of the rich lost a secondary source of income. In addition, the increase in taxes required these peasants to "ask for more lands to work, borrow more money, and therefore [become] more dependent on the wealthy."[63]

While the abolition of the corvee gave the appearance of progressive reform, it was replaced by a more onerous form of conscripted labour. Colonial legislation in the 1930's restricted the use of unpaid compulsory labour to emergency situations and necessary public works.[64] However, when labour was scarce, peasants were often conscripted by the Public Works Department which argued that this complied with labour regulations because the task could be classified as a special emergency or public need.[65] In addition to being forcibly conscripted, the graft and corruption among officials usually meant that workers did not receive their legally entitled wage. Compulsory labourers were often required to supply their own food rations for the duration of their work period.[66] According to Mai Elliot, extremely harsh working conditions and the abusive practices of officials

sometimes triggered violent protests, such as the Tay revolt in Lang Son province in 1920.[67]

Direct taxes only constituted one portion of the exactions levied by the colonial regime. A sizable proportion of the government's revenues was derived indirectly from its monopoly of the alcohol, opium[68], and salt[69] industries. It is estimated that between 50 to 70 percent of the general budget of French Indochina was derived from these monopolies.[70] For example, the alcohol monopoly permitted the government to control both the production and sale of alcohol, ensuring that only Europeans and some Chinese could afford to establish distilleries. What was produced was bought by the colonial administration and resold to the peasantry with a substantial mark up. Because rice wine was traditionally distilled by peasants, who used the product in religious ceremonies, the State implemented numerous sanctions and repressive measures in an attempt to restrict the illegal distillation of alcohol and increase its revenue. The administration even resorted to ordering mandatory consumption,

> whereby any village that did not buy a quantity of alcohol proportionate to the number of its registered members would be considered as indulging in contraband and punished by the notables. The administration went so far as to evaluate the Residents' bureaucratic abilities based on the number of hectolitres of alcohol consumed in their provinces.[71]

The entire system of colonial taxation not only impoverished many sectors of the peasantry, the penetration of a money economy necessitated tax payments in currency.[72] This made peasants extremely susceptible to the price fluctuations in local and international

markets. The world "credit crisis" in 1907 triggered peasant tax protests in 1908 as a shortage of cash reduced rice prices and created difficulties for peasants forced to pay taxes.[73] This was only a prelude to the international market crisis in 1929. James Scott estimates that the net income in various regions in Cochinchina dropped by 87% to 95% between 1929 and 1934.[74] Not only were peasants pressed to pay taxes, but new debts were accrued and old debts were left unpaid, leading to foreclosures and an increasing number of peasants being forced into tenancy.[75]

Regressive taxation, dependency on international and domestic market fluctuations, and the normal risks involved in any form of agriculture led to increased stratification of Vietnamese society. A fall in price levels often forced peasants to borrow or sell a portion of their land in order to pay taxes and previous debts. Those in more fortunate economic situations were able to charge exorbitant interest rates and land rents by playing off one peasant against another peasant. This often forced peasants into a "rural proletarian class" after selling their property at reduced prices and being unable to afford inflated rents on agricultural land. With economic and political elites vying for a larger share in the exploitation of the local peasantry, the class structure of Vietnamese society was gradually being altered.[76] The economic differences between various sectors in Vietnamese society became more pronounced and increasingly polarized.

B. Changing Landownership Patterns

The pauperization of rural Vietnam had severe repercussions on the landholding patterns in Vietnamese society. The growing number of landless or tenant peasants created a class that had little vested interest in the continuation of the colonial economic structure. Likewise, the increasing financial insecurity and breakdown in traditional property structures, in both communal and privately owned lands, was alienating the middle peasant who was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain solvency. However, the nature of these changes, while having a similar result, was different in each region of Vietnam.[77]

In Cochinchina, the initial French conquest led to the expropriation of the property of all local residents who had fled the invasion of French forces. In addition, all former crown domains and unoccupied lands became colonial possessions. Following this extensive expropriation of Vietnamese property, the colonial administration established a system of land concessions and auctions for the numerous areas of undeveloped land along the Mekong delta. The auctioning of land helped defray the cost of building canals, which in turn rendered more land arable and provided a crucial transportation network for the military.[78] Land concessions enabled the administration to grant "substantial tracts of land to Vietnamese who demonstrated a willingness to operate within the framework of the colonial overrule."[79] This created a new indigenous landed elite that was dependent on French rule for the maintenance of its economic interests. The ensuing patron-

client relationship between the colonial administration and this new
Vietnamese aristocracy simplified French rule in Cochinchina, providing
the French with some indigenous support.

Land concessions, often accompanied by tax advantages, were
used to attract French settlers and capital investment by metropolitan
companies. This attracted a growing number of French nationals to
Vietnam and resulted in the gradual the establishment of a powerful
settler community in Cochinchina. This expatriate European community,
comprised of French settlers and colonial bureaucrats of all ranks,
formed a formidable bloc within the political and economic structure of
Cochinchina. Although representing a small percentage of the
population, this bloc was indispensable to colonial rule. In addition,
the members of this class equated economic survival with their ability
to maintain political superiority. Their position remained tenable as
long as the colonial administration remained committed to the
maintenance of a political system that excluded indigenous
participation. With the settler community "unyielding and
wholeheartedly" opposed to the legitimization of indigenous political
activity, it remained dependent on "outright coercive mechanisms for its
economic survival, not to speak of its superior status with respect to
the indigenous population."[80]

The predominant role of the European community in the
administration of the colony meant that the process of maintaining the
status quo the political strength of the Europeans prevented the
Vietnamese elite, who had profited from their collaboration with the
French, from effectively participating in the political institutions of

the colonial regime. However, similar to their French counterparts, the Vietnamese collaborators were forced to rely on the colonial regime for the maintenance of their economic position. This elite was in the unique position of being frustrated in its political ambitions while simultaneously being dependent on the dominant political structures for the maintenance of its socio-economic position; and, its exploitation of sharecroppers and tenants meant that its relationship to the peasantry was similar to that of French landowners and plantation developers.

In Annam and Tonkin, the shortage of arable land did not permit the expansion and development of large landholdings as was the case in Cochinchina.[81] However, the gradual reduction of village communal property produced similar cleavages and stratification in rural society. According to Ngo Vinh Long, "the French colonial administration actively sought to reduce the area of communal land by permitting village officials to sell it."[82] Despite the resulting decrease in communal land, regions close to the Vietnamese court tended to retain their communal lands. It is argued that this was an attempt by Vietnamese officials in Annam to safeguard certain traditional institutions that were being eroded by the policies of the colonial administration.[83] However, this was generally ineffective and the prevalent trends saw a substantial decrease in communal property which exacerbated economic stratification in rural areas.[84]

C. Administrative Developments

Increased taxation of the peasantry and economic subsidization of large property holders in the form of land concessions resulted in a regressive redistribution of wealth. This exacerbated existing tensions and cleavages in traditional society, resulting in a more pronounced distinction between various classes. Also, as French officials required more Vietnamese mediators for the effective administration of the state, the conflictual relationship between this mediating class and the indigenous population became more acute and antagonistic. Vietnamese collaborators profited from their relationship with the French through land concession programs, legal advantages, and the support of various levels of administration. This alienated the peasantry which could not seek redress from French colonial officials who relied on informants and collaborators for the enforcement of regulations and the implementation of colonial policies. For example, the initial unwillingness of many traditional mandarins to serve under colonial officials in Cochinchina forced the administration to recruit interpreters and low level Vietnamese officials from the "less respectable elements of the population".[85] *These individuals were prone to numerous abuses and* lacked the expertise of the former mandarins. This discredited the French among the peasantry and contributed to their dependence on unreliable informants who often used their influence for personal advantage.[86]

Village notables who forcibly or willingly implemented colonial policies at the local level, were tempted to profit from their role as

mediators between French and local inhabitants. While made personally

responsible by the colonial regime for multiple administrative tasks

requiring travel expenses and personal expenditures, notables were not

reimbursed for these costs. Rather, the appointment to a administrative

position within the village cost the individual a certain amount

depending on the nature of the position's responsibilities and its

prestige.[87] Consequently, many village notables took advantage of

their position within the administrative structure, often at the expense

of other members of the village. Depending on their administrative

responsabilites, notables frequently claimed abandoned property for

private use and profited from manipulated auctions of village communal

land.[88] In addition, their knowledge of administrative procedures and

regulations permitted the manipulation of public land auctions, and the

expropriation of virgin land developed by peasants in Cochinchina.[89]

The collection and assessment of individual taxes was another important

responsibility which permitted widespread abuse by designated notables

who used their power to protect the village elite and exploit other

members of the village.

The mandarin elite employed in Annam and Tonkin, while

limited in their decision-making powers, frequently manipulated the

ignorance and fears of French officials to sanction repressive measures

that the mandarins used for financial and political advantages. While

the mandarin class in Cochinchina had been virtually destroyed during

the conquest, this was not the case in Annam and Tonkin.[90] A lack of

French administrators forced France to rely initially on the traditional

administrative structure of Annam and Tonkin. However, colonial

officials attempted to transform the Mandarinate by restructuring state examinations, instituting new guidelines governing the recruitment of mandarins, and establishing a French curriculum for training purposes.

While the rapacious nature of the mandarin class had been the subject of much peasant folklore,[91] traditional social and political institutions had minimized the exploitative capacity of village notables and mandarins. A unified village prevented internal meddling by provincial mandarins. Likewise, the royal court was eager to intercede on behalf of village notables who were being exploited by regional mandarins in order to assure its control over the mandarins outside of the immediate vicinity of Hue. French colonialism introduced a new set of power relations within Vietnamese society, and these relations, in conjunction with colonial economic policies, resulted in serious alterations in the class structure of the indigenous population as various sectors of Vietnamese society used colonial institutions to maximize socio-economic differences.

D. Development of Domestic Political Institutions

Prior to the introduction of colonialism, the political institutions of Vietnam had the appearance of a highly centralized monarchical state. However, the "real basis for power was military might and not legalization of imperial authority."[92] Communication between the central government and regional mandarins was often poor, limiting the monarchy's ability to enforce state policies or maintain stability throughout the country. The loyalty of powerful mandarins was

often based upon land and monetary concessions provided by the monarchy or powerful interest groups. This gave many prominent mandarins an independent base for political power and increased regionalism and political antagonisms among the political elite.[93]

The conquest of Cochinchina resulted in the destruction of the traditional political institutions. The French military occupation was eventually replaced by a civilian administration and a colonial council. By the 1880's the colonial regime was dominated by French citizens controlling the Cochinchinese colonial council. The private aspirations of these citizens were largely opposed to the broader political interests of the Metropole. For example, in 1909 the French Chambers adopted the policy of association, intending to increase economic prosperity and reduce the cost of administration by assigning the local inhabitants an active role in the affairs of the colony. This was fought by colons and fonctionnaires who saw the extension of indigenous political participation as a threat to their existing privileges.[94] Despite attempts by various Governors General to modify the political structures of Cochinchina in the late 1890's, the French expatriates continued to have an enormous influence on the budget and expenditures of the general government of Indochina and the colony of Cochinchina. In his memoirs, Doumer stated:

> Of the scarcely 2,000 French citizens in
> Cochinchina, 1,500 lived off the state budget,
> and not a few of the remaining 500 were
> connected with the administration in other ways.
> Thus, of a population of 3 million, 2,000 had
> the right to vote, and of these three-quarters
> were government employees.... One easily grasps
> the beauty of this system,.... A majority of

> officials living off the budget decides what
> shall be spent and what taxes shall be
> collected.[95]

Even in 1911, when the French Chambers provided the Governor

General with wide ranging powers to restructure the political

institutions of colonial Vietnam, the interests of French fonctionnaires

and colons in regions such as Cochinchina still had considerable

influence on policy decisions.[96] For example, in 1928 the French

Colonial Ministry ordered reforms to control abuses attributed to land

concession policies. This mobilized a powerful lobby group that

reversed some of the new guidelines.[97] In the late 1930's, the threat

of war motivated the French Ministry of Colonies to implement reforms

that would ensure the loyalty of indigenous elites, diversify the

economy, and alleviate the impact of possible isolation from the

metropole. In Vietnam, these measures met stiff opposition from French

colons and fonctionnaires. Attempts to increase indigenous political

participation were successfully sabotaged by colonial administrators

unwilling to implement reforms and alienate fellow members of the French

colonial elite.

In 1940, the growing isolation of Vietnam, and world turmoil,

created new opportunities for governing officials. The newly

established Vichy regime appointed Admiral Decoux as the Governor

General of Indochina. Shortly after his appointment, he began to

restructure the political institutions of Vietnam. With little

interference from France, and with virtual dictatorial powers, Decoux

suspended the elected assemblies of each state in Indochina. In their

place, a hand-picked Federal Council was chosen to act as an advisory

body. In a concession to the native population, the majority of positions in the Council were given to prominent members of the Vietnamese elite. However, this meant little given the absence of any political authority within the council. Thus, the consolidation of political power in the hands of the central General Government created a highly centralized institution that was capable of managing the administration and economy without the incumbrances confronted by all the former regimes.

Nevertheless, Decoux realized the importance of encouraging the loyalty of the Vietnamese elite, particularly given the close proximity of Japan and its establishment of military bases in Vietnam in 1940. In an effort to secure the allegiance of the Vietnamese elite, Decoux embarked upon a number of projects intended to bolster Vietnamese confidence in French colonialism and counter the propaganda of the Japanese stationed in Vietnam. Efforts were made to encourage equal relations between French and Vietnamese by forbidding tutoiement, brutal punishments, and other signs of French superiority. In other areas, national sentiments were encouraged in conjunction with an emphasis on Vietnam's attachment to France. Finally, recognizing the growing disenchantment of the educated elite, the colonial regime attempted to fill middle and upper level administrative posts with trained Vietnamese. While the number of Vietnamese holding these positions doubled from 1940 to 1944, the political question was only one aspect of the policy. Unable to replace retiring or deceased officials because of the world situation, the colonial regime was forced to rely on the indigenous elite for the maintenance of its administration.

Regardless of the regime's efforts to maximize its power and increase the collaboration of the Vietnamese, it still relied very much on the ability of the repressive machinery of the Surete to hunt down members of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement as well as dissident Frenchmen who sympathized with the Gaullists. During the Japanese involvement in Vietnam, the Surete was constantly battling with the Kempeitai (Japanese military police) who were attempting to protect various nationalist revolutionary groups.[98] Nevertheless, the Surete and its network of agents worked effectively to maintain political control over Vietnamese society. In fact, some French authorities argued that the repression following the Lang Son and Cochinchina rebellion in 1940 was so severe as to have created an irreparable rift between the Vietnamese and the France.[99] While this rift applied mainly to the peasantry, the Vietnamese elite were also disillusioned by their continued denial of political participation and attracted to the promise of independence held out by the Japanese.

Summary of Class Developments

While the preceding discussion described the process of dislocation and stratification of the peasantry, it should be noted that the development of mining in Tonkin and plantations in Cochinchina resulted in greater demand for a mobile proletariat. Similarly, marginal industrialization in the cities also required a steady supply of labourers. The general demand for labour, combined with poor working conditions, created an environment where peasants migrated from seasonal

agricultural work to urban employment sectors. For some, this also

included periods of work for plantations or mines. The constant need to

maintain a subsistence income resulted in the frequent dislocation of

the impoverished sectors of the peasantry. The fluidity of the lower

echelons of Vietnamese society reduced regional diversity and parochial

differences. It also created important group intersections between

rural and urban sectors of the proletariat:

> Since the proletariat was recruited from the
> countryside, most workers were ex-peasants.
> Owing to the great turnover in the work force, a
> large number of peasants had been members of the
> proletariat at some point in their lives. Many
> peasants in the suburbs worked part-time in the
> cities, and many workers habitually returned to
> their villages to help with the harvest.[100]

The social fluidity of the rural and urban proletariat meant

that individuals in the lower strata of Vietnamese society were

subjected to common experiences and ideas. The greater interaction

between rural and urban sectors of the workforce diminished differences

between various regions or segments of the population undergoing

different socio-economic developments. The lack of social rigidity

permitted a large section of Vietnamese society to share similar

economic and political interests. This resulted from the shared

experience of proletarianization and minimized the degree of internal

contentions and interest conflicts associated with economically

subordinate classes.

The fluid quality of the lower strata of Vietnamese society

liberated numerous peasants from traditional village institutions

without completely severing attachments to village life.[101] Although

the indigenous working class, by 1939, only represented 5 or 6 percent

of the total population, there was a constant and rapid turnover in the

labour force.[102] It was estimated that of the 24,825 workers employed

in 1936 in one mining center in Tonkin, only 422 worked 300 days or more

while 18,645 had worked less than 150 days.[103] Likewise, plantations

in Cochinchina had similar problems keeping sufficient numbers of

workers. According to Isoart,

> Cette instabilité avait certainement retardé la
> formation d'une classe ouvrière consciente de
> son originalité, mais, en revanche, elle avait
> fait connaître à une partie importante de la
> population des conditions souvent inhumaines de
> l'exploitation capitaliste.[104]

This was used effectively by revolutionary organizations in their

attacks on colonial labour abuses. It also gave these organizations an

effective basis for impeding the recruitment of contractual labour for

plantations, mines, and public works projects. Of these groups, the ICP

was the most successful in exploiting the close links between workers

and peasants and developing organizational strength among rural and

urban sectors of Vietnamese society.

The middle class only developed marginally within the colonial

framework. While colonial legislation encouraged the financial

activities of the Vietnamese, which had been effectively limited under

the monarchy, the bourgeois class was primarily restricted to the Mekong

delta and exploitation of indigenous rice production. Beyond the

agriculture sector few Vietnamese could compete with Chinese and

European financial interests. The narrow capital base of the Vietnamese

middle class and its dependence on exports rendered them extremely

susceptible to world market fluctuations. The economic crisis of 1930 demonstrated the dependence of the middle class on foreign capital and international markets by forcing them to rely on the colonial administration for relief from high interest rates and the effects of a failing world rice market.[105] This increased the middle class' dependence on the colonial regime, and its willingness to act moderately in its demands for political participation. Its fear of social revolution and of losing its precarious economic position motivated political compromise, often alienating the middle class from the rest of Vietnamese society. This was particularly true of the principal political voice of the Cochinchinese middle class, the Constitutionalist Party, which lost favour among many of the Vietnamese intelligentsia for promoting economic interests of the Vietnamese economic elite and compromising the political demands of all other Vietnamese.[106]

Part Three: The Emergence of the Revolutionary Situation

The subtheoretical approaches discussed in the preceding chapter were various attempts to explain the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. Common to each of these approaches was the emphasis on socio-economic developments and their impact on the revolutionary movement. Despite disagreement over the nature of these changes or their relationship to the revolutionary process, there was a general failure to explain the actual emergence of the revolutionary situation. This was primarily the result of theoretical frameworks that focus on domestic developments to the exclusion of international and world-

historical factors creating politico-military crises for the State or dominant class. It is the politico-military crisis that is so crucial for the emergence of a revolutionary situation, and it is only in this context that the revolutionary organization can successfully challenge the incumbent regime. In the case of colonial Vietnam, if international developments had not severely restricted the ability of colonial authorities to suppress the activities and expansion of the revolutionary movement, it is unlikely that the ICP would have been capable of challenging the incumbent regime.

While ideological frameworks and group structures permit specific organizations to take advantage of revolutionary situations, an accurate explanation of the revolutionary process cannot neglect factors influencing the initial development of a crisis situation. The various subtheories discussed previously focused on the impact of socio-economic developments, arguing that these changes permitted revolutionary groups to mobilize and direct mass support against the colonial administration. However, they all fail to account for the variables contributing to the decline in the repressive capacity of the colonial regime or the sudden ability of the revolutionary movement to consolidate its strength. This is crucial for a clear understanding of the reasons underlying the colonial administration's inability to quell revolutionary activity in the late 1940's and the early 1950's while effectively suppressing ICP directed peasant-based uprisings and elite-based revolts led by other revolutionary or reactionary organizations prior to 1945.

The following explanation does not preclude the important function of domestic socio-economic and political structural

transformations. Rather, it includes the role of these factors in its analysis of the changing political relations between the State and various classes and sectors of Vietnamese society. However, limiting the analysis to these variables results in a failure to account for the important impact of international and world-historical factors that weakened the colonial regime's political and military hegemony.[107] This includes the factors that limit the metropole's willingness to support or provide the necessary means to maintain the dominance of its colonial institutions. While the ability of the revolutionary organization to take advantage of a revolutionary situation is a crucial point which is discussed in the next chapter, this section focuses on the transnational relations affecting the military and political capacity of the colonial regime.

Transnational Relations Affecting the Military and Political Capacity of the Colonial Regime

A. Role of Japan

The August Revolution of 1945 marked the first time in which a Vietnamese organization (Vietminh), committed to the overthrow of foreign domination and the introduction of new socio-economic and political institutions, had successfully won political control over a significant proportion of Vietnam. While the Vietminh's position was challenged within the year by returning French troops, the colonial administration was never again able to reestablish its hegemony

throughout Vietnam. In the end, the unwillingness of the metropole to continue supporting the growing cost of fighting the Vietminh resulted in the gradual attrition of colonial power, resulting in the 1954 Geneva Peace Settlement and the permanent establishment of a revolutionary government north of the 16th parallel.

While August 1945 marks the beginning of the revolutionary movement's first serious challenge to colonial hegemony, the factors influencing this development begin with the Japan-Vichy accord on August 30, 1940. Prior to this treaty, the Japanese had arranged a cease-fire with the Soviet Union along the Manchuria-Mongolia border. This freed troops and resources for a new Japanese campaign in south China. However, when the Japanese Hunan campaign ceased to advance along its southerly route, Japanese troops stationed in Canton and Beihai (on the Gulf of Tonkin) attempted to cross Kwangsi and cut communication and supplies being shipped to Chinese defenders along Sino-Vietnamese transportation routes.[108]

As early as 1937, Japanese delegations were using diplomatic pressure in an attempt to stop American military supplies arriving in Haiphong and entering China along Vietnamese transportation networks. According to Masaya Shiraishi, colonial officials did not cede to these demands because "Les Français ne désiraient pas interrompre les exportation vers la Chine puis qu'ils entendaient renforcer la capacité de résistance de ce pays de manière à provoquer un engagement accru des Japonais et, ainsi, les detourner de l'Indochine."[109]

However, by 1940, the war in South China was stalemated[110] and Japan was forced to threaten colonial Vietnam with military aggression

if it did not close its borders to military shipments and permit Japanese officials to inspect goods passing border crossings.[111] With France and Great Britain preoccupied by the war in Europe, and the refusal of the United States to become directly involved in a conflict with Japan, the colonial administration was forced to recognize its inability to defend Vietnam in the presence of a much superior military force. The newly formed Vichy regime, represented by Admiral Decoux, decided that in exchange for the recognition of France's sovereignty in Vietnam the Japanese would be permitted to establish "temporary" military bases in Tonkin and be recognized as the preeminent nation in the Far East.

The concessions forced on the colonial regime signaled the beginning of a politico-military crisis for the French administration. When the Japanese wished to increase their presence in Vietnam, ultimatums were issued with a corresponding demonstration of Japan's military potential.[112] While forced to accept further concessions on September 22, 1940, the colonial elite still hoped for future support from Anglo-American forces. However, shortly after the signing of the agreement, Japanese forces in South China, allegedly ignorant of the new treaty, attacked and quickly defeated French posts in the Lang Son province in Tonkin. This attack was accompanied by a revolt staged by members of the Japanese trained Phuc Quoc, which was a remnant of Phan Boi Chau's Quang Phuc Hoi. Armed by the Japanese, the ranks of the Phuc Quoc swelled as escaping indigenous colonial troops, border bandits, exiles, and members of various mountain ethnic groups supported their activites in the wake of Japanese successes.[113] However, the Japanese

withdrew their support from the Phuc Quoc after it was established that the colonial administration had agreed upon the terms of a new treaty. Without this support the Phuc Quoc lost their momentum. Returning quickly, French troops forced the Phuc Quoc to retreat into Japanese controlled Kwangtung province in China.

While the treaty of September 22 permitted the French to reoccupy Lang Son province, the fact that Japanese forces had been so effective in their attack convinced the colonial administration that henceforth, close collaboration with Japan was the only way of retaining some form of control over Vietnam.[114] It also demonstrated to many Vietnamese that the French were militarily inferior to Japan. Meanwhile, Japanese officials disagreed over the best way to secure Indochina as a supply base for its Pacific war effort and as a "stepping stone" for a future campaign against Burma. One faction among the Japanese argued that the only way to assure the support of Vietnam was to encourage the overthrow of French colonialism and establish an indigenous self-determined state. This position was supported by many members of the diplomatic corps who argued that the faithful application of Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity" ideology, which included the full independence of Vietnam, would gain the cooperation of the native population for Japan's war efforts.[115] Alternative arguments advanced the belief that Japan could not spare the necessary troops and equipment needed to ensure the defeat of French forces. They maintained that Vietnam would best serve Japan's military and economic interests if the French administration was retained and the economic interests of the colonial elite were safeguarded.[116] This position was the official

position of the Japanese High Command until world events changed the colonial administration's willingness to collaborate.[117]

By 1941, the colonial regime was confronted with a serious economic dilemma. The British blockade of Vichy France had significantly reduced Vietnam's major exports of rice and rubber to the Metropole. As Vietnam became politically integrated within the Axis Southeast Asian sphere, its previous economic links with France were gradually severed. Despite Decoux's attempts to diversify the Vietnamese economy (thereby reducing Vietnam's dependency on manufactured goods imported from Japan), and establish temporary trade barriers by controlling marketing boards regulating major exports, colonial Vietnam became increasingly dependent on its Japanese trade relations.[118] In May 1941, the colonial regime signed commerce, tariff, and navigation agreements with the Japanese government. According to Masaya Shiraishi,

> En vertu de ces accords, les Japonais obtenaient
> les ressources naturelles nécessaires en échange
> de leurs produits industriels, et en particulier
> de leurs produits textiles. Ils obtenaient
> aussi le statut de la nation la plus favorisée
> et le champ libre pour leurs affaires en
> Indochine. Ainsi, ils mettaient virtuellement
> fin au monopole français sur l'economie
> indochinoise.[119]

The inability of the colonial regime to stop the political and economic advances of the Japanese encouraged revolutionary organizations throughout Vietnam to mobilize their resources in the expectation of a French defeat. When Japanese troops attacked French garrisons stationed in Lang Son province in 1940, they precipitated local uprisings throughout the area. Not only did the Japanese-backed Phuc Quoc

participate in the revolt, but ICP cadre who had been operating in the Lang Son province since 1933 mobilized ethnic tribesmen (Tho tribes) in the Bac Son district and captured two French military posts, Binh Gia and Mo Nhia. Similarly, the fear and demoralization of French authorities in the adjacent province of Cao Bang permitted the ICP to intensify their activities in the area and establish important ties with the local inhabitants. While the French were able to reconsolidate their position in the Lang Son and Cao Bang provinces, the inroads made by the ICP permitted the establishment of a guerrilla corridor into the upper Red River delta through the Thai Nguyen province.[120]

The ICP strongholds in Bac Son were soon defeated by the French, necessitating a retreat into local inaccessible mountain areas. Renewed colonial repression in Cao Bang soon minimized the extent to which ICP cadres could effectively operate in the region. However, in Cochinchina, the threat of a Thai invasion in Cambodia had created a situation which local ICP attempted to utilize in its revolutionary strategy. This region had been subject to peasant unrest and local protests because of high taxes, the falling price of rice, rising unemployment, and forced conscription for military service along the Cambodian-Thai border.[121] After concentrating propaganda on "peasants and newly-drafted Vietnamese troops", the ICP's Regional Committee for Cochinchina estimated that "half of the indigenous troops in Cochin China were allegedly sympathetic to the Communists, ... [and] that up to 30 percent of the entire population of the colony was on its side."[122]

The failure of the Bac Son revolt had led the Central Committee to postpone preparations for a rebellion in Cochinchina. However, the

representative sent to inform the Regional Committee of the new directive was captured en route by colonial authorities. Notified of the ICP's plans, the French declared martial law and disarmed all the Vietnamese troops in the area. In the absence of any orders from the Central Committee, local ICP leaders continued with their preparations, launching several concentrated attacks on military and administrative establishments throughout the Mekong delta on November 22-23. While the uprising in the larger centers such as Saigon was rapidly quelled, revolutionary forces in the rural areas were not subdued until the middle of December. Eventually, the remaining ICP forces retreated into the wilderness areas of the Plain of Joncs, north of the Mekong delta.

Unlike the ICP forces in Cao Bang and Lang Son, which were able to find temporary refuge in South China under the protection of Chinese Nationalists, the cadre in Cochinchina had no convenient haven or retreat. In an effort to destroy the revolutionary movement, the colonial regime arrested 800 communist activists, and 106 individuals convicted of complicity in the uprising were publicly executed as an example to local inhabitants. According to Brocheux, many of the individuals arrested represented the best militants, leaders, and "vieux routiers" of the ICP.[123] While those lost were quickly replaced by newly trained recruits, these new revolutionaries lacked the experience and organizational capacity of their predecessors.[124]

While the ICP was forced to rebuild its organization after its defeat in the Viet Bac (northern Tonkin) and Cochinchina, other nationalist organizations were mushrooming throughout Vietnam with the support and encouragement of various Japanese officials. Despite the

fact that the official Japanese policy supported the continuation of the French colonial status quo, the upper echelons of the Japanese authorities stationed in Vietnam did not prevent subordinate officials from promoting pro-Japanese Vietnamese nationalism.[125] One exception to this rule was the military which was observed more closely by the French, who frequently lodged complaints whenever military officers did not adhere to official policy. For example, a Japanese officer in the Lang Son assault force was punished because of aid given to Vietnamese nationalists fighting the French. This same officer was later returned to Vietnam just prior to the Japanese takeover in March 1945, and became active in the promotion of Vietnamese independence.[126]

Unlike the military, the diplomatic corps and Japanese intellectuals (french-speaking Japanese recruited to serve military and business interests) had greater freedom in their relations with Vietnamese nationalists. A number of individuals from each of these groups, including some members of the military, actively promoted the development of a nationalist revolutionary movement.[127] From 1941 to 1943, Japanese ties with various nationalist organizations and religious sects increased dramatically. Attempts by the colonial administration to prevent these developments were hindered by the willingness of Japanese officials to protect indigenous nationalists. By 1943, the Japanese had organized the various faction ridden pro-Japanese nationalist groups under one umbrella organization called the Dai Viet. This was aligned with the Phuc Quoc and the two religious sects in Cochinchina, the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai, in the mutual support of Prince Cuong De who was residing in Japan. However, when the colonial

administration attempted to suppress the growing number of nationalist organizations in 1943, the Japanese offered only marginal support for the nationalists, protecting some leaders but letting the rest of the pro-Japanese nationalist movement succumb to colonial repression.[128]

World events in 1943 forced the Japanese High Command to reassess its policy concerning the independence of Vietnam. Heavy losses in the Pacific and Allied advances in Africa and Europe meant that continued French collaboration was no longer assured; and the continuing drain on the Japanese military lessened the likelihood of forcibly maintaining control of Vietnam without some indigenous support. As military conditions worsened, a growing number of Japanese military officers and diplomats were pressuring the High Command to overthrow the colonial administration. The fall of the Vichy regime and the recognition by western powers of the de Gaulle government on October 23, 1944, gave momentum to the growing anti-Japanese movement among the French. However, the High Command remained reluctant to take direct military action against the colonial regime until the Japanese defeat in the Philippines increased the possibility of an Allied invasion of Vietnam and permitted reinforcements to be directed to positions in Indochina. Intensified American aerial bombing in January 1945 convinced the Japanese that Allied forces would soon attack their bases in Southeast Asia.

Prior to the takeover of the colonial administration on March 9, 1945, the French in Vietnam were under the sway of the Gaullist representative General Mordant. His preparations to launch a simultaneous attack against the revolutionary movement in the north (led

by the ICP), remnants of various religious and nationalist groups, and
Japanese positions throughout Vietnam, were preempted by a quick
Japanese coup. Unable to escape the vigilance of Japanese intelligence
operations, the French preparations were discovered and the Japanese
reacted quickly on March 9, 1945, disarming colonial troops and
confining French residents to restricted areas. This event was the
crowning point in the emerging revolutionary situation. It marked a
"sudden and complete collapse of French prestige" throughout Vietnam;
and more than any other event, the overthrow of the French army and
administration by Japanese forces was a turning point in the
revolutionary movement.[129]

B. The August Revolution: Prelude and Aftermath

The Coup of March 9, 1945 marked an important turning point in
the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. While many of the pro-Japanese
nationalist organizations were expecting some form of liberation by
Japan, the ICP realized the important changes in the world and domestic
political situation and had begun preparations for a general
insurrection in anticipation of Japan's defeat or an Allied invasion of
Vietnam.[130] In this respect, the ICP recognized the tenuous position
of the Japanese and clearly wanted to be identified with the winning
Allies in order to increase their popular support and appeal to
nationalists that were not pro-Japanese.[131]

Prior to the capitulation of the French, the war was having a
detrimental impact on the economy of colonial Vietnam. The economy was

drained as Japan imported as many of Vietnam's rice, corn, jute, and vegetable oil products as the transportation system could bear while only increasing French credits in Japanese banks. Soon colonial Vietnam was faced with severe shortages in "machinery, spare parts, chemicals, and consumer goods normally imported from France."[132] Inflation was rampant as the colonial administration printed ever larger quantities of paper money to meet its normal expenditures and the cost of maintaining Japanese troops stationed in Vietnam. However, according to Marr, the "single most disruptive wartime practice was to force Vietnamese peasants to shift some of their arable land to the cultivation of industrial crops."[133] This threatened the subsistence of many peasants in Annam and Tonkin where staple production barely sufficed during bountiful harvests. Later policies forcing peasants to sell half their crop at prices fixed well below the existing market levels further exacerbated the subsistence of the peasantry and motivated numerous landlords to expel tenants and let their land lay fallow.

During the latter half of 1944, two factors created further serious economic problems for the peasantry, particularly in Annam and Tonkin. First, weather conditions destroyed rice crops in the north and central regions of Vietnam. Second, Allied naval and aerial attacks on transportation systems in Vietnam led to Japan's refusal to buy industrial crops which could not be shipped to the homeland. This left peasants with an inedible and unmarketable product. While peasants starved in Annam and Tonkin, large rice stores rotted in Cochinchina because government officials were unwilling to risk military transports

for civilian purposes. Furthermore, the rice that was available was being distilled by the Japanese for use in military vehicles.

This was the domestic situation confronting the Japanese when they took control of the colonial administration in March, 1945. However, international and military considerations resulted in an important compromise between the necessity of maintaining an effective and controllable administration, and the idealism of Pan-Asianism that permeated the ranks of the Japanese diplomatic corps.[134] The Japanese Command was worried about the possible international repercussions of an armed coup in Vietnam. They were aware that any attempt to disarm the French would be viewed as a reversal of their previous position and would therefore need some formal justification or risk jeopardizing the renewal of their non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in April 1945. The Japanese High Command did not want to give the Soviet Union any pretext for allying itself with Japan's enemies.[135] Thus, it was agreed that military control of the former colonial administration would be partially disguised by granting some form of independence to Vietnam.[136] The priority of the military's need for direct control of the colonial administration was exemplified by choosing to let Bao Dai continue as the reigning monarch rather than replace him with Prince Cuong De who was the choice of the leading nationalist organizations.[137] Similarly, the ministers chosen by Bao Dai, at the request of the Japanese, were men of moderate political orientation and little political experience. Such men could not be expected to affect great change, cope with the serious economic situation confronting

Vietnam, or challenge Japanese control of the administration, regardless of their good intentions.[138]

The new government established by Bao Dai, and headed by Prime Minister Tran Truong Kim, lacked popular support. This was first the result of the Japanese decision to exclude prominent nationalists from the government; second, the fact that the Kim government did not control Cochinchina which prevented it from receiving the direct support of the pro-Japanese Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects; third, the evident subordination of Vietnamese independence to the immediate objectives of the Japanese military diminished the initial enthusiasm supporting the newly appointed cabinet; and finally, the inability of the administration to reduce inflation and resolve the famine problem discredited government efforts to deal with the general economic crisis confronting Vietnam.[139] Despite the dismay over the doc lap banh ve (fake independence), political activity continued to increase with little hindrance from the Japanese. The humiliation of the French and the military set-backs confronting Japan increased the sense among politically active Vietnamese that genuine independence was a real possibility.

The August revolution was not a violent eruption, nor an explosion. Rather, as Devillers states, it was "le résultat final de l'osmose, le passage indolore d'un état à un autre, l'aboutissement logique de l'infiltration du Viet-Minh dans tous les secteurs de la vie nationale."[140] While the activities of the Vietminh will be discussed in the following chapter, there were a number of important circumstances that enabled this group to take control of the dominant political and

administrative institutions in colonial Vietnam. First, the surrender
of the Japanese meant that there was no longer any dominant politico-
military structure capable of countering the challenge of the
revolutionary movement. The Japanese did not rearm the French, nor did
they attempt to counter the activities of the Vietminh.

With the news of Japan's surrender most Japanese diplomatic and
military personnel were more interested in returning safely to Japan
than engaging in conflicts with the Vietminh or the French.[141] In
Tonkin and Annam, the Japanese turned over administrative posts to the
advancing Vietminh and did not interfere with the mass demonstrations
organized by revolutionary activists. This was also the case with
Vietnamese administrators directly responsible to the Kim government.
In Cochinchina, where Vietminh infiltration was slower, the Japanese
relinquished official authority to a United National Front composed of
the leading revolutionary organizations in the South. This organization
soon joined with the Vietminh as its nationalist representatives began
to fear that United National Front would be perceived as pro-
Japanese.[142] The Japanese only fought the Vietminh in Cochinchina
after being ordered into combat by the British who could not maintain
control of the Mekong delta after their arrival in the middle of
September.[143] Other than this instance, the Japanese preferred to
negotiate with the Vietminh rather than use military force.

The fact that the Japanese did not restore the French to their
pre-war stature and were unwilling to impede the revolutionary movement
was a significant variable in the success of the Vietminh. The second
important factor was the attempt by the Roosevelt administration to ally

itself with Chiang Kai-shek's China and replace the Europeans as the stabilizing force in Asia.[144] Politically, Roosevelt did not envision France as a future world power and his anticolonial policy of trusteeship was designed to ensure the independence of Europe's colonies. With Vietnam viewed as strategically important for the control of South Sea trade routes and world market commodities such as rubber, tin, and rice,[145] the United States would support Nationalist China as a temporary international trustee over colonial Vietnam following the surrender of the Japanese. This would eliminate France as a power in southeast Asia and permit China and the United States to consolidate their hold on Asia, eventually replacing the British.[146]

The anticolonial foreign policy of the United States, and their efforts to ensure that Vietnam was under the jurisdiction of the American controlled Chinese theater operations, resulted in closer French and British relations.[147] Believing that threats to France's world status would soon be followed by similar threats to Britain's overseas possessions, the British planned to protect France's claim to Vietnam. According to Walter La Feber, British and American diplomats, "with their eyes on postwar advantages, devoted more time to maneuvering against one another than to fighting the Japanese."[148]

While the United States did provide some aid to the French resistance in Vietnam, they frequently obstructed French activities in Tonkin where the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was closely affiliated with the Vietminh.[149] In fact, U.S. air support for the French resistance in Vietnam was only granted in late March, 1945, and only after de Gaulle had become completely infuriated with American

foreign policy, claiming that the Americans were forcing the French into the Soviet orbit.[150]

Despite the attempts of Roosevelt to undermine the role of Britain and France in Vietnam, difficulties with China and the success of the island-hopping campaign in the Pacific permitted compromises in U.S. policy concerning French involvement in Vietnam. In the spring of 1944, the ability of the Chinese Nationalists to maintain their position became less certain. Reactionary forces within the Kuomintang threatened to split Chiang's government irrevocably. Chiang was becoming intransigent towards American military directives, even going so far as to issue laws discriminating against American investments. A spring campaign by the Japanese in 1944 endangered the Allied position in South China, but Chiang refused to heed U.S. demands for aid from the U.S. supplied Chinese divisions stationed in Yunnan. According to La Feber, Chiang feared that if the ten divisions in this area were moved, "the Japanese would invade Yunnan and Szechwan; the Chinese Communists would then trigger a rebellion and all China would be lost."[151]

With the success of the island-hopping campaign and the turn of events in China, Vietnam became peripheral to the Allied war effort. The difficulties confronting Nationalist China meant that its role in Indochina could only be assured through strong U.S. aid; and with the changing military focus, the Americans were unwilling to divert supplies to an unsteady ally for an invasion that was only peripheral to the principal Allied thrust in the Pacific. Thus, the U.S. tacitly agreed to let the British conduct minimal occupational duties in Vietnam. This created a rift between the forces involved in the reoccupation of

Vietnam following the surrender of Japan. In the north, the Nationalist Chinese prevented the French from regaining control of their colonial possession. In the south, the British were actively involved in fighting the Vietminh and reestablishing the French as the dominant military and political power in that region of Vietnam.[152] This was a crucial point, where transnational relations created time during which revolutionary forces could consolidate and expand their power base, before anti-revolutionary forces could unite and undermine the revolution.

C. Role of China: The Final Years

While China played an important role as a sanctuary for Vietnamese revolutionaries throughout the history of the revolutionary movement, its greatest impact on the revolution was during the period following the surrender of the Japanese, and later, in 1949, when the Communists defeated the Chinese Nationalists.[153] When Chinese troops arrived in Hanoi on September 9, 1945 they had no intention of seizing power. Rather, their primary concern was aiding members of the various revolutionary nationalist organizations supported by the Kuomintang, such as the VNQDD and the Dong Minh Hoi, acquire control of the government and prevent the restoration of French colonialism in Annam and Tonkin.[154] Far from altruistic, this policy was an attempt to secure China's southern borders because the Nationalist army was not sufficiently strong to control Vietnam directly.

With approximately 180,000 men stationed in Annam and Tonkin,
the Chinese were an enormous economic burden on an already destabilized
economy. In addition to pillaging the countryside, the Chinese fixed
the exchange rate between the piaster and the Chinese dollar, permitting
the Chinese to buy "a vil prix presque tout ce dont ils ont envie."[155]
They also occupied the most comfortable and luxurious buildings in the
cities, imposing their laws and regulations on the local
inhabitants.[156] Their support of the newly formed Bloc Nationaliste,
composed of the various nationalist organizations opposed to the
Vietminh, only exacerbated conflict and division within the ranks of the
provisional government.

Despite the problems created by the Nationalist Chinese, they
did permit the revolutionary movement to expand at an unprecedented
rate. This was primarily the result of Sino-French negotiations which
caused the Chinese to reduce support to the nationalist factions of the
revolutionary movement, taking a more neutral approach to the political
developments within the newly established Vietnamese government. This
permitted the Vietminh to consolidate its position before the return of
the French, forcing many of its nationalist rivals to retreat into China
after losing the active support of the Nationalist Chinese. While the
Nationalist Chinese favoured an independent Vietnam, they also wished to
use the occupation of Tonkin and Annam as a bargaining tool in their
negotiations with the French.

According to King C. Chen, the Chinese planned to use their
advantageous position to negotiate three issues: first, China wanted
complete control of the Yunnan section of the Indochina railway; second,

the legal discrimination, heavy taxation, and severe administrative restrictions on Chinese residing in Vietnam must be abolished; and third, France must renounce its extraterritorial concessions in China.[157] While Sino-French negotiations began as early as September, 1945, events in the early part of 1946 increased China's desire for a quick end to negotiations.

The first indication that China's stay in Vietnam would be of limited duration came with the rapid restoration of Cochinchina, Laos, and Cambodia to French rule. Second, the evacuation of French and British troops from Lebanon and Syria was being discussed in the Security Council in early February, 1946, and "hinted at the possibility that foreign troops would have to leave occupied soil one way or another."[158] Third, an attempt to negotiate a withdrawal of Soviet troops in Manchuria implied a similar action in Vietnam on the part of the Chinese Nationalists. Finally, and probably the most pressing problem confronting the Kuomintang government in Nanking, was the increasing seriousness of the conflict between Nationalist troops and Lin Piao's CCP-led United Democratic Army in Manchuria. The Kuomintang government was anxious to finalize its agreements with the French so that the bulk of its army in Vietnam could be transferred north.[159]

The French eventually met the demands of the Chinese, even to the extent of yielding special rights for China in Vietnam. This was the "first time since the West had gone into China that China had concluded an 'unequal treaty' with a foreign power."[160] This was the price France was willing to pay for the quick restoration of its colonial possessions. However, because of the "limited size of the

French force, some areas, such as Thanh-Hoa, were handed over directly to the Vietminh by the Chinese."[161]

From 1947-1949, the Nationalist Chinese were preoccupied with the civil war and contented with keeping the Vietminh separate from the Communist Chinese while "remaining aloof from the implications of the Franco-Vietnamese conflict."[162] At the same time, the Vietminh willingly provided assurances to the Kuomintang government that it sincerely wanted to establish friendly relations. They hoped to develop Sino-Vietnamese cooperation in an effort to "prevent the radical Yenan [nationalist Vietnamese] elements from slipping into the Vietnamese government in an attempt to split [Chinese and Vietnamese] activities, on one hand, and avoid the danger of losing southwestern China to French imperialism, on the other."[163] During this period the Vietminh limited their propaganda to nationalist appeals, never publicizing communist programs.[164]

Sino-Vietnamese relations created an important staging ground for Vietminh activity. A number of factors made it possible for the revolutionary movement to grow and flourish in the Viet Bac area despite pressure from Colonial forces and occasional attempts by the Chinese Nationalists to limit Vietminh and CCP activities along its border. By the end of 1948, three CCP units had entered the region, working along the border and cooperating closely with the Vietminh. The "noncooperative and defensive" activities of the French and the Chinese Nationalists created a relatively secure zone for guerrilla maneuvers.[165] The French did not "press hard enough toward the border" and the Chinese Nationalists did not cross the border in pursuit of

their enemy. The policy of the Chinese was partly the result of its poor relations with the French, who were wary of the potential threat of the CCP and unwilling to take the side of the Kuomintang government.[166] Consequently, both the CCP and the Vietminh operated on either side of the border, using this freedom to move bases to secure positions when threatened by the Chinese or the French.

By late 1948 and early 1949 the Chinese Nationalists were being routed by the CCP, losing 470,000 troops in Manchuria, and 550,000 troops in Hwai-Hai. The eventual defeat of the Nationalists in South China by Communist forces in December 1949, heralded a new era for the Vietminh and the revolutionary movement in Vietnam. Before the defeat of the Nationalist Chinese, the Vietminh could not advance beyond a strategic stalemate.[167] A Communist China meant an increase in military aid, and a safe regrouping area where the Vietminh could train and supply a large army. While the extent of this aid is still unknown, it did have considerable impact on the activities of the Vietminh, who began a major offensive one year after the consolidation of Communist China.[168] Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Vietminh requested military assistance and diplomatic recognition.[169] The subsequent trade agreements, signed during the early 1950's, exchanged Vietminh minerals, rice, and lumber for Chinese munitions, arms, military equipment, machine tools, and medicine. These supplies, in addition to Chinese advisers, permitted the Vietminh to transform its guerrilla and regional forces into a regular army. The increasing size of the Vietminh's strike capacity during this period soon presented a serious threat to the French-Vietnamese army.[170]

While CCP's support of the Vietminh was important, there was another international factor that influenced the direction of the revolution. On January 14, 1950, after secret meetings between the Vietminh and Peking, the representatives of the newly established People's Republic of China officially recognized the Vietminh government. Seventeen days later the Soviet Union also recognized the Vietminh government, followed a few days later by similar responses from North Korea and other Communist nations in eastern Europe. This was a major change in Soviet policy which had been consistent in its refusal of diplomatic support for the revolutionary movement in Vietnam. Prior to 1950, Stalin had focused Soviet attention on the influential role of the French Communist Party (FCP) in metropole politics.[171] The Soviets refused to recognize the Vietminh during this period because it hoped to avoid embarrassing the FCP, which was "compelled to pursue a strong nationalist line in order to outbid other French political parties...".[172] It was hoped that the FCP would eventually take power in Paris and align with the Soviet Union.

During this period the FCP supported the French presence in Vietnam, even supporting the French military campaign against the Vietminh in 1947. Although the FCP eventually condemned French colonialism, by that time the Vietminh felt that the support of the FCP was no longer as important as originally believed:

> In 1946, Maurice Thorez [leader of the FCP] had been the deputy premier in Paris, Chiang Kai-shek ruler of China (officially at least), Mao a rebel fighting an underground war. In 1950, Mao was in Peking, Thorez in opposition, Chiang in Formosa. All this gave an entirely new look to

the situation. Paris no longer held the key to
the Indochinese problem, nor was it the
fountainhead of `democracy'.[173]

Diplomatic recognition not only legitimized Chinese aid, it
also gave the Vietminh a moral boost and the incentive to launch a
"general mobilization" campaign in preparation for the final phase of
its war against the colonial regime. Prior to 1950, international
factors were unfavourable for the Vietminh. The Franco-Vietminh
conflict had not aroused pro-Vietnamese sentiments in the metropole and
the French Left had abstained from making Vietnam a central issue in
metropolitan politics.[174] Similarly, the British, Soviets, and the
United States had remained aloof, providing neither moral nor material
support for either side. However, China's recognition of the Vietminh
created an international furor.

The Vietminh's recognition caused the French to hurriedly
declare Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia nominally independent, attempting to
unite nationalist forces against the growing strength of the
revolutionary movement. The United States quickly moved from a position
of relative nonintervention to active interference in the Vietnamese
conflict. As part of its policy of active containment in Asia, the U.S.
began to aid the French war effort. It is estimated that U.S. aid to
France in 1951 averaged 7,200 tons per month as compared to an estimated
10 to 20 tons per month of Chinese aid being sent to the Vietminh. By
1953, U.S. aid reached 10,000 tons per month versus Chinese aid which
had risen to 500 to 600 tons per month.[175]

Despite the increased U.S. aid directed towards the French war
effort, the growing cost of French involvement in Vietnam was beginning

to have an effect on public opinion in the metropole. In 1952, it was announced that since 1945, war expenditures in Vietnam amounted to 1,600 billion francs (twice the amount of U.S. aid to France under the American Marshall Plan) and that French casualties, including dead, wounded, missing, and prisoners, totaled more than 90,000. In the end, the battle of Dien Bien Phu marked the point at which the French government could no longer justify its continued presence in Vietnam. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the factors that determined the conclusion of the Franco-Vietminh conflict. However, the growing opposition to the war in the metropole, and the realization that defeating the Vietminh militarily would cost more than the metropole was unwilling to pay, led to the decision to negotiate the final withdrawal of the French presence in Vietnam.

Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the Socio-historical approach only analyzes one dimension of the revolutionary process. But, this provides an explanation of the important role of transnational and world historical variables, structural transformations, and the extent to which these variables were crucial determinants influencing the development of the revolution movement and the emergence of a politico-military crisis exploitable by revolutionary organizations. The transnational and world-historical context of socio-economic developments and changing colonial structures ensured an increase in social stratification and exacerbated class cleavages in

Vietnamese society. The structural framework of colonial Vietnam engendered and maintained conflictual relationships between various sectors of society and between classes and the state. The status quo was maintained, not on the basis of market relations or pluralistic competition, but on the basis of coercive power exercised by the state and disproportionately influenced by a small sector of Vietnamese and colonial society. The inherent conflict within this structural framework, and the fluidity of the lower stratum of the indigenous population resulting from particular socio-economic developments, created an environment where revolutionary organizations could find active support for the overthrow of the colonial regime and the restructuring of society.

The second focus of the Socio-historical approach was the transnational and world historical factors contributing to the emergence of the revolutionary situation. Without the initial defeat of the French by Japanese forces in March 1945 and the subsequent surrender of the Japanese in August 1945, it is unlikely that the Vietminh would have had the capacity to challenge either the French or the Japanese. Similarly, the victory of the Communist Chinese aided the Vietminh to break its military deadlock with colonial forces and create a serious military threat to the colonial regime. This eventually led to diminished support for the colonial war effort from the metropole, and a gradual willingness on the part of French officials to relinquish their control of Vietnam.

NOTES

[1] The reference to cultural framework is an attempt to differentiate between the concept of ideology as described in Chapter One and a less specific notion that focuses on general belief systems rather than cognitive frameworks specifically applied to evaluation, policy formulation, and the attainment of relatively specific objectives. In other words, culture in this context includes beliefs that do not normally pertain to political or economic spheres.

[2] The use of ideology in this chapter only differs from that of the following chapter in its more general perspective. Ideology in the Socio-historical model examines ideas in the context of society at large, focusing on general conceptual changes rather than specific ideologies involving particular group activities.

[3] For a discussion of the general role of conceptual changes in the revolutionary process see David G. Marr, "Introduction" in Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981). Also, Alexander Woodside in "The Development of Social Organ-izations in Vietnamese Cities in the Late Colonial Period", Pacific Affairs, Vol. XLIV, No. 1, (Spring 1971), pp. 39-64, provides an excellent discussion on the effects of compromises between anachronistic conceptual ideals and modern organizational structures, and modern conceptual frameworks and anachronistic organizational principles.

[4] Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 17.

[5] Ibid., p. 25.

[6] Ibid., p. 23.

[7] The leading proponent of the revolutionary movement, the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP), demonstrated remarkable ingenuity in its adaptation of Marxist-Leninist organizational methods to the demands of a heterogeneous and predominantly rural Asian society; the alteration of Maoist military strategy to fit the geopolitical conditions of Vietnam; and the creative application of modern technology with its limited resources.

[8] Describing Skocpol's orientation as institutional in its approach to social structures is simply a method of differentiating her approach from models that place greater emphasis on belief systems or normative/cultural frameworks in their analysis of social organization.

[9] The concept of ideology is discussed in Chapter One. Central to this concept is the notion that ideology provides the individual or

group with a specific cognitive orientation towards action within a perceived set of circumstances. While the following chapter examines the role of specific ideologies in group formation and mobilization, this chapter limits its discussion of ideology to the broader historical context of general ideas.

[10] See Chapter Two for the historical overview of the French conquest of Vietnam.

[11] Buttinger, Vietnam: A Political History, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pub., 1968), p. 84. Cf. Martin J. Murray, The Development of Capitalism in Colonial Indochina (1870-1940), (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 54f. and Stephen H. Roberts, The History of French Colonial Policy 1870-1925, org. 1929, (rpt. ed., Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1963), p. 423.

[12] Roberts, p. 423.

[13] Ibid., p. 424.

[14] According to Martin J. Murray, this was an attempt by French merchant houses to gain access and subsequent control over the Yangtze valley, in particular, the rich Szechwan Basin. Murray, pp. 55f..

[15] Ibid., p. 55.

[16] By 1900 it was firmly established that South China was not as rich as had been predicted. The southern Chinese provinces were relatively poor and even the more prosperous regions such as the Szechwan valley turned to the east along the Yangtse or followed the British controlled West River rather than the more treacherous and unpredictable Red River. Roberts, pp. 431f..

[17] Administrative costs were a constant and escalating problem even in Annam and Tonkin which were ruled indirectly. Ibid., p. 481. For example, Buttinger states that the office of the Lieutenant Governor of Cochinchina absorbed 720,000 francs while the "entire Ministry of Colonies in Paris was run at a cost of 830,000 francs."; and, where the "Viceroy of India governed 320 million Hindus with 4,800 European employees; the Governor of French Indochina needed 5,000 French officials to rule a native population of 30 million." Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, (New York: Frederick Praeger, Pubs., 1967), p. 104.

[18] In Tonkin, the acute shortage of French administrators necessitated the use of mandarins and traditional bureaucratic forms of administration. The conquest of Tonkin was less direct and implementation of a protectorate created less resistance from the governing elite than was the case in Cochinchina. Later, the French were able to eliminate the key positions held by Tonkinese mandarins and reduced the decision-making power of other administrative positions held

by the Vietnamese. Under the provisions of the protectorate the authority of the Emperor was delegated to an Imperial High Commissioner (Kinh-luoc) who was "empowered to appoint officials and to take all decisions concerning the administration of Tonkin without reference to the court." Nguyen The Anh, "The Vietnamese Monarchy under French Colonial Rule 1884-1945", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 19, no. 1, 1985, p. 148. However, these powers were illusionary in that Mandarins could be dismissed at will by French officials. In 1897, even the pretense of Vietnamese authority was destroyed when the prerogative of the Kinh-luoc were officially combined in the person of the French résident supérieur.

[19] This would diminish the colony's reliance on Metropole credits which were frequently affected by vacillations in Metropolitan political sentiment over the expense of colonial endeavors.

[20] Murray, pp. 124ff..

[21] During World War I many Vietnamese were forcibly conscripted into miltary and labour pools which were actively used in the European war effort. This was often the cause of unrest in regions where local inhabitants resisted the recruiting efforts of colonial officials. Devillers estimates that 100,000 Vietnamese were employed as labourers or military personnel between 1914-18. Philippe Devillers, Histoire du Vietnam de 1940 à 1952, 3rd ed., (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952), p. 39.

[22] Some French officials attempted to use the colonies such as Indochina as bargaining tools during peace negotiations with Germany. This was primarily an attempt to to gain European concessions such as the return of Alsace and Lorraine.

[23] The policy of mise en valeur involved a dual mandate, the development of the colony's natural riches and the riches inherent in indigenous society. As one of the principal proponents of the new doctrine, Albert Sarrault argued that the goal of colonial policy was to develop the social as well as the material characteristics of France's colonies. "French colonial policy sees in our protégés, whatever the colour of their skin and however retarded their evolution, men and not an anonymous servile mass, - souls and neither slave-prisoners nor `fiscal sponges'." Cited in Roberts, p. 72.

[24] According to Murray,

> The course of events immediately follow-ing World War I was precipitous for expanded metropolitan trade and invest-ments in Indochina. The franc's dwind-ling purchasing power undermined its stability in relation to the piaster. Large-scale metropolitan concessionary companies took an active interest in investment possibilities in Indochina. (Murray, p. 124).

[25] Government support following World War I never reached the same magnitude as pre-war attempts by the colonial administration to develop "long-term and relatively high-risk infrastructure ventures that private enterprise was unwilling or unable to undertake alone." Ibid., p. 128. Daniel Hemery states that in 1913, "les dépenses d'emprunt représentent un total de 529 millions, en 1914 l'annuité de la dette indochinoise dépasse 18 millions de francs et absorbe 22,7% des dépenses du gouvernement général." "L'Indochine de la Conquête à la Colonisation (1885-1914)", ed. Jean Ganiage, L'Expansion coloniale de la France sous la Troisième République (1871-1914), (Paris: Payot, 1968). Murray adds:

> After World War I, once expansion got underway, capital accumulation tended to be self supporting. Colonial profits were high and sufficient flows of money were available to finance fresh investments on the requisite scale. (Murray, p. 128).

Rather than remain involved in subsidizing low interest loans and public works projects, the post war administration began to utilize various administrative methods to channel capital investment in selected areas and mediate between the various industries competing for limited indigenous labour resources. This was accomplished while simultaneously attempting to mobilize and increase the existing labour force and was apparent, for example, in colonial policy regarding labour recruitment for southern plantations in the over populated deltas of Tonkin and Annam.

[26] David G. Marr, Vietnamese Tradition on Trial,1920-1945, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 70f.

[27] Murray, pp. 149ff.

[28] Denis J. Duncanson, Government and Revolution in Vietnam, (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 116.

[29] Ibid., p. 131.

[30] Ho Chi Minh, "The Path Which Led Me to Leninism", in On Revolution Selected Writings, 1920-66, ed. Bernard B. Fall, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1967), pp. 5-7.

[31] Paul Isoart, Le Phénomène National Vietnamien, (Paris: R. Pichon and R. Durand-Auzias, 1961), p.245.

[32] Ibid., p. 251.

[33] Ibid., p. 274ff. Cf. Alexander B. Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), pp. 82ff.

[34] Ibid., p. 30. According to Woodside, the Eastern thought prevalent in Vietnam was deficient in its analytical and structural qualities. The popular decline in logic and logical methods in Confucianism meant that the Vietnamese intelligentsia employing the techniques of Chinese scholarship had greater difficulty making theoretical and empirical breakthroughs: "... Chinese thought was relatively rich in imagination and relatively poor in experimentation, relatively rich in analogy building but relatively poor in deductive reasoning." Ibid., p. 73.

[35] Ibid., p. 31.

[36] Ibid., p. 31.

[37] Alexander B. Woodside, "Conceptions of Change and of Human Responsibility for Change in Late Traditional Vietnam", Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays on Southeast Asian Thought, eds. David K. Wyatt and Alexander Woodside, Monograph Series No. 24, (Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1982), pp. 125f..

[38] According to Woodside,

> Le Qui Don, like other Vietnamese Confucian philosophers, subscribed to a belief in chinh giao ("government" merged with "teaching"). According to this belief, at some ultimate level within this world political power, and the power of moral-spiritual-social indoctrination and determination, must always be fused together. Because there was no assumption of any dissociation between existing forms of political power and the spirit of history or of religious truth, there was little expectation that the latter could ever fundamentally contradict the former by giving birth to a totally new type of polity, like a theocracy or a republic instead of a pedagogical monarchy. [emphasis in original] (Ibid., p. 125).

[39] Ibid., p. 134.

[40] "Speech by comrade Van (Vo Nguyen Giap) at the ceremony founding the Viet-Nam Liberation Armed Propaganda Brigade, December 22, 1944", Vietnam: The Definitive Documentation of Human Decisions, Vol I., ed. Gareth Porter, (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc., Pubs., 1979), p. 15.

[41] Milton Osborne, "Vietnamese Perception of the Identity of the State", Australian Outlook, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1969, pp. 10ff.

[42] Cf. Stephen B. Young, "Vietnamese Marxism: Transition in Elite Ideology", Asian Survey, Vol. XIX, No. 8, (August 1979), passim. Young argues that the neo-Confucianism had enough similarities with Marxism so

as to facilitate an easy transition for the Vietnamese intelligentsia. However, this does not explain why so many Vietnamese elite were drawn to other political ideologies, particularly in the early years of the revolutionary movement.

[43] See Theda Skocpol, "Review Article: What Makes Peasants Revolutionary?", Comparative Politics, (April 1982), p. 372.

[44] Ibid., p. 372.

[45] Skocpol understands states as "potentially autonomous organizations located at the interface of class structures and international situations...". Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 33.

[46] It should be noted that in the context of the Socio-historical approach, the analysis of political and socio-economic developments extends beyond domestic factors to include a discussion of the influence of transnational and world historical variables.

[47] Devillers divides colonial society into three principal groups:

> ...les fonctionnaires, les militaires et les <colons>
> (ce nom générique désignant, d'une manière d'ailleurs
> forte imparfaite, tous ceux qui tirent leurs revenus de
> l'economie (Colons, commerçants, industriels, fondes
> de pouvoir, employes de commerce, etc....) (Devillers,
> p. 41).

While the military was often involved in strategic policy conflicts, it was colons and fonctionnaires that were involved in maintaining a particular class interest that was frequently opposed to Vietnamese and metropolitan interests. This chapter focuses on relationships between political groups in France (Metropole) and Vietnam; colonial and traditional political and social institutions; and, various sectors of the the fragmented political elite, (ie. Vietnamese elites, colonial civil servants (fonctionnaires), French colonial business interests (colons), and members of the elite representing the political and economic interests of the Metropole.

[48] Administrative costs were a constant and escalating problem even in Annam and Tonkin which were ruled indirectly. According to Roberts, in 1911, "Annam voted 85 per cent. of its budget for officials, ten per cent. for public works, and yet was supposed to be only indirectly administered!". Roberts, p. 481. After a short period of economic prosperity under the Doumer administration in the late 1890's, French Indochina began to accrue an enormous debt because of increasing administrative costs and interest on loans used to develop transportation systems and public works. These investments were not resulting in economic returns and after the initial economic euphoria

under Doumer's development projects the administration was having to bear the burden of costly and unproductive investments.

[49] According to Jeffery Paige,in Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World, (New York: The Free Press, 1975), p. 281,

> ...the French colonial administration in Cochinchina adopted the narrow fiscal objective of balancing the colonial budget, paying the everexpanding French administrative cadre, and if possible creating a profitable economy that would justify the costs of conquest and administration.

[50] Pham Cao Duong, Vietnamese Peasants Under French Domination 1861-1945, Center for Southeast Asia Studies, University of California, Berkeley, Ca., (New York: University Press of America, 1985), p. 96. Despite the fact that Indochina was economically more important than any other French colony, the primary concern of the Metropole was with its African possessions. This continued until after the first World War and was probably the result of world interest in the potential wealth of Africa and the political struggle amongst world powers for African colonial possessions. See Christopher M. Andrew and A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Climax of French Imperial Expansion 1914-1924, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981), pp. 144ff..

[51] See Jean Chesneaux, "Stages in the Development of the Vietnam National Movement 1862-1940", Past and Present, No. 7, (April 1955), p. 64 and Murray, p. 427. It should be noted that these figures do not include additional revenues generated through colonial indirect taxation in the form of salt, opium, and alcohol monopolies. Ngo Vinh Long in Before the Revolution: The Vietnamese Peasants under the French, (Cambridge, Mt.: The MIT Press, 1973), p. 71, estimates that alcohol and salt monopolies accounted for seventy percent of the colonial government's operating revenue.

[52] This was possible in Cochinchina after the formal cession of the Cochinchinese provinces to France and sufficient time was given for peasants to recover after the devastation of war. In Tonkin and Annam, modifications in taxation only occurred after the protectorate treaties were enacted and the French were able to establish their control over the indigenous administration. See Pham Cao Duong, Vietnamese Peasants Under French Domination 1861-1945, Monograph Series No. 24, Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California, (Berkeley, California, NY: University Press of America, 1985), p. 94.

The traditional system of taxation was primarily limited to two forms of direct taxes, the thue dinh (registered member or head tax) and the thue dien (property tax). Both taxes could be paid in kind or in money and applied only to those individuals who were listed on the village rolls and cadastral registers. The amount to be collected was assessed

according to these village lists and then given to the village itself to
determine each villagers share of the total cost. However, because of
the importance of the village lists in the general tax assessment, each
village jealously guarded its right to influence the composition of
citizen rolls and land registers. According to Pham Cao Duong,

> Despite the minutely detailed rules enacted by the
> legislator, taxes were not determined and levied
> directly by the mandarins. They were, however, debated
> between the village and the representative of the
> Crown; the former seeking to safeguard the interests
> of the commune while the latter put forth efforts to
> protect or make gains for the imperial treasury. Taxes
> were thus more of a rent, a tribute paid by the
> commune to the sovereign, than a share by each indi-
> vidual in the general expenses of the State. (Ibid.,
> p. 94).

Pham Cao Duong also notes that this system was extremely advantageous
for the village. He estimates that in 1884 the total number of
registered villagers in Annam and Tonkin "comprised only one-third of
the valid and taxable population." Ibid.. Thus, the "tax load for each
taxpayer that year was therefore shared by three inhabitants." Ibid..

[53] Taking into account that the head tax is only one of many, Ngo
Vinh Long estimates that during the period of 1934-1937, the head tax
consisted of 20 percent of a poor or middle peasant's net income in
Annam or Tonkin. Conversely, a more prosperous sharecropper in
Cochinchina could be expected to pay 10 percent of his net income as his
share of the head tax. Ngo Vinh Long, pp. 63-64. Cf. James Scott, The
Moral Economy of the Peasant, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976),
p. 108.

[54] The opium and kitchen fire tax were primarily for the ethnic
tribes with transitory agriculture patterns. See Mai Elliot,
"Translator's Introduction", in Reminiscences on the Army for National
Salvation (Memoir of General Chu Van Tan), Trans. Mai Elliot, (Ithica,
NY: Data Paper NO. 97 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1974),
p. 12.

[55] Cf. Ngo Vinh Long, p. 214 and Scott, Moral Economy, p. 110

[56] See ibid., p. 106f.

[57] Traditionally, the male population was divided into a number
of categories: 1) robust adults between twenty and fifty-five years of
age, were subject to all taxes and services; 2) male citizens between
fifty-five to sixty years of age, the handicapped, and young males
between eighteen and twenty years were required to pay half of the fixed
rate and were exempt from corvee and military service; and 3) mandarins,
the sons of mandarins, those passing government exams, junior civil

servants, soldiers, public workers, and the seriously handicapped were completely exempt from all taxes and services. Pham Cao Duong, p. 97.

[58] Ibid., p. 99.

[59] Ngo Vinh Long, p. 63.

[60] Pham Cao Duong, p. 97.

[61] The tax card was initially an attempt by colonial officials to enforce a dual system of taxes for registered and unregistered villagers. It was thought that this would force villages to maintain accurate records on taxable villagers and ensure that unregistered villagers payed the lesser head tax. The result was that notables continued collecting taxes equally while using the issuance of tax cards as a means of enforcing the compliance of unregistered villagers, forcing them to pay an inflated tax assessment. This subsidized the higher tax required of registered villagers. It should be noted that this reflected the particular political and economic power of the village elite under French rule and the inability of colonial officials to protect the poor and landless peasants who constituted the unregistered category.

[62] Popkin notes that in Tonkin, population increases and general poverty forced many peasants to work a part of every year in other villages. Consequently, an increasing number of landless and poor peasants were forced to comply with the demands of the notables or risk being arrested for not having a tax card. Samuel L. Popkin, "Corporatism and Colonialism", Comparative Politics, April 1976, p. 443.

[63] Pham Cao Duong, p. 101.

[64] In 1943 compulsory labour was restored. See Murray, p. 89f.

[65] Cf. ibid., p. 88.

[66] Elliot, p. 13. Cf. Murray, pp. 85ff. and Pham Cao Duong, p. 102.

[67] Elliot, p. 13.

[68] Under the traditional monarchy, the consumption of opium was discouraged. However, colonial monopolies resulted in increase opium sales and the use of opium reached unprecedented levels. In 1929, 14 million piasters were generated by the opium monopoly. Despite price increases, intended to reduce consumption, revenues in opium sales surpassed 24 million piasters in 1942. Pham Cao Duong, p. 114. The Vietnamese joked that the signs on stores bearing the letters R.O. (Regie Opium), signifying that the establishment was registered to sell products containing opium, were flying the "national flag of the Republic of Opium addicts." Truong Chinh and Vo Nguyen Giap, The

Peasant Question (1937-1938), tran. Christine Pelzer White, (Ithica, NY: Data Paper No. 94 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1974), p. 55. Hereafter cited as Chinh and Giap.

[69] The salt monopoly permitted the State to control an important part of the Vietnamese diet. Regulating salt production and sales permitted colonial officials to charge consumers five to ten times the price paid to producers. Chinh and Giap, p. 56. The exorbitant price of salt under these conditions limited the availability and affordability of fish sauce which was a principal food staple in Vietnamese diets. This also affected the fishing industry which used fish sauce to preserve the daily catch.

[70] Pham Cao Duong, p. 103, Cf. Ngo Vinh Long, p. 71 and Hemery, "L'Indochine de la Conquête à la colonisation", p. 380.

[71] Pham Cao Duong, p. 109. See also Chinh and Giap, p. 61.

[72] Ngo Vinh Long states that peasants paying in kind were required to supply a quantity of a particular good (generally rice) with a market price that was far in excess of the tax being levied. Ngo Vinh Long, p. 64. According to Pierre Brocheux in "Les communistes et les paysans dans la révolution vietnamienne", ed. Pierre Brocheux, Histoire de l'Asie du Sud-Est, (Lille: Presse Universitaire de Lille, 1981), p. 249, the necessity of paying taxes had unintentional side effects that increased the financial burden of the peasantry:

> Des particularités venaient accentuer la hantise des échéances fiscales, par exemple en Annam (le centre du Vietnam) les paysans devaient acheter des piastres indochinoises avec les sapèques (monnaie de zinc) qu'ils utilisaient dans les transactions quotidiennes; à chaque terme de perception fiscale, le taux de la piastre augmentait, donnant lieu à une spéculation périodique doublée parfois d'une spéculation conjoncturelle. (Ibid.).

[73] Scott, Moral Economy, p. 85.

[74] Ibid., p. 86.

[75] According to Murray, rice cultivation in the MeKong delta declined from 2,225,000 hectares in 1930 to 1,961,000 hectares during the 1932-1933 season, which meant that peasants would find it difficult to pay their personal taxes through their agricultural produce. Murray, p. 458.

[76] According to Samuel Popkin in "Corporatism and Colonialism",
pp. 443-444:

> If a poor peasant had no possible way of meeting his
> taxes, his `share' was shifted to another member of
> his family. If no member of the family could pay, the
> notables did not ask a larger contribution from the
> rich. Instead, first the delinquent taxpayer's
> possessions were auctioned off, then his family's
> posses-sions. If these measures failed, the peasant or
> one of his children would become enslaved to anyone
> willing to pay his tax. If there were so many poor
> that the village simply could not squeeze enough money
> out of them by any means, then the same forms of
> brutal redistribution would be carried out by the
> mandarins. The mandarin would take possessions from
> the rich by force, and auction them off; the rich
> would subsequently extract in any way they could, what
> they considered the value of their lost possessions
> from the poor.

[77] Murray argues,

> By 1930, the total area of land transferred to French
> citizens via piecemeal expropriation was approximately
> 104,000 hectares in Tonkin, 168,400 hectares in Annam,
> and a truly spectacular 606,500 hectares in
> Cochinchina. These figures changed very little from
> this date until the end of the colonial regime.
> (Murray, p. 66).

[78] See ibid., p. 58.

[79] Ibid., p. 57.

[80] Murray, p. 61.

[81] In Annam and Tonkin, village notables were often politically
dependent on indigenous mandarins who acted as mediators between French
colonial officials and the local inhabitants. Unable to voice grievances
or seek redress from central authorities, except through the appointed
mandarin, notables were at a disadvantage during tax assessments. From
this advantageous position, mandarins were able to bargain effectively
over the completeness of village population rolls and land registers.
The vulnerable position of the notables promoted collusion between
mandarins wishing to invest in village property and notables wanting to
reduce the tax assessment. Using notables as fronts, mandarins acquired
land without evoking serious reprisals from the villagers whose labour
was required if the property was to remain productive; for in this
region, villagers were less open towards outside encroachment and had

developed numerous methods of sabotaging the property of outside
investors or absentee landlords.

[82] Ngo Vinh Long, p. 15.

[83] Cf.ibid., p. 16.

[84] For a more complete description of the distribution of
communal lands and the ensuing conflicts between different classes
within the village see Chinh and Giap, pp. 77-84.

[85] Roy Jumper and Nguyen Thi Hue, Notes on the Political and
Administrative History of Viet Nam 1802-1962, Michigan State University
Viet Nam Advisory Group, June 1962, p. 88.

[86] There are numerous accounts where village notables and rich
peasants, acting as informants, were able to extort numerous demands
from the peasantry and enhance their own power vis a vis the rest of the
village. See Ngo Vinh Long, passim.

[87] Ibid., pp. 69f..

[88] See Murray, p. 427.

[89] Ibid., p. 427.

[90] The Mandarin class was divided in three categories: superior,
secondary, and subordinate. It was the superior class that was the most
seriously affected by the colonial system. The French were forced to
use the other classes in order to implement any colonial policies. For
further discussion on the restructuring of the mandarin class see Roy
Jumper and Nguyen Thi Hue, pp. 96ff..

[91] See Marr, Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945, p. 104.

[92] Roy Jumper and Nguyen Thi Hue, p. 66.

[93] Paige, p. 279. Cf. Murray, p. 50.

[94] See Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, pp.
85ff..

[95] Cited in ibid., p. 109.

[96] Sarrault's program in 1911, as the new Governor General of
Indochina, was to institute reforms that would restructure power
relations between federal and regional governments in Indochina. The
main losers in Sarrault's reforms were the Governor and Deputy of
Cochinchina. In order to counteract the opposition in the colon
community, Sarrault authorized indigenous landowners and businessmen to
establish their own newspaper to act as a platform for their economic

and political interests which were opposed to the French domination of the Colonial Council of Cochinchina. See Hue-Tam Ho Tai, "The Politics of Compromise: The Constitu-tionalist Party and the Electoral Reforms of 1922 in French Cochinchina", Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1984, pp. 378f..

97 Murray, p. 192.

98 Devillers, p. 90ff.

99 Pierre Brocheux, "L'Occasion Favorable 1940-1945: Les forces politiques vietnamiennes pendant la seconde querre mondiale", L'Indochine Française, 1940-1945, ed. Paul Isoart, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982), p. 139. (Hereafter cited as "L'Occasion Favorable") Cf. Butt. Vol I, p. 109.

100 Christine Pelzer White, "The Vietnamese Revolutionary Alliance: Intellectuals, Workers, and Peasants", Peasant Rebellion and Communist Revolution in Asia, ed J.W. Lewis, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 79.

101 Citing Charles Robequain, Isoart in Le Phénomène Vietnamien, pp. 268-269, argues:

> L'ouvrier vietnamien répugnait à se détacher complétement de la terre du village natal "ou le rappelaient, à certaines dates, les grands travaux de la rizière, les fêtes collectives et les commémorations familiales: les ceremonies du Tet en particulier, lui étaient un motif puissant pour se retremper dans son milieu d'origine et resserrer, par l'accomplissement des rites, les liens ancéstraux".

102 Ibid., p. 269. It should be noted that of that percentage, the vast majority of labourers required little specialization or training.

103 Ibid., p. 269.

104 Ibid., p. 269.

105 Ibid., pp. 272f..

106 This was particularly true of the Constitutionalist party and its compromises on electoral issues in the 1920's. See Hue-Tam Ho Tai, pp. 371-391.

107 The world-historical developments influenced ideological developments within Vietnam, providing intellectuals and business elites with a vision of what Vietnam could become and how this could be accomplished.

[108] Dick Wilson., When Tigers Fight: The Story of the Sino-Japanese War 1937-45, (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1982), pp. 160, 163. Cf. Devillers, p. 74.

[109] Masaya Shiraishi, "La Présence Japonaise en Indochine (1940-1945), L'Indochine Française 1940-1945, ed. Paul Isoart, (Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1982), p. 215.

[110] For details on the Sino-Japanese war see Wilson, Chapter 9.

[111] Cf. Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, p. 235; Masaya Shiraishi, pp. 217-218; and Devillers, p. 77.

[112] By July 1941 Japanese troop were stationed in south Vietnam.

[113] See John McAlister, Jr., Vietnam: The Origins of Revolution, (New York: Alfred A. Knopt, Pub., 1969), p. 119. Cf. Kiyoko Kurusu Nitz, "Independence Without Nationalists? The Japanese and Vietnamese Nationalism during the Japanese Period, 1940-45", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol 15, No. 1, (March 1984), p. 112.

[114] Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, p. 237.

[115] For discussion see Kiyoko Kurusu Nitz, passim. Cf. Masaya Shiraishi, p. 218.

[116] Masaya Shiraishi, p. 217.

[117] See Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, p. 238. Cf. Brocheux "L'Occasion Favorable", p. 141 and Masaya Shiraishi, p. 218.

[118] See Ralph B. Smith, "The Japanese Period in Indochina and the Coup of 9 March 1945", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. IX, No. 2, (Sept. 1978), pp. 269f..

[119] Masaya Shiraishi, p. 217.

[120] Elliot, pp. 18ff. Cf. William J. Duiker's emphasis on the lack of experience and organizational skills within the Communist forces during this period and its affect on their activities in The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 61f..

[121] The areas where the ICP had a strong base of support were: Gia Dinh, Cholon, Mytho, Vinh-Long, Travinh, Cantho, Soctrang, Tanan, Bentre. These were the most heavily populated and the riches regions in the Mekong delta. It was in these areas that guerrilla activity reached its zenith. The rebellion was slower to begin in the provinces of Long xuyen, Baclieu, and Rachgiah. Brocheux, "L'Occasion Favorable", p. 137.

122 Duiker, The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, p. 62. Cf. Brocheux, "L'Occasion Favorable" p. 142.

123 Ibid., p. 143.

124 Ibid., p. 143.

125 See Kiyoko Kurusu Nitz, p. 115. Cf. Brocheux "L'Occasion Favorable", p. 145.

126 Ibid., p. 116.

127 Much of the opinion concerning Japanese aid to the nationalist movement is based on circumstantial evidence and reported complaints by the colonial administration concerning Japanese meddling in domestic affairs.

128 The successful disruption of nationalist activities by the colonial administration proved to be an important setback for the nationalist revolutionary movement from which they never fully recovered. The unwillingness of Japanese officials to extend greater protection to the nationalists can be explained in part by the fact that official policy from Japan supported the maintenance of the French status quo despite the commitment of various Japanese officials to the Vietnamese nationalist movement.

129 Smith, "The Japanese Period in Indochina and the Coup of 9 March 1945", pp. 286, 301. Smith argues that the March coup completely transformed general Vietnamese attitudes concerning French authority and strength:

> Not merely were the French removed from positions in which they had the initiative against any opposition movement; they also lost their power over the minds of ordinary Vietnamese and this made possible the growth of a new spirit in the country at large. (Ibid., p. 287).

130 See "Instructions of the Standing Bureau of the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party (March 12, 1945)", Vietnam: The Definitive Documentation of Human Decisions, Vol. 1, ed. Gareth Porter, (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc. Pubs., 1979), pp. 17-22.

131 See Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled, Vol. I, pp. 270f.

132 Marr, "Vietnam: Harnessing the Wirlwind", Asia -- The Winning of Independence, ed. Robin Jeffery, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 192.

133 Ibid., p. 192.

134 According to Smith, the "Japanese need for stability and continuity, which had been given so much emphasis by the army, prevailed over the more idealistic notions of those who wanted to encourage Vietnamese nationalism." Smith, "The Japanese Period in Indochina and the Coup of 9 March 1945", p. 286.

135 At this time the Soviet Union had already agreed at the Yalta conference to enter the war against Japan. But, the Japanese were unaware of this secret agreement

136 See ibid., pp. 282ff..

137 For a discussion of the conflicts among Japanese officials over the choice between Bao Dai and Cuong De see Kiyoko Kurusu Nitz, pp. 128ff., passim.

138 Cf. Huynh Kim Khanh, "The Vietnamese August Revolution Reinterpreted", Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 30, No. 4, (Aug. 1971), pp. 766ff. and Ralph B. Smith, "The Japanese Period in Indochina and the Coup of 9 March 1945", pp. 288ff..

139 Masaya Shiraishi, pp. 238f.. For a good discussion of the various policies implemented by the Kim government see Smith, "The Japanese in Indochina and the Coup of March 1945", pp. 290f..

140 Devillers, p. 132.

141 Kiyoko Kurusu Nitz, p. 130.

142 Devillers, pp. 141f..

143 The Japanese were not enthusiastic about aiding the British maintain order in Cochinchina. The British complained that the Japanese troops were becoming increasingly disorderly, disobeying British orders, letting Vietminh prisoners escape, sharing accommodations with Vietnamese, and openly cooperating with the local inhabitants. Peter M. Dunn, The First Vietnam War, (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1985), pp. 337f..

144 See Walter La Feber, "Roosevelt, Churchill and Indochina: 1942-45", American Historical Review, Vol. 80, 1975, pp. 1277-1299.

145 Ibid., p. 1278.

146 According to the British, Roosevelt was attempting to,

> develop a China strong enough to police Asia but weak enough to be dependent upon the United States. The president could then use China to help him stabilize Asia and open it to what the Atlantic Charter called "access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world." (Ibid., pp. 1280-1281).

[147] In 1942, Indochina and Thailand were brought within the Chinese theater, which was commanded by Chiang Kai-shek and U.S. General Stilwell, through U.S. pressure. This meant that British troops were subordinate to the Sino-American command the moment they entered Vietnam, and Free French forces could not enter the sphere without Chiang's permission and were under his "supreme command". Ibid., p. 1282.

[148] Ibid., p. 1282.

[149] Dunn, pp. 41, 51, 105. According to Dunn, the OSS did supply the French resistance in Indochina with arms, but to a lesser extent than the Vietminh. Documents submitted to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations reveal that the OSS was actively involved in the establishment of a Air Ground Aid Service (AGAS) with the Vietminh during the latter part of the war. Also, the OSS supplied various Vietminh groups with medical aid, a small supply of rifles, mortars, machine guns, grenades, bazookas, and field training. Members of the OSS worked directly with the Vietminh during the last months of the war. See US Government Printing Office, The United States and Vietnam: 1944-1947, Staff Study No. 2 for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 1972, pp. 3f. and Causes, Origins, and Lessons of the Vietnam War, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 92nd Congress 2nd Session, May 9,10, and 11, 1972, pp. 241ff. (Documents relating to OSS activities in French Indochina). Dunn argues throughout his book that OSS affiliation with the Vietminh was used by the ICP to demonstrate to the local people that the United States was backing the Vietminh. This gave the Vietminh a degree of credibility among the populace that it would not have ordinarily attained. However, there is not enough evidence supporting the claim that the OSS contributed significantly to the legitimacy of the Vietminh. See Dunn, passim..

[150] La Feber, p. 1293.

[151] Ibid., p. 1287.

[152] The role of the British was a crucial factor in the restoration of French power in Cochinchina. Without the support and active participation of British troops under the command of General Gracey, who was sympathetic to French colonial demands, it is very unlikely that the Free French forces would have been capable of restoring French control in the region. While the French wanted the British to leave Vietnam as quickly as possible, there was a long period where the Vietminh, despite being weaker in the south, could have effectively mobilized a powerful counterattack against French forces. According to Dunn, the French required British troops to protect vital installations such as the shipping yards and the Saigon power plant. Also, the French were confronted with a serious labour shortage during the early rebuilding phase because many Vietnamese refused to work for the French. Dunn, p. 346.

[153] China also played a significant role in the development of the various revolutionary organizations and the group conflict that prevailed prior to and following the Vietminh's aquisition of power in August 1945. However, this is discussed in the following chapter.

[154] Devillers, p. 193. For a more complete discussion of the economic effects of the Chinese occupation see King C. Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 132ff..

[155] Devillers, p. 191.

[156] Ibid., pp. 191f..

[157] Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 140.

[158] Ibid., p. 141.

[159] Ibid., p. 141.

[160] Ibid., pp. 142-143.

[161] Ibid., p. 145.

[162] Ibid., p. 171.

[163] Cited in ibid., p. 172.

[164] The Chinese Nationalists held a Vietminh delegation hostage to ensure that Ho Chi Minh would expel Chinese Communists working among the Vietminh. However, while Ho gave every indication of severing ties with the Chinese Communists working in the area, there is some evidence suggesting that Ho's attempts were only superficial gestures seeking to ease the anxiety of the Kuomintang. Cf. ibid., p. 193.

[165] Ibid., pp. 192f..

[166] Cf. Ibid., pp. 199, 208f.. The appearance of neutrality became even more important to colonial officials who feared a CCP sponsored invasion when 30,000 Nationalist troops retreated into north eastern Vietnam and 50,000 CCP troops remained stationed at the Sino-Vietnamese border.

[167] See Robert F. Turner, Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development, (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1975), pp. 81ff..

[168] Cf. Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, pp. 269ff.; Turner, p. 82; and Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina, Stanford: (Stanford University Press, 1954), pp. 252f.. Hammer argues that while Chinese military aid was an important factor in the growing strength of the Vietminh, it was not decisive. Accordingly, the main objective of

Chinese policy "seemed to be not so much to enable the Vietminh to win a military victory as to maintain it at fighting strength...". (p. 253). While this may have been the intention of Chinese leaders, it does not account for the fact that Chinese support, whether counted quantitatively or strategically, enabled the Vietminh to break its deadlock with colonial forces. According to J. J. Zasloff, in The Role of the Sanctuary in Insurgency: Communist China's Support to the Vietminh, 1946-56, (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1967), pp. 26ff., Chinese aid to the Vietminh was a decisive factor permitting General Giap of the Vietminh to launch a general offensive in September-October 1950. This offensive destroyed all of the French forts near the Chinese frontier which established secure access to China, and cost the French 6,000 troops and "enough arms to outfit an entire Vietminh division". Zasloff argues that the growing strength of the Vietminh, initiated by increased aid from China and the capture of French military supplies, created an "insoluble tactical dilemma" for the French:

> In the face of rising Vietminh offensives, the French... had too few troops to carry out the dual task of maintaining law and order throughout the country and taking the initiative to wipe out the growing power of the Vietminh. If they spread out their forces and attempt-ed to pacify larger segments of the country, the Vietminh would infiltrate the Delta and speed up the process of pourissment [sic] (the rot). At the same time, when the French concentrated their forces in key regions, such as the Delta, they tended to immobilize themselves, and left open substantial segments of the countryside where the Vietminh could obtain new recruits and supplies, take refuge, and enforce political control. (Ibid., p. 29).

169 William J. Duiker, The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1981, p. 139. Ho Chi Minh reportedly brought back a draft of the Sino-Vietnamese aid agreement in November 1950. Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 269.

170 Ibid., p. 270. The increase in the numerical strength of the Vietminh, by 1951, posed a serious problem for the French. The unwillingness of the metropole to draft young men for service in Indochina made it increasingly difficult for the colonial military command to find sufficient reinforcements to effectively counter Vietminh activities.

171 Thai Quang Trung, "Staline et les révolutions nationales", Revue Française de Science Politique, (Oct 1980), p. 999. Cf. Devillers, p. 292, Jean Lacouture, Ho Chi Minh, trans. Peter Wiles, (Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1968), pp. 131ff, 162f..

172 Donald S. Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle: Moscow, Peking, Hanoi, (New York: Pegasus, 1967), p. 37. According to Joseph Buttinger in

<u>Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled</u>, Vol. II, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), pp. 676ff., the non-Communist Left was primarily responsible for the war in Indochina because they ruled France during the crucial postwar years, and they adopted the colonial policy of the France's "reactionary colonial party". Various scholars have argued that Socialists acted in this manner, in contradiction to their formal position on colonial matters, because political considerations in the metropole required policy compromises for the maintenance of coalition governments. However, as Buttinger notes, the Socialist Minister of Overseas Affairs, Marius Moutet, supported French colonial policy based on the erroneous belief that "the evils of a policy one knows to be wrong can be reduced by taking its execution into one's own hand...." This forced Moutet to act, and defend his actions, as an accomplice of the colonial party. Cf. Hammer, pp. 297ff.. It is interesting to note that some of the reluctance, on the part of the French Left to support the Vietminh, was its fear that France would be displaced by the United States, or, as in the case of the Socialist party, that the Vietminh was primarily a communist organization. Cf. Buttinger, <u>Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled</u>, Vol II, notes 7,8,9, pp. 1012-1013. See also Paul Isoart, <u>Le Phénomène National Vietnamien</u>, (Paris: R. Pichon and R. Durand-Auzias, 1961), pp. 381ff. for further discussion on the disarray and lack of direction in the metropole government during the war in Indochina.

[173] Lacouture, <u>Ho Chi Minh</u>, p. 160.

[174] Buttinger, <u>Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled</u>, Vol. II, p. 699.

[175] For aid figures see Zasloff, <u>The Role of the Sanctuary in Insurgency: Communist China's Support to the Vietminh, 1946-1954</u>, p. 57.

CHAPTER FIVE: GROUP CONFLICT APPROACH

Introduction

This chapter introduces the final component of the alternative revolutionary model proposed in this thesis. Combined with the preceding chapter, the group focus of this chapter provides the groundwork for a potential holistic model that improves upon the explanations of the various subtheoretical approaches examined in Chapter Three. In order to cover the necessary theoretical and historical elements that need to be examined, the chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the general theoretical model of group conflict advanced by Charles Tilly. This includes a discussion on Tilly's specific method of analyzing groups; the introduction of an ideological component into this analytical framework; and finally, an overview of Multiple Sovereignty and the concept of competing polities.

Part two attempts to apply Tilly's Group Conflict model by examining two aspects of the revolution in colonial Vietnam. First, there is analysis of the development of major revolutionary groups in Vietnam. This examines group attributes and characteristics influencing the growth and development of the revolutionary movement. There is also a discussion of the qualities that permitted the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) to dominate the revolutionary movement and eliminate or neutralize other revolutionary groups. The final component of part two

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is the analysis of Vietminh's establishment of a polity in Colonial
Vietnam. This examines the emergence of multiple sovereignty and the
establishment of a viable challenge to the colonial regime.

While the preceding chapter analyzed the impact of socio-
economic and political variables on the formation of the Vietnamese
revolutionary movement and transnational influences affecting the
emergence of a revolutionary situation, the general focus of this
chapter is on the factors permitting revolutionary groups to supplant
the colonial administration and exploit the regime's structural
weaknesses. Tilly's group conflict model, with the inclusion of an
ideological dimension, offers a method for understanding this process.
Its emphasis on group formation, characteristics, and interaction
provides a better analysis of power and political conflict than the
subtheoretical approaches. Consequently, the theoretical focus of
Tilly's approach offers a possible framework for explaining why one
particular group was more successful than other challenging groups in
exploiting the emerging revolutionary situation in the 1940's; and
eventually, why one particular group was capable of dominating the
leadership of the revolutionary movement. It also explains how a group,
relatively weak militarily, could successfully mobilize resources to
challenge the colonial regime, and sustain this challenge until
international and domestic factors gave the revolutionary forces a
strategic advantage.

Part One: Tilly's General Group Conflict Model

When examining conflict during emerging revolutionary situations, the group approach has greater flexibility than class or structural analysis because it provides a better account of shifting alignments and intersections between various segments of society. This is extremely important if one is to explain the changing configuration of the revolutionary movement and its relationship to different sectors of the population during different periods of the revolutionary process. This is also important if one is to comprehend the complex overlapping of group memberships and how this affects resource mobilization and group dominance. In addition, the Group Conflict approach provides a framework for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of various groups and how this affects their respective relationships to the revolutionary movement.

For Tilly, groups form the basic unit of analysis, and are defined as a combination of categories and networks.[1] Categories are populations where members share characteristics distinguishing them from other groups and individuals. Networks exist where members are connected by some direct or indirect social ties. These two qualities focus on relationships and determine the extent to which given populations differ from one another, and as groups, act collectively to achieve shared objectives. This also permits a closer examination of group interaction and formation, which is important if one is to explain the process of acquiring political hegemony during revolutionary transitions.[2] It should be remembered that individuals frequently

belong to different groups simultaneously. The existence of overlapping

group membership was particularly true in the later stages of the

revolutionary movement, where for example, members of the Indochinese

Communist Party (ICP) were simultaneously affiliated with numerous other

associations and organizations with non-communist participants and

members from other revolutionary groups.

Before applying the Group conflict approach to colonial Vietnam

it is necessary to outline the basic framework employed by Tilly. The

most fundamental dimension of this approach to revolution is the polity

model. In the case of Vietnam, traditional political boundaries define

the limits of a population and constitute the basic parameters of the

polity.[3] Controlling the principal means of coercion within the

population is an organization described as the government. Extraneous

to the government are contenders, being "any group which, during some

specified period, applies pooled resources to influence the

government."[4] This includes attempts on the part of contenders to

secure greater power by either influencing government or challenging the

regime's hegemony. According to Tilly, contenders consist of "members"

who have routine, low-cost access to government controlled resources;

and "challengers", are those who comprise all other contenders outside

of the polity; where polity represents the collective action of members

and the government. Therefore, Tilly argues that contenders can

increase their power within the polity, as was the case with the various

nationalist groups; or, contenders can increase their power by acting

outside of the polity and establishing a counter-government, as was the

case with the ICP-Vietminh.

The polity model identifies the principal power struggle between contenders and the government, where each group attempts to realize its objectives by applying pooled resources to one another. In addition, groups already in the polity (members) seek to maintain their position while groups not belonging to the polity (challengers) attempt to gain entrance.[5] This results in conflicts over power, where power determines whether group interests can be realized. Tilly breaks this process into four important "variable characteristics": interest, organization, mobilization, and opportunity.[6] Collective action is a function of these characteristics, and in the case of revolution, relates initially to a group's attempts to maximize power that opposes and threatens the state's control over the population.[7]

Analysis of Groups

Tilly focuses primarily on the political dimension of the revolutionary process. This is evident in his emphasis on the analysis of group power struggles and efforts to control the principal means of coercion. In the case of revolution, collective action challenges the political hegemony of the incumbent regime by establishing alternative means of coercion that permit revolutionary forces to control segments of the population formerly under the control of the state.[8] Within this framework, the existence of organizations controlling some means of influence and coercion signifies potential political conflict and the possibility of one group being able to wrest control of the state's sovereignty. The extent to which revolution is a possibility depends on

the nature of group resources, organizational strength, leadership capabilities, and membership composition. These characteristics will be used to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the principal revolutionary groups in colonial Vietnam.

For Tilly, group resources are analyzed with respect to normative values (for example, ideals and commitment); the utilitarian basis for individual participation within the group and pursuing group prescribed objectives; and the means to enforce, punish, and limit the behaviour of leaders and members. The assessment of organization determines a group's effective capacity to mobilize resources and direct the membership to act in a strategic manner. Leadership is another important factor, and may seriously affect the emergence of alternative polities challenging the state and usurping its polity. For Tilly, the motivation for individuals to support dissident groups is less important than the commitment of members to their leaders. In a revolutionary situation, group leaders must be perceived as viable or exclusive alternatives with legitimate claims to political hegemony. Finally, the composition of the membership and its strength in commitment and numbers indicates the degree of collective interest within a segment of society, and its potential as a collective force.

Ideology and the Analysis of Revolutionary Groups

Unlike Skocpol, who minimizes the role of purposeful action, Tilly straddles the division between causal and purposive explanations of revolution. Tilly attempts to formulate a model that incorporates

both structural factors limiting group behavior and rational processes that determine intentional action within a given structural framework. In Tilly's model of group mobilization, interest directly and indirectly influences all of the variables determining collective action. While interests are an overriding concern in the group conflict model, they are accepted as givens without any consideration as to their ideological context. Tilly discusses long term average interests as a function of the relations of production, but he provides no analysis of the nature of short term interests.[9] This fails to clarify the relationship between interest and the overall strategy, commitment, and orientation of revolutionary forces.[10] This is particularly true of Tilly's implicit reliance on utility and interest maximizing models to explain why members are willing to act collectively. However, this assumption is subject to the same criticisms as were outlined in Chapter Three in the critique of Popkin's Public Choice model. The addition of the ideological variable, as discussed in Chapter One, attempts to rectify this problem in Tilly's model, while retaining those portions of his group conflict approach that provide a good explanatory basis for understanding certain aspects of the revolutionary process.

In order to salvage the group conflict approach, it is necessary to incorporate a concept of ideology that adds another dimension to each of the four variables used by Tilly to analyze group structures. This provides a general framework for understanding the nature and role of values and utility in Tilly's concept of group resources, and the ideological impact on mechanisms limiting and controlling the behavior of leaders and members. Introducing the

concept of ideology also permits a more careful examination of the premises underlying the organizational structure and revolutionary strategies of different contenders. Finally, the inclusion of an ideological dimension offers a fuller explanation of the nature of individual commitment to the claims of group leaders, and in part, explains the particular composition and coalitions of groups with similar orientations.

It should be noted that the distinction between each of the group characteristics and ideology is used primarily to emphasize the cognitive dimension of group behavior. One of the problems associated with this method of analyzing revolutionary groups is the necessity of deriving cognitive frameworks from the actions and statements of participants. This has a tendency to blur the theoretical distinction between the cognitive or ideological context and pragmatic adaptation to historical circumstances, and runs the risk of wrongly imputing actions to systematic cognitive orientations where they never existed. However, as it was pointed out in Chapter One, focusing on the ideological dimension of groups helps explain the differing reactions of groups in similar circumstances. This has the advantage of providing a framework for explaining why groups are organized in a particular manner; identifying elements influencing the basis and orientation of group resources; and finally, denoting factors influencing the particular attraction of a group and sense of unity or cohesion among leaders or members. While utilizing the ideological component in this manner has certain risks, it also has the potential advantage of rendering one's analysis more penetrating.

Analysis of Multiple Sovereignty

The analysis of groups is crucial in Tilly's concept of revolution. While this analysis, to some extent is present in Popkin's work, it is lacking in the other three subtheoretical approaches. However, unlike Popkin, Tilly gives greater emphasis to the political dimension of group conflict. Thus, with multiple sovereignty understood as being the fragmentation of the state polity into competing polities, group characteristics (ie. leadership, resources, organization, and membership) reveal the nature of polity development in colonial Vietnam and explain, for example, why the ICP was capable of maintaining control over large segments of the population and thereby exploiting the revolutionary situation in the late 1940's and early 1950's.[11]

In order for one group to attain sovereignty over a polity, at the exclusion of all other groups, it must effectively employ its resources in a manner that allows for the subjugation of all other polities and claims to authority. If this political conflict cannot be resolved through mediation and compromise, multiple sovereignty becomes acute and culminates in the use of force. Multiple sovereignty describes the emergence of a revolutionary situation which is the result of three "proximate causes":[12] 1) the appearance of contenders or coalitions of contenders who advance exclusive claims to control government currently controlled by the incumbents; 2) where contenders enjoy the commitment of a significant number of the population, whose commitment to the contender's claims is not simply acknowledged in principle, but supported contrary to government directives; 3) where

the government is unwilling or unable to suppress alternative political claims and commitment to these claims by members of its polity. This last condition, is facilitated by the formation of coalitions between contending groups who combine resources to challenge the hegemony of the incumbent regime.

In the first instance, the advance of exclusive claims results in the exclusion of contenders (members) from within the polity or decreases the likelihood of external contenders (challengers) from entering the polity. This involves the formulation of objectives that are incompatible with the policies and institutions of the incumbent regime, and proposes an alternative to the existing socio-economic and political system. Initially, alternative claims may express a willingness to compromise or function within the existing system. However, the onset of multiple sovereignty indicates an inability to conciliate differing objectives and is often accompanied by government repression which attempts to isolate and eliminate alternative claims threatening its hegemony. As in the case of colonial Vietnam, this exacerbates the incompatibility of different claims within a given population and results in the fragmentation of the dominant polity. This forces contending groups to work outside of the existing political institutions and form alternative structures that compete politically for control of the population. In other words, a contending polity within a population is established by constructing an alternative member/government structure that is not subject to the control of the incumbent regime.[13]

The second condition in the revolutionary situation requires contending groups to extend acceptance of their exclusive claims. This must be accomplished in the face of prohibitions and contrary directives by the incumbent regime.[14] In this context, the capacity to extend acceptance becomes a function of ideology, organization, and the incumbent regime's policies that alienate the population by failing to fulfill specific obligations "which members of the subject population regard as well established and crucial to their welfare."[15] This last factor often includes attempts to increase demands on the resources of the population through direct and indirect taxation, compulsory military service, and economic policies that jeopardize subsistence.

The final condition in the emergence of sovereignty is the inability of government forces to counteract the development of a challenging revolutionary movement. This condition was discussed in the preceding chapter, which analyzed transnational factors weakening the state's capacity to respond to challengers. While transnational relations are frequently crucial in the initial establishment and continuation of conflicting polities, they are also relevant to the state's inability to regain its dominance. Both of these aspects were covered in the sections dealing with the role of Japan, China, and the United States in Chapter Four. However, to reiterate this in the context of Tilly's model, the configuration of transnational relations may result in three possible paths: 1) sheer insufficiency of the available means of coercion; 2) inefficient application of resources; and 3) factors inhibiting their application.[16]

Not all of the aforementioned conditions are entirely due to transnational factors. In some cases, the ideological perspective of the government renders the state incapable or unwilling to comprehend the nature of the revolutionary movement. This seriously limits its capacity to formulate policies that use available resources effectively to counter revolutionary challengers. This was particularly true of the colonial administration and its inability or unwillingness to comprehend the political nature of its war with the Vietminh; and consequently, it consistently underestimated the capacity of the Vietminh to mobilize mass support for tactical operations and sustain insurgency operations in areas thought to be under French control.[17] This misperception continued until the Vietminh had acquired a military capacity and a strategic position that was capable of challenging colonial forces despite increased foreign aid from the United States in the latter part of the conflict.

While this transnational component was dealt with in Chapter Four, this chapter examines an equally important aspect of the revolutionary process, the formation of conflicting polities. Although groups may be derived from contenders within the polity or challengers that exist outside of the polity, in each case, dissident groups in a revolutionary situation must acquire a new polity. In other words, a revolutionary group must acquire some means of coercion over a given population and thereby control the collective action of its subjects. At this point the group becomes a polity, where survival depends upon its ability to form coalitions or mobilize enough of its own resources so as to secure control over the political environment. In cases where

the population is acquiescent and passive, groups may successfully contend for political power with little commitment from members of the polity. However, in the case where groups are competing for exclusive claims to political control of a given population, or where segments of the population resist the political control of a contending group, the commitment of members in the polity is especially important.

One important advantage of Tilly's model is that unlike the frustration-aggression and structural-functional models, it does not presuppose that collective violence in revolution follows an unsteady but increasing pattern until reaching a climax, followed by a rapid decline. Tilly denies the necessity of a build-up of violence before revolution commences. He argues that once multiple sovereignty begins, "collective violence will continue at high levels long after the basic issue is decided, and will taper off gradually."[18] According to Tilly's model, this more accurately reflects the nature of the various power struggles and changing coalitions between challengers, members, and the incumbent regime. Consequently, the long duration of high level collective violence is the result of several factors.[19] First, the genesis of multiple sovereignty initiates a general round of mutual testing between all contenders. This was evident in the changing relationships between the ICP, Nationalists, and the Politico-religious sects. Second, the exclusive claims (control of the entire government) of the various contenders justifies high risks and involves high costs which amount to unlimited war. The willingness of Vietnamese revolutionary groups and the colonial regime to use all forms of violence to achieve political objectives only emphasized the cost of

failure and the necessity of ensuring victory. In each case, failure often meant virtual annihilation by one's enemies. Third, because it usually takes a larger mobilized mass to take power than to maintain it, once the central governing apparatus has been seized the revolutionary coalition is susceptible to fragmentation. This is the result of divergent objectives of the principal contenders which were temporarily put aside as they formed coalitions to oust the incumbent regime. This was true of the Vietminh, which lost the support of principal groups such as the Catholic community, the VNQDD and Phuc Quoc, the Hoa Hao, and the Cao Dai following its consolidation of power in 1945 and 1946.

Part Two: Group Conflict and Colonial Vietnam

Unlike Chapter Two, which provides an historical chronology of the revolutionary movement and the groups involved in this development, this chapter focuses more specifically on individual groups and their respective ideological frameworks, resources, organization, leadership, members, and their relationship to other groups within the political context. It should be noted that unlike Popkin's use of the group framework, Tilly's model extends beyond the peasantry and gives greater emphasis to the role of power in the political sphere. However, it must be remembered that the Socio-historical model of the preceding chapter provides other additional insights into the relationship of political factors at the broader structural level. The two models must be used together if one is to view the revolutionary process in an holistic

manner. This avoids the often narrow focus associated with the subtheoretical models in Chapter Three.

The principal Vietnamese organizations vying for political control of the revolutionary movement can be divided into three groups: the Revolutionary Nationalists, the Politico-religious sects, and the Communists. While the general historical development of these groups was discussed in chapter two, it is necessary to examine this aspect of the revolutionary process in greater detail, particularly the latter stages of the revolutionary phase. It is during this period that the ICP established its political hegemony within the revolutionary movement, causing the dissolution of weaker revolutionary groups and relegating more powerful competition to the periphery. The following sections analyze the factors contributing to the success of the ICP and its various front organizations between 1945 and 1954, and examines the reasons underlying the failure of other groups to successfully compete with the ICP for leading positions in coalitions and united front organizations. The weaknesses and failures of these groups, particularly at the ideological level, tend to emphasize the advantageous position of the ICP and its pragmatic use of the theoretical experience of Marxism-Leninism with respect to group resources, organization, leadership, and members.[20]

In order to understand the important contribution Tilly's Group Conflict approach makes, it is necessary to review some of the factors preventing the growth of the revolutionary movement prior to the Japanese Coup d'Etat on March 9, 1945. While the preceding chapter carefully outlined the structural and transnational factors which

impeded the expansion of revolutionary groups, there are other factors that limited the extent to which these groups could develop into organizations capable of challenging the colonial regime. The first important factor was the ideological constraints inherited from earlier revolutionary organizations prior to the 1940's. During the early stages of the revolutionary movement, the different ideological orientations of the various revolutionary groups seriously affected their ability to manage and develop group resources.

Groups such as the Tan Viet, VNQDD, and Thanh Nien (Revolutionary Youth League) were ideologically incapable of formulating a normative and utilitarian context that would ensure united and harmonious collective action on the part of their respective leaders and members. Nor did they have the ideological homogeneity that facilitates group unity and minimizes the impact of personality conflicts. Similarly, their ideological orientation, which involved accepting the basic organizational precepts of Leninism, did not allow them to use this organizational framework effectively to increase the depth and diversity of their membership. Nor was this organizational framework and its ideological context used to limit internal fragmentation and disunity. This was in part, the result of not recognizing the full potential of the Leninist model, and not recognizing the necessary modifications that would render this model effective in the organization of a revolutionary vanguard that could form and lead a mass following in Vietnam. In many respects, the leaders and members of these groups were often still attached to traditional concepts that hindered the expansion of the revolutionary movement and encouraged fragmentation. While the

Tan Viet and Thanh Nien were dissolved by 1930, and the VNQDD was
rendered impotent following the Yen Bay uprising, the nascent formation
of a Communist party from the remnants of the two latter groups was to
eventually survive and mature until it was capable of taking advantage
of the revolutionary situation emerging in the mid 1940's. Following
the 1930's, the groups competing for control of the revolutionary
movement during various stages, such as the Politico-religious sects,
Trotskyists, Phuc Quoc, Dai Viet, and VNQDD, all lacked the maturity and
ideological sophistication of the ICP. This affected in many ways their
ability to compete in terms of resources, organization, leadership, and
members.

The main point which is stressed in the application of the
Group Conflict model is that in addition to the presence of political
and socio-economic structures that exacerbate class polarization and
conflict, and contribute to the emergence of a revolutionary situation,
a revolutionary group must be able to evaluate changing circumstances
and prepare organizationally and strategically to take maximum advantage
of the situation. While colonial repression seriously limited the
expansion and development of the revolutionary movement prior to 1945,
this does not explain why it was the ICP that was prepared for the
surrender of the Japanese and and was capable of taking advantage of the
temporary power vacuum in August 1945. Nor does the ICP's use of
Chinese sanctuaries explain their success. The VNQDD also used South
China as a sanctuary and was for the most part on much better terms with
the governing KMT than its Communist counterpart. Even with this
advantage, the VNQDD failed to reestablish its domestic organization and

place itself in an advantageous position in Vietnam vis a vis the ICP
and its united front organization, the Vietminh.

In order to understand the advantageous position of the ICP, it
is necessary to examine the process whereby the ICP developed an
effective ideological framework and applied this framework to maximize
its group resources, organizational strength, leadership capacity, and
the collective power of its members. While the ICP made costly mistakes
in the course of the revolution, unlike its competitors, its ideology
was positively oriented towards self-assessment and evaluation, or
finding the "correct way".[21] This evaluative capacity enabled the ICP
to learn from its mistakes and take measures that would prevent similar
problems in the future.

The factors contributing to the success of the ICP are more
apparent when compared with corresponding developments, or lack of
developments, among its principal competitors in the revolutionary
movement. The following sections attempt to analyze these differences
and examine the extent to which the ICP was able to adapt to changing
circumstances while other groups utilized anachronistic concepts,
organizations, and programs. This is followed by an analysis of the
group attributes of the ICP that permitted the creation of a viable
challenge to the Colonial regime and contributed to the emergence of
multiple sovereignty.

Traditional Anticolonial Groups

Before discussing group development and conflict in the
revolutionary movement, it is necessary to examine one aspect of
anticolonialism that has not been discussed. This points to some
problems that plagued revolutionary groups throughout most of the
revolution, particularly the nationalist organizations and the Politico-
religious sects. While the Can Vuong and Duy Tan Hoi movements marked
the early beginnings of organized opposition to colonialism among the
elite, numerous secret societies within the peasantry formed another
element of anticolonialism. Later, when the Can Vuong and Duy Tan Hoi
were defeated, secret societies throughout Vietnam continued to
antagonize the colonial administration in the absence of any elite
directed anticolonial organization.

From 1910 to 1916, there were various attempts by these secret
societies to engage in overt political activities. This was
accomplished by expanding their traditional mutual aid organizations to
encompass broader associations capable of mobilizing political support.
This was particularly evident in Cochinchina where four known secret
society networks instigated uprisings throughout provinces in the Mekong
delta from 1910-1916.[22] At one point it is estimated that the
influence of these various networks extended over eleven provinces in
Cochinchina. At the height of political agitation in 1916, in response
to French recruiting policies during World War One, these societies
demonstrated an unprecedented degree of coordination among
anticolonialist groups.[23]

Despite the increased mobilization of the peasantry through secret societies, the ideological and organizational structure of the two principal forms of secret societies in Vietnam (the White Lotus groups and Triad societies) impeded further developments in the anticolonial movement at the grassroots level.[24] Conversely, the structure of these indigenous societies prevented colonial security forces from completely destroying the anticolonial movement. Both the Lotus and Triad societies were decentralized, which meant that each local group was relatively independent. Thus, the ability of the colonial regime to destroy principal groups never jeopardized the movement at large. However, this decentralization minimized the effective coordination of attacks on the colonial administration or the mobilization of joint actions among different village societies. Furthermore, the traditional and semi-religious approach of the Triad and Lotus organizations lacked a coherent set of ideas related to strategic questions, socio-economic programs, and organization. Their primary emphasis was the acquisition of power through the conquest of administrative posts.[25] This ideological immaturity and lack of foresight meant that the leadership of these societies continually failed to realize that capturing local colonial offices did not threaten the colonial regime, nor did it advance their political objectives. The superior colonial forces quickly quelled any attempts on the part of secret societies to exert political power through the use of force. Their efforts at the most only succeeded in creating temporary instability in selected localities.

While some revolutionary organizations in the early stages of
the revolutionary movement utilized the networks and organizational
frameworks of the traditional secret societies, the very nature of these
groups posed several limitations. As Woodside clearly emphasizes, the
ideological concepts of the new revolutionary elite after 1925 were
largely incomprehensible to lower-class secret societies. The
leadership of the various secret societies lacked a coherent vision of
the world beyond Vietnam and were "less capable of comparing the
situation inside Vietnam with those situations outside which suggested
and inspired improvement and nationalistic self-assertion."[26] Another
factor inhibiting the merger of early elite revolutionary organizations
and the predominant secret societies was the negative orientation of the
various secret societies towards the Vietnamese elite. According to
Woodside, the activities of Vietnamese secret societies were aimed as
much against the "self-confident habits and values" of the Vietnamese
elite as against French colonialism.[27] The peasants and urban coolies
who formed the membership of the predominant secret societies were
unwilling to jeopardize an organizational framework that offered
tangible status and prestige in a society where status and prestige were
effectively denied.

Early Revolutionary Groups

Early group development in the revolutionary movement was
discussed briefly in Chapter Two. However, there are two points that
need further clarification because they provide the foundation for

understanding the important divergence in revolutionary group structures

after 1930 and the increasing superiority of the Communist

revolutionaries. This is crucial if one is to explain the extent to

which Communist ideology, resources, organization, leadership, and

members effectively competed with other revolutionary groups. First, it

is necessary to examine the ideological formation of the early

revolutionary organizations prior to 1930, and how this influenced the

ability of each group to secure and maintain resources; create a

domestic organizational structure; provide consistent quality leadership

that was unified and capable of demanding high levels of commitment from

individuals at all levels of the organization; and form a broad base of

support that was committed to collective objectives. Second, the nature

of these group attributes must be analyzed with respect to the

ideological limitations which inhibited more effective revolutionary

action in the confines of colonial repression. It should be noted that

this does not imply that ideology is an independent or causal variable,

in the sense that it determines the course of revolutionary

developments. Rather, ideology in this context, while being influenced

by numerous international and cultural factors, provides a cognitive

orientation towards the evaluation of circumstances and decisions

concerning particular actions.[28]

In the earliest stages of the revolutionary movement, the

various groups attempting to challenge the colonial regime were

schismatic and ideologically undeveloped. In many respects, they were

plagued with some of the organizational and tactical problems

confronting traditional secret societies. Despite the growing influence

of twentieth century revolutionary models, the numerous revolutionary groups springing up throughout Vietnam during the second half of the 1920's relied very much on the personal following of charismatic leaders and the support of a narrow spectrum of Vietnamese society. They all focused on the recruitment of students, minor colonial officials, and petty intellectuals such as teachers, journalists, and clerks. In addition, there was considerable emphasis on the role of the individual hero or leader in history. This contributed to group factionalism as various leaders and their followers frequently quarreled with their counterparts over parochial interests and individual status within the revolutionary organization. Another common attribute of these revolutionary groups was their inability to agree upon ideological matters. While each group espoused national independence as the essential objective of the revolutionary movement, they disagreed over the appropriate means of achieving this objective and what this independence would entail.[29] This severely curtailed the commitment of the membership to act collectively and often resulted in a divided leadership that could not act in unison nor be assured the support of its followers. Furthermore, as a growing number of participants became influenced by Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary principles of Sun Yat-sen, ideological divisions formed over the relative importance or applicability of class struggle, social revolution versus national revolution, the role of the peasantry and working class, the appropriateness of using nationalism or patriotism as a basis for revolutionary activity, and the necessity of formulating specific social and political reforms.[30]

The prominent groups in the late 1920's, such as the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (VNQDD), Thanh Nien or Revolutionary Youth League (whose members became the principal components of the ICP), and the Tan Viet Cach Menh Dang, failed to adopt systematic programs or strategies outlining the path to revolution. Their respective party platforms frequently used the same slogans and platforms. For example, the Tan Viet and the VNQDD subscribed to a three phase revolutionary program that consisted of an embryonic clandestine phase, a preparatory clandestine phase, and a destructive insurrectionary phase.[31] The VNQDD and the Thanh Nien both employed the slogan "First make a national revolution; then make a world revolution."[32] All three groups lacked any clear notion of their role within the revolutionary movement or how the collective actions of their membership could bring about the overthrow of the colonial regime.

The Tan Viet was divided internally over the issue of Marxism and its applicability to colonial Vietnam. This exacerbated disagreement over the advisability of seeking international support from either Soviet or Chinese communists for fear of jeopardizing Vietnamese independence, and implicitly, of being forced to accept a particular ideological framework that did not apply to Vietnam. While the Tan Viet accepted the organizational structure of the Leninist model (the cell pattern), prominent members attacked the emphasis on class struggle. For example, Dao Duy Anh, a leading theoretician in the Tan Viet, argued that the undeveloped Vietnamese economy precluded the application of Lenin's concept of class struggle and class consciousness. He believed that focusing on class conflict would only antagonize different sectors

of Vietnamese society, crippling efforts to unite the Vietnamese against the French.[33] This became a central issue within the Tan Viet, as the membership became divided over whether to stress nationalism or class struggle in its party program.

The Tan Viet enjoyed some popular support among the peasantry in Annam, where its principal strength was in the provinces of Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and Thanh Hoa. Much of this support was the result of the traditional respect afforded teachers and minor government officials who comprised the largest part of the Tan Viet's membership. This influence among the local peasantry did not spread to regions outside of Annam. Unlike the Thanh Nien which trained members in South China and sent them to all regions in Vietnam, the Tan Viet centered its activities in one area. The predominance of regional loyalties and the sedentary teaching and administrative occupations of the majority of its membership limited the Tan Viet's ability to develop a national political organization. Also, the party's reliance on traditional prestige restricted its capacity to attract support among urban workers and middle class functionaries in the region.[34] This was exacerbated by the fact that the Tan Viet's unwillingness to align itself with international communism meant that it lacked the general continuity and organizational strength of its leading competitor, the Thanh Nien. Finally, persistent internal schisms made it susceptible to membership raids carried out by the VNQDD and the Thanh Nien, which successfully absorbed disenchanted members. While the Tan Viet was a significant revolutionary group in 1927, it was eventually dissolved in 1929 with a majority of its membership going to the Thanh Nien.

Similar to the Tan Viet, the VNQDD developed within an ideological context that was initially favourable to the revolutionary concepts found in Marxist-Leninist thought. It focused on the principles of change outlined by Sun Yat-sen, but its political training manuals included Communist works such as Bukharin's and Preobrazhenskii's ABC of Communism and Marx's The Paris Commune. However, while members of the VNQDD claimed to be disciples of Sun Yat-sen, they disagreed among themselves over primacy of national and social objectives. With respect to social issues that there was little serious discussion. While VNQDD leaders such as Nguyen Thai Hoc argued that the only way for the Colonial administration to avoid revolution was to respect individual rights such as the liberty to travel, education, association, and press, he also stipulated that there must be an end to corruption in official offices, efforts to educate the people, and develop trade and indigenous industries.[35] However, there is little to indicate that the VNQDD ever formulated concrete programs for the implementation of these reforms.

The founders of the VNQDD accepted the basic organizational guidelines of Leninism, creating an organization based on a committee system, with a central governing committee and various other associations and committees at provincial, regional, and local levels. Nevertheless, despite borrowing from Marxist-Leninist organizational theory, the VNQDD leadership was fearful of confusing the "democratic centralism" of Leninism with the paternalistic hierarchy of traditional Confucianism to which it was opposed.[36] It was unable to reconcile its emphasis on egalitarianism and the necessity of organizing an effective

revolutionary structure requiring some degree of authoritarianism. This frequently resulted in organizational confusion and hesitancy when it was necessary to control operations centrally. Also, unlike their early communist counterparts in the Thanh Nien, the various committees and associations in the VNQDD hierarchy were not organized around groups with similar occupations or lifestyles. They did not stress the importance of grouping individuals on the basis of personal ties, primordial social attachments, and already existing corporate bodies. By assuming that unity and collective action could be based upon a common patriotism, the VNQDD failed to exploit the already existing ties and social bonds within different sectors of Vietnamese society.[37] Nor did the VNQDD advocate a "methodical long-term preparation" of party members and the masses as did the Thanh Nien.[38] They focused on violence and militant action as the quickest means of achieving power and thus focused their recruiting efforts on the indigenous military and directed their organizational energies towards the formation of military forces. The ideological emphasis of the VNQDD and their organizational disarray was reflected in the leadership and among the members. While at one point the VNQDD was the largest revolutionary organization in Vietnam, it was decimated following the failure of the Yen Bay uprising and lacked the resources and organizational structure to rebuild. As will be pointed out later, it never acquired an international dimension like its Communist counterparts despite its relationship to the KMT. This is one reason why it was never able to regain its pre-1930 status and effectively compete with the ICP.

Similar to the VNQDD and Tan Viet, the Thanh Nien was also prone to ideological schisms within its membership. But unlike their counterparts, their disagreements focused on the extent to which programs should follow the dictates of international Communism, and to what extent they should be modified to conform to the particular conditions existing in Vietnam. Schisms formed around the issue of the relative importance of the proletariat and peasantry within the revolutionary movement, and the advisability of using patriotism as a common basis for support in the revolutionary movement rather than focusing solely on class conflict and interests. While all of the propaganda of the Thanh Nien stayed within the bounds of the orthodox tradition of the Communist International, there were serious disagreements over the Thanh Nien's elevation of the peasantry and the role of national sentiment in the revolutionary program.[39]

When Ho Chi Minh was confronted with the task of organizing the Thanh Nien, and adapting Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam, he attempted to modify the concept of class and class struggle to fit the context of a predominantly peasant society. In his early lectures to new members of the Thanh Nien, Ho circumvented the Marxist-Leninist bias towards the peasantry which viewed the peasants as either reactionary or subject to petit bourgeois tendencies. He taught that the "revolutionary firmness" of a class was based on the degree to which it was oppressed rather than its place within the mode of production.[40] This was the argument in The Revolutionary Road, published in 1926, and used as an instruction manual for Thanh Nien recruits. By focusing on oppression rather than position within the mode of production, Ho dichotomized society into two

classes: the oppressors (capitalists) and the oppressed (workers and peasants). Thus, as early as 1926, he was attempting to blur the orthodox distinction between the proletariat and the peasantry and thereby ensure an "organic" and harmonious relationship between two important sectors within the revolutionary movement.[41]

However, while Ho exerted a great deal of influence over the members of the Thanh Nien, his initial ideological position was challenged by more militant communists after his departure in 1928.[42] These individuals believed that the revolution would only succeed if class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat became the principal emphasis of the party. During this period militants called for the establishment of a Communist party in order to openly espouse the doctrines of International Communism and follow the program of the Comintern more precisely, rejecting the implications of Ho's earlier teachings. This was reinforced by the fact that the Sixth Congress of the Communist International was calling for the formation of Communist parties in European colonies and the proletarianization of the revolutionary movement, requiring that all communist organizations begin to "... demarcate themselves in the most clear-cut fashion, both politically and organizationally, from all the petty-bourgeois groups and parties."[43]

The new emphasis of the Comintern provoked a serious split within the Thanh Nien. While the Thanh Nien contained an elite core of Marxist-Leninist cadre, it was created as a general organization appealing to a wide range of individuals by focusing on national revolution, the overthrow of the French and the restoration of

Vietnamese independence through the united efforts of all progressive anticolonialists.[44] Its program avoided ideological questions that would increase divisions among members and affiliates who were suspicious of or unfamiliar with Marxism-Leninism.

The new pronouncements of the Comintern gave militant members of the Thanh Nien who were dissatisfied with the party's lack of progress psychological support for their proposals to dissolve the organization and establish an ideologically pure Communist party that was dedicated to world revolution and the proletarian movement. Many of these members felt that the revolutionary orientation of the Thanh Nien was incapable of attracting large numbers of workers and peasants. According to this faction, what was required was a clear emphasis on class issues rather than patriotism and national independence.

The militant were correct in pointing to the lack of success in the Thanh Nien's efforts to generate a revolutionary movement. But, their criticisms did not reveal the complete reason for the failure of Thanh Nien to attract more recruits, particularly from the peasant and proletarian sectors of Vietnamese society. Like their competitors, the members of the Thanh Nien recruited candidates in a haphazard manner, relying on personal acquaintances rather than systematic infiltration into existing organizations and aggressive propaganda strategies. This ensured that any growth in the membership generally reflected the existing composition of the party and did not expand into other sectors of society. While Ho Chi Minh was to successfully return to the theme of patriotism under the banner of the Vietminh in the 1940's, the Thanh Nien's simple patriotic appeal was not supported by a sophisticated

ideological foundation that gave later Communist organizations their cohesion and direction, and ensured the commitment and support of both leaders and members for the achievement of specific objectives. By 1929, the Thanh Nien was virtually torn apart as one section of its membership broke away to form its own Communist party, which in turn began to absorb significant sections of the original parent organization. This marked a significant turning point in the Communist revolutionary movement and signaled the introduction of an important international dimension in subsequent Communist activities.

During the late 1920's revolutionary groups were not only forced to contend with colonial repression, but also a debilitating competition amongst themselves. Each group attempted to recruit new members and attract the members of competing organizations. However, the ideological weaknesses of each of these parties seriously affected their ability to mobilize resources in a manner that would minimize internal schisms and retain the commitment of their existing memberships. Despite this problem there was one other element that significantly contributed to the general confusion and division within the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. This was the growing animosity of the two most prominent revolutionary organizations, the Thanh Nien and the VNQDD, and their refusal to collaborate with one another or refrain from attacking each other's organization. This problem was in part, a result of the growing antagonisms between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Kuomintang (KMT) after their falling apart in 1927.

Huynh Kim Khanh argues that prior to 1930, the memoirs of many VNQDD activists indicate attempts to merge with Ho Chi Minh's Thanh Nien

which was based in Canton.[45] However, the dispute between the CCP and KMT exacerbated the tensions between the VNQDD and the Thanh Nien, as the former adopted the anti-communist policy of Chiang Kai-shek's KMT, and the latter was dissolved in favour of a more rigidly organized Marxist-Leninist party that was opposed to any affiliation with what it considered to be one of the enemies of social revolution (ie. nationalist parties).[46] Also, the effective repression by colonial security forces forced each organization to rely more heavily on their external sanctuaries. The ideological affinity between the VNQDD and the KMT, plus the growing awareness after the assassination of a French labour recruiter that Colonial authorities were determined to destroy the the VNQDD as quickly as possible, influenced the VNQDD to seek the future protection of the KMT in South China. This reinforced the VNQDD's willingness to accept the KMT's indictment of Communism, if for nothing else, to ensure its safe haven if its planned revolt at Yen Bay failed to ignite Vietnamese soldiers and start a national mutiny.[47]

At the same time, the KMT was attempting to arrest the central committee of the Thanh Nien in an effort to suppress Communist organizations in areas under its control. This forced the leadership of the Thanh Nien to constantly relocate its headquarters and training centers in order to avoid capture and detainment. The hostilities directed against the Thanh Nien may have been exacerbated by the fact that the Comintern reorganized its Southeast Asian Bureau, dissolving the communist organization in Singapore which was responsible for all communist contacts in Vietnam, and placing communist activities in

Indochina under the jurisdiction of the CCP central committee in Shanghai.[48]

All of these factors only contributed to the disruption of revolutionary activities and the fragmentation of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. However, the new revolutionary groups forming in the late thirties and early forties, while building on the foundation of their predecessors from the 1920's, were becoming increasingly polarized as the nationalist organizations and politico-religious sects found it increasingly difficult to compete with the resources and organization of the dominant Communist group, the ICP. While coalitions vacillated, the overpowering strength of the ICP forced the nationalists and sects to enter an uneasy alliance or risk dissolution and absorption by the ICP front organizations. The following sections examine each of these groups and analyze the characteristics and qualities affecting their ability to lead the revolutionary movement and challenge the Colonial regime.

Communist Revolutionary Groups

The section of Thanh Nien that broke with the parent organization in 1929 formed the first Vietnamese communist party, the Dong Duong Cong San Dang (DDCSD).[49] It was more militant and active in its recruiting, propaganda, and agitation than the older organizations. Consequently, its increased political activity quickly attracted and absorbed members of the Thanh Nien and the Tan Viet. In an effort to save the last remnants of its organization, the remaining members of the

Thanh Nien formed the Annamese Communist Party. The Tan Viet, which had suffered numerous defections to the DDCSD and the Thanh Nien was soon forced to form its own party, the League of Indochinese Communists.

In the fall of 1929 the Comintern felt that the existence of three rival Communist organizations indicated that Vietnam was ready for an internationally sanctioned Communist party. While affiliation with the Comintern would give the Vietnamese revolutionary movement international support, prestige and experience, it also required strict adherence to prevailing party dogma. While the Thanh Nien had kept its political program in general terms in order to avoid "knotty theoretical problems" and attract a wider base of support, the Comintern did not permit deviation from its accepted policies and ideological framework.[50] This required all members of the Communist party in Vietnam to reject many of the ideas propagated by the Thanh Nien under Ho Chi Minh. These included the concept of the peasantry as one of the principal forces of the revolution; the maintenance of relationships with the petite bourgeoisie, intellectuals, and middle and rich peasants; and patriotic platforms that did not emphasize world revolution and role of the proletariat.[51]

The reason for discussing the fragmentation of the Thanh Nien in such detail is to emphasize the important role of the Comintern in creating a unified revolutionary organization. Although Chapter Two discussed this period, it did not examine the manner in which the initial links with International Communism provided Vietnamese communism with ideological stability and direction. The Comintern provided a means for settling internal disputes. It acted as an external

arbitrator, ensuring that personal feuds and differences of opinion did not interfere with the overall objectives of the revolutionary movement. While the Comintern sometimes proffered misguided strategies that hindered revolutionary developments, as was the case with its position on the limited united front in the late twenties and early thirties, its influence gave the ICP a considerable advantage over other groups.

This international dimension marked an important divergence in the development of the Communist segment of the revolutionary movement. After Ho Chi Minh had been recalled to mediate the unification of the various Communist parties, Vietnamese communism began a new era that increasingly differentiated it from its counterparts throughout Vietnam. Unlike prior revolutionary organizations, the ICP could rely on the revolutionary strategies and postindependence programs of international communism. They could elaborate in greater detail on the policies that would bring about social justice and prosperity for the Vietnamese people. Their early competitors such as the Tan Viet and the VNQDD restricted their objectives to political goals such as the overthrow of the colonial regime, and limited post-independence programs to the institution of a Western form of republican government.

It was the international component of the ICP that enabled it to survive the effective repression of colonial authorities and rebuild its organization in the early 1930's, after the colonial reprisals following the Nghe Tinh Soviets, and in the early 1940's after the failure of ICP-led uprisings in northern Tonkin and Cochinchina.[52] After the formation of a single Communist party connected with the Comintern, the Vietnamese Communists were able to adopt the cumulative

experience of Communist parties throughout the world. This provided a rich ideological framework, an abundant source of "scientific" methods of revolution. It included strategic theories, techniques of organization, cadre training programs, propaganda and agitation methods, and the ability to send promising cadre for special revolutionary training in safe locations out of the reach of colonial authorities.[53] The systematic and constant training of new Vietnamese revolutionaries in schools such as the Stalin School (University of Toilers of the East) in the Soviet Union provided a crucial leadership reserve with which to rebuild the ICP's domestic organizations following periods of repression.[54]

The international factor also influenced the harmonious nature of the ICP leadership. The Comintern acted as an arbitrator in personality disputes, making sure that the objectives of the revolution were always foremost in the minds of the central committee of the ICP. While the Comintern contributed to the stability and cohesion of the ICP leadership through common training programs and ideological uniformity, credit must be given to the Vietnamese leadership for stressing the overriding importance of unity and consensus within the ICP. Unlike other communist parties throughout Asia and Europe, large-scale purges involving factional infighting and the humiliation of losing members were unknown to the Vietnamese Communists. As Kelly and Mackerras note, the emphasis on consensual decision-making in the leading committees of the ICP avoided bloody clashes over shifts in party policy.[55] This contributed to the continuity and stability of the ICP's leadership and permitted leaders to concentrate on developing long range programs and

organizational strength. Leaders within the Nationalist groups and politico-religious sects were often more concerned about protecting themselves from fellow leaders than formulating and implementing programs that would increase the strength of the group as a whole.

There is one other factor, that while based upon dubious theoretical assumptions concerning the primary role of the proletariat in the revolutionary process, increased substantially the differences between the membership and leaders of the ICP and their Nationalist and Politico-religious counterparts.[56] This was the impact of the Comintern's policy of proletarianization. While this was mentioned briefly in Chapter Two, its impact on the future advantage of the ICP requires further explanation. Under the influence of Stalin, the Comintern was demanding that Communist parties take sufficient measures to ensure that each organization was not controlled or influenced by non-proletarian elements of society which were susceptible to petty-bourgeois and bourgeois ideology. This increased emphasis on class background and "revolutionary purity" required that party organizations reflect the revolutionary role of the proletariat in the composition and orientation of leaders and the members. This resulted in new constraints on the recruitment of ICP members and required that each Communist experience the poverty and oppressive degradation of the working class by living with and recruiting amongst workers in Colonial Vietnam.[57]

Proletarianization resulted in two important developments that had an important impact on the strength of the ICP at later stages in the revolution. First, the necessity of enduring the hardships of the

Vietnamese proletariat distinguished those who were truly dedicated to the revolutionary ideals of Communism and those who only expressed verbal dedication. This effectively monitored the commitment and diligence of all members of the ICP to the leadership and the mass orientation of the party. Second, the experience of becoming intimately involved with the proletariat established an emotional link between workers and peasants and a greater awareness of their joint revolutionary potential. The social fluidity of the lower echelons of Vietnamese society, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, meant that as the ICP attempted to establish worker organizations it was also penetrating the peasantry. When the role of the peasantry was reincorporated into the ideological framework of the ICP in the early 1940's, with the return of Ho Chi Minh, the party had maintained a dedicated cadre that was experienced in the creation of mass-based organizations amongst peasants and workers, and had cultivated close contacts within both sectors. This was an advantage that all of the Nationalist groups lacked. While the foundation of the Politico-religious sects was based within the peasantry, they lacked many of the emotional and organizational linkages with the proletarian element of the peasantry. This was particularly true of the Cao Dai with its elite hierarchical orientation and the predominance of indigenous colonial administrators and landowners in its leadership.

Both the international dimension and the effects of proletarianization constituted two crucial components that gave the ICP considerable advantage over its competitors in the areas of ideology, resources, organization, leadership, and members. These advantages were

not evident in other Communist groups that were competing with the ICP

for control of the revolutionary movement. While these groups had

little overall impact in the eventual challenging of the colonial

regime, it is instructive to examine why they were unable to challenge

the primacy of the ICP among Vietnamese communists.

The two principal Communist groups other than the ICP were the

Trotskyists, and the Stalinists who had returned from France in the late

twenties and early thirties, but were not affiliated with the Thanh

Nien. The first group was effectively severed from International

Communism with the rise of Stalin and the campaign discrediting Leon

Trotsky in 1929. It lacked unity on the important issue of

revolutionary strategy and was prone to factionalism. According to

Huynh Kim Khanh, the "bitterness of the disputes between factions was

second only to the resentment each felt towards Stalin and his

followers."[58] One faction "emphasized legal and overt means of

struggle and eschewed clandestine activities;" another claimed to

preserve the spirit of the October Revolution and in contrast emphasized

clandestine groups; a third faction competed in elections and

collaborated with the non-ICP Stalinists in the publication of a

newspaper, La Lutte.[59] These Stalinists felt little compulsion to

adhere strictly to the policies of the Comintern, and unlike their ICP

counterparts, there was a greater tendency to make their own decisions

concerning the appropriate course of the revolutionary movement in

Vietnam.[60] This group was able to work with one section of the

Trotskyists for two reasons. First, they did not feel the same pressure

to reject alignments with Trotskyists because they were not closely

linked to the Comintern which had stigmatized Trotsky. Second, both the Trotskyists and the Stalinists working on La Lutte were former comrades who had joined the Communist movement in France, but had later separated over the controversy between Stalin and Trotsky. They were able temporarily to put aside their ideological differences in order to unite against colonialism.

The La Lutte group were successful in electing two candidates of their workers slate at the 1933 Saigon Municipal elections. The Stalinist component of this group also expanded their organizational base throughout Cochinchina and capitalized on the temporary vacuum created when the colonial repression which followed the Nghe Tinh Soviets decimated the ranks of the ICP. However, the resurgence of the ICP under the Popular Front, and the influx of Soviet trained cadre soon enabled the ICP to absorb the organization of the non-ICP Stalinists. New Comintern policies on popular front alliances with all progressive sectors of society, following the success of this strategy with the Spanish Communists in 1936, enabled the ICP to continue an alliance with the La Lutte Trotskyists. However, this alliance was dissolved by 1937 because of irreconcilable ideological differences over the ICP's willingness to support the initiatives of the Popular Front government and continued emphasis on popular front organizations despite their failure to influence colonial reforms. Just prior to the dissolution of La Lutte, another Trotskyist faction which was vehemently opposed to any alliance with the ICP gained control of the paper after a number of the prominent La Lutte leaders were arrested. Their attacks on Stalin and

Comintern directives generated irreparable hostilities between the ICP
and the remaining Trotskyists.[61]

While the non-ICP Stalinists were eventually absorbed by the
ICP, the Trotskyists remained apart. However, the colonial repression
following the fall of the Blum government decimated the ranks of the
Trotskyists who did not have the means of rebuilding their various
splinter organizations. Although the ICP was equally affected by the
repression, their international support and larger domestic organization
throughout all of Vietnam permitted a quicker recovery. Another factor
inhibiting the Trotskyist's ability to recover was an ideological
orientation that did not emphasize the infiltration and organization
building. This was evident in the unwillingness of the international
Trotskyists to form a Fourth International following the Comintern's
rejection of Trotsky in 1929. They chose to influence existing
communist organizations rather than form competing organizations.
Similarly, after the collapse of the various Trotskyist cells in the
late 1930's, the remaining members chose to function as political
advisors for the Politico-religious sects rather than rebuild their
former organizations.[62]

While this section treated the various strengths of the ICP,
the successful application of these strengths will be examined in the
section on the Vietminh. This will provide a clearer indication of the
superiority of the ICP as a revolutionary group, and how it was able to
control the revolutionary movement and dominate the coalitions that were
necessary for the establishment of a polity that could challenge the
sovereignty of the colonial regime.

Nationalist Revolutionary Groups

The various attempts to form viable nationalist organizations that were capable of challenging the dominance of the ICP in the revolutionary movement in the 1940's all failed. This was primarily the result of weaknesses that were very similar to those plaguing the early revolutionary groups. The Tan Viet and the early VNQDD exemplified many of the problems that also limited the ability of later nationalist groups to develop domestic organizations, maintain cohesion among nationalist leaders and commitment among the membership, correctly assess political conditions, and devise strategies that would permit each respective group to exploit the emergence of a revolutionary situation.

Of the early nationalist groups, the VNQDD was the only one to remain intact after 1931. However, it remained in South China after its expulsion from Vietnam following the Yen Bay uprising and failed to rebuild a domestic organization. Its ideological orientation emphasized military force, but it had failed to defeat the colonial regime using this approach. There was little impetus amongst the remaining VNQDD cadre to rebuild the party structure in Vietnam. Instead, the remnants of the VNQDD chose to remain in South China under the protection of the KMT, hoping that their Chinese ally would propel the VNQDD into power once the appropriate situation presented itself. This was an attitude that prevailed among many of the nationalist groups. Likewise, the Dai Viet and Phuc Quoc initially relied on the Japanese for protection from colonial authorities and planned on future Japanese intervention to

overthrow French colonialism and establish a nationalist regime.

However, Japan failed to involve members of either the Dai Viet or Phuc

Quoc in the Vietnamese government following the March coup d'etat, and

they did not replace Bao Dai with the Nationalists' Prince Cuong De.

This effectively restricted the development of either group. After the

defeat of Japan, these groups were forced to align with the KMT. All

three nationalist groups failed to make domestic preparations for the

seizure of power, preferring instead to follow in the wake of the KMT

which they thought would clear the way for a nationalist takeover. The

KMT encouraged this attitude by offering the Nationalist groups

sanctuary and aid in South China.

There is little indication that the basic ideological framework

of the VNQDD changed after the Yen Bay uprising. Following its defeat

there was no serious assessment of the factors causing the failure of

the VNQDD's aborted attempt at revolution. If anything, the importance

of a military victory became even more fundamental to the VNQDD's

strategic outlook. This may be why the remaining leaders felt that only

a major power could overthrow the colonial regime, thereby encouraging

their efforts to develop a close alliance with the KMT. Unlike the ICP,

there was little effective analysis of the potential impact of changing

international relations, nor was there any concerted effort to

understand how a revolutionary group could exploit the growing socio-

economic and political problems confronting Vietnam during the mid

1940's. Although the VNQDD realized the importance of utilizing the

support of foreign nations, their political intrigues were ineffective

without an operative domestic organization. Its support of a KMT

liberated Vietnam relied on the cooperation of the Chinese. Similarly, the VNQDD's coinciding alliance with the pro-Japanese Dai Viet relied on the degree to which the the Japanese were willing to support the Dai Viet.[63] Neither group understood the value of exploiting the economic hardships of the peasantry during this period and combining this strategy with international alliances.

While the Japanese were instrumental in uniting numerous nationalist groups in a loose federation called the Dai Viet, this group had little in the way of an ideology. Furthermore, the fact that its creation was due to Japanese intervention only accentuated potential cleavages that were never reconciled at the initial formation of the Dai Viet. Similar to many nationalist groups, the Dai Viet was primarily concerned with the restoration of Vietnamese independence and the institution of a monarchical regime led by Prince Cuong De who resided in Japan. They supported the Tran Trong Kim cabinet in 1945, but the Japanese prevented the Dai Viet from expanding its organization so as to curtail any potential threat to Japanese control of the Kim regime. This dependence on the Japanese effectively limited the Dai Viet's capacity to expand autonomously and develop domestic organizational strength that could compete with either the Japanese, or inadvertently, the ICP. By 1943, the Dai Viet had merged with the Phuc Quoc.

Similar to the Dai Viet, the Phuc Quoc was monarchical in orientation and motivated by patriotism. While Phuc Quoc leaders were disappointed after the withdrawal of Japanese support during the Lang Son revolt in the early 1940's, they later became an integral part of a Japanese created umbrella organization that included the Dai Viet and

both politico-religious sects. Once again, without constant Japanese

assistance, the nationalists and sects were unable to act in unison.

The Phuc Quoc, like its nationalist counterparts lacked a systematic

ideological framework that gave direction and encouraged cohesion among

its leaders. This prevented the Phuc Quoc from capitalizing on its

Japanese support. Later, following the defeat of Japan, the Phuc Quoc

was unable to maintain a large committed membership in Vietnam because

of the animosity felt towards the Japanese, who had brought considerable

economic hardship on the Vietnamese before their defeat. This forced

the Phuc Quoc to turn instead to the KMT for political support. Like

the Dai Viet and the VNQDD, this was mainly due to its emphasis on

elites and its reluctance to encourage mass support within the

peasantry. Without a mass based organization, the Phuc Quoc had to rely

exclusively on external support.

The problem of how to establish a unified and powerful

revolutionary movement was subject to much debate among Nationalists.

However, their common ideological orientation prevented the development

of a revolutionary movement that could compete with the ICP's Vietminh.

The nationalists emphasized the role of tightly knit, clandestine groups

which were capable of stepping into power when the right moment

presented itself. This was not the same as the ICP's concept of the

revolutionary vanguard. The Nationalists argued,

> that it was undesirable to excite the peasants
> to revolutionary action. If large numbers of
> people were needed at a particular time, then it
> was best to recruit them through established
> patron-client networks. In this way one could be
> certain that the mass who understood only the

need for more food or better health care would
follow the few who understood high politics.[64]

Because they viewed the historical direction and composition of

society in a completely different light, the mobilization of mass

support was more compatible with the ideological framework of the ICP.

While emphasis changed over time, the ICP was consistent in its

endorsement of a mass based revolution. Within its organizational

context, the peasantry and the proletariat had important roles that were

continuously stressed. This emphasis was not simply pragmatic, but had

its roots in the ICP's ideological conception of the class structure of

society, society's inherent contradictions, and the historical direction

of the conflicts issuing from these contradictions. These elements were

completely lacking in the ideological framework of the different

nationalist groups. In addition, the ICP was quite willing to draw from

the precedents established by the Soviets and Chinese Communists to

propagate the concept of mass struggle. The "altruistic", "cooperative"

and "protracted" struggle were a few of the many concepts used by the

ICP to communicate the "multifaceted idea of struggle and to start

converting it to reality."[65] The nationalists had no counterpart that

was equally translatable into action oriented policy.

This did not mean that the ICP placed little emphasis on

foreign support. Rather, the ICP recognized the need for international

aid, but focused equally on the importance of remaining in control of

the revolutionary movement by maintaining an autonomous domestic

organization. This was crucial if the ICP was to use foreign support

without jeopardizing its independence as a revolutionary group. Unlike

the nationalists, the ICP was able to maximize this independence by focusing on its domestic membership and ensuring that it had the support of large sectors of the population. This weakness was apparent in the failure of the nationalists to control the KMT created Dong Minh Hoi in 1942. While this will be discussed in the section on the Vietminh, it accentuates the key role of well structured domestic organizations, and the ideological and resource superiority of the ICP.

Politico-Religious Sects: Cao Dai and Hoa Hao

Prior to the emergence of the revolutionary situation in in the mid 1940's, the revolutionary movement was extremely fragmented. An important reason for this lack of unification, particularly in the South, was the strength of the Politico-religious sects in Cochinchina and their influence among the peasantry. During and after the Popular Front era there were numerous attempts by revolutionary groups to elicit the support and aid of the two principal south Vietnamese sects, the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao. Competition for this support and the demands of sect leaders to hold prominent positions in any united revolutionary effort created serious intergroup rivalries as each sect and revolutionary group tried to attract a wider base of support and weaken their competitors.

The objective of this section is to examine the ideology, resources, organization, leadership, and membership of the two most predominant sects. This will clarify some of the problems confronting each sect and delineate the various weaknesses that prevented these

sects from spreading throughout Vietnam and gaining control of the revolutionary movement. Furthermore, this analysis will point to several factors enabling the ICP to take advantage of both the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai, and other factors preventing the ICP from securing its control of the Mekong delta following the August revolution.

Both the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao worked with the French, Japanese, nationalists, and ICP at different intervals in the revolutionary process. Each sect was careful to align itself with the groups that supported their expansion and provided protection from threatening powers. Thus when the French were arresting Caodaists and members of the Hoa Hao because their growing influence among the peasantry threatened colonial authority, the sects turned to the Japanese for support and protection. Similarly, both sects aligned with the Vietminh during its attempts to seize control of Cochinchina in 1945. When it became evident that the Vietminh was determined to control and dominate the revolutionary movement, thereby threatening to relegate the sects to a secondary position, both the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao chose to make uneasy alliances with the French, who promised military aid and relative autonomy in exchange for fighting the Vietminh. The willingness to change alliances indicated more than shifting fortunes in Vietnamese politics. More importantly, this indicates the vulnerability of the sects to the coercive power of the state and revolutionary groups such as the ICP, and the degree to which each sect was obsessed with securing its own domain. Also, much of their strength among the peasantry was not due to superior resources, organization, or leadership, but rather, it was based on the fact that the sects were not suppressed with the

same vigour as were the revolutionary groups because they were not considered as threatening to the colonial regime. In order to understand this aspect of the sects it is necessary to examine their respective ideological frameworks and group structures.

Caodaism is often defined as a syncretic cult religion attempting to harmonize the three most important Eastern religions, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. It also incorporated some of the features of Western Catholicism, in an effort to reconcile differences between Eastern and Western belief systems. Drawing from a Vietnamese philosophical tradition common among the peasantry, the Caodaists sought to create a religious framework that borrowed from all of the predominant religious beliefs in Vietnam, including the animism and spiritism of traditional villages. This was done in order to appeal to a wide range of individuals and harmonize societal conflicts.[66] This process was not uncommon in Vietnam, but, unlike many of its predecessors which were often organized as secret societies, Caodaism effectively symbolized the imagery of past peasant rebellions and the hope of a millenial future in an overt organizational setting. This was an important attraction in a region that during the 1920's and 1930's was experiencing a serious reevaluation of Buddhism and Confucianism.[67] It also represented a popular reaction to intensified Catholic proselytizing during this period.

In a more specific context, the ideological framework of Caodaism was extremely diffuse and lacked concrete objectives or organizational strategies. While its internal organization was philosophically based on the hierarchical structure of Confucianism with

its emphasis on duty, filial piety, and ethical social behavior, it imitated many of the organizational forms of Catholicism. However, unlike Catholic popes and prelates, the Cao Dai hierarchy lacked the organizational means to secure the adherence and unity of sect leaders. Furthermore, the religious framework was insufficiently structured so as to encourage harmony based on doctrinal consensus. While the syncretic composition of Caodaism had a wide appeal, there was little effort to systematically resolve the numerous internal contradictions within this syncretic framework. These contradictions, in addition to personality conflicts, became the basis of frequent divisions within the general organization. As early as 1927, there were Cao Dai groups that claimed no affiliation with the group's original religious seat in Tay Ninh province. By the early 1930's the Cao Dai movement was divided into 12 sects that were relatively independent of one another.[68] This factionalism frequently prevented concerted action on the part of the Cao Dai and limited the effective use of their numerical strength when confronting colonial authorities or revolutionary groups.

While the Cao Dai cannot be described as revolutionary, it was nonetheless political and favoured certain reforms that would minimize the colonial administration's control over indigenous political activities and economic development, and restore certain traditional values. In the late 1920's, political organizations such as the Constitutionalist Party and moderate nationalists attempted to link their urban activities with those of the Caodaists. It was believed that this would provide a strong rural base for the urban parties. And, the patriotic tendencies of the Cao Dai were sufficiently moderate so as

not to jeopardize the position of the more moderate political groups or incite colonial repression. These urban leaders realized the important influence of the Cao Dai in the countryside, and attempted to use the influence of the Cao Dai to offset the growing strength of the ICP among the Cochinchinese peasantry. While this developed into an important link between rural Caodaists and urban Nationalists, it did not generate policies and programs that had national appeal. Nor did it develop a firm organizational basis for unified action.

At one point the Cao Dai joined with various nationalist groups such as the Phuc Quoc and Dai Viet in the support of Prince Cuong De as the next Emperor of Vietnam, but they eventually sided with the French, who promised arms and autonomy in exchange for support in the war against the Vietminh. The constant shifting in Cao Dai alliances reflects its ideological emphasis on the necessity of ensuring the survival of the sect and maximizing its political power at the expense of other groups. This opportunistic orientation was evident in the fact that at one point the Cao Dai were subsidizing activities of the Trotskyists, approving anti-French activities, and counselling adepts to withhold taxes; while at the same time, the Caodaist organization was used to prevent peasants from causing problems in sect controlled areas. According to Hue-Tam Ho Tai, "The Caodaist organization was used to prevent the peasants from turning against landlords who were members of the sect while egging them on to oppose the colonial authorities and non-Caodaist landlords."[69] This form of opportunism was reinforced by the composition and orientation of the sect, and the relationship between its leaders and members.

Jane Werner estimates that over 75% of the leading Caodaist dignitaries were individuals who had profited from colonial rule. This meant, that while indigenous colonial officials and village notables forming the bulk of the leadership harboured resentment against the colonial regime because of the limitations it imposed upon the Vietnamese elite, they nonetheless had some interest in the preservation of some colonial institutions.[70] Furthermore, this factor limited the degree to which leaders were willing to discuss potential reforms that would affect the status quo. Although peasants were often attracted to Caodaism by promises which ranged from protection from illnesses and taxes, to mediation with the spirit world, there is sufficient evidence to argue that many joined the Cao Dai in order to strengthen patron-client relations. Werner argues convincingly that recruiting patterns among the peasantry closely followed the conversion of key village notables and indigenous colonial administrators, whose political and economic dependents also joined.[71] This suggests that much of the Cao Dai's support was based on attempts by peasants to establish a closer relationship to those with whom they were economically and politically linked. This also provides some explanation as to why the Cao Dai did not expand in areas where it could not attract the support of the indigenous elite. Unlike the Communists, the Cao Dai had to rely to a much larger extent on the conversion of local elites who controlled the economic and political life of a substantial number of peasants. This also meant that the Cao Dai could not endorse reforms that would threaten this portion of the sect, and this placed it at a greater

disadvantage vis a vis the Communists, who promised more far-reaching

changes in the socio-economic structure of Vietnamese society.

The Hoa Hao which was led by a charismatic prophet named Huynh

Phu So did not become an important sect until its proselyting activities

in 1940 increased its size dramatically. The principal appeal of the

Hoa Hao, apart from its important mystical attraction of the healings

and prophetic utterances of its founder, was its communitarian and

egalitarian platforms. However, the Hoa Hao did not advocate forced

redistribution or industrialization and urban life. They argued that

equality was defined in religious terms and meant the equal right and

ability to attain Buddhahood.[72]   With respect to communitarianism,

there was a xenophobic attitude towards groups and sectors of society

that were not part of the pioneer villages that featured predominantly

in the areas under Hoa Hao control. However, within the community a

great deal of emphasis was placed on individual piety and village

solidarity so that peasants could pool resources, exchange services, and

undertake collective endeavors which would benefit the collectivity.[73]

This closed society was only effective when external influences were

kept at a minimum and village elites demonstrated some degree of

paternalism.

The egalitarianism of the Hoa Hao was also reflected in its

laicization of Buddhism and the emphasis on the universal practice of

thriftiness.[74]   However, even this egalitarian element was more

spiritual than economic. Huynh's notion that economic problems were the

result of moral faults stressed the moral imperative of rich to impart

their wealth to the poor. The emphasis on the moral dimension of

economic problems and the Hoa Hao's unfamiliarity with national or international events emphasized its parochial focus. While the charisma of Huynh attracted a large following in the South, his following did not spread in the North. Also, internal bickering among different Hoa Hao leaders and competition from the larger Cao Dai sect limited expansion in the South.

Unlike, the Cao Dai, the leadership of this sect was primarily composed of illiterate peasants who were more interested in action than in questions of religious doctrine or political ideals.[75] Huynh's effective proselyting attracted numerous peasants who were disenchanted with the corruption and wealth of Buddhist monks, and costly traditional rites `and ceremonies practiced by Caodaists and most villages. His attempts to simplify the mysteries of Buddhism and his condemnation of the extravagance of some monks alienated many prominent Buddhists, but was warmly welcomed by many peasants.

While the Hoa Hao drew heavily on the organizational experience of the ICP during its brief alliance with the Vietminh in 1945, it lacked the evaluative and strategic qualities of Vietnamese Marxism-Leninism. While its Leninist cell and committee structure permitted the Hoa Hao to prevent infiltration and keep its organization intact, it lacked the other ideological components that could successfully direct further organizational expansion or keep its leadership united and the membership committed to a particular line of action.

The Vietminh and Multiple Sovereignty

The earlier section on Communist groups discussed the characteristics that placed them in an advantageous position vis a vis the Nationalists and the politico-religious sects. This section focuses on how these characteristics were used to establish a united front organization that dominated the Vietnamese revolutionary movement and permitted the ICP to direct the course of the revolution and establish a polity capable of challenging the hegemony of the colonial regime.

The emergence of multiple sovereignty in colonial Vietnam required various coalitions between normally inimical groups. What is important is that the ICP was able to maintain these coalitions through its united front organization, the Vietminh, long enough to create an organizational base that was capable of dominating the revolutionary movement. Without these initial coalitions it is unlikely that the ICP would have been successful in their bid for power, nor would it have been capable of directing the revolutionary movement without making serious compromises to other organizations.

Whereas the Traditional Sociological, Moral Economy, and Structural approaches emphasized the role of socio-economic changes, this section focuses on the political dimension of group conflict. This requires a more specific analysis of the group characteristics affecting political relationships between revolutionary groups and the colonial regime and adds an important dimension to the transnational and socio-economic factors discussed in the preceding chapter. Without analyzing group characteristics, one cannot explain how particular revolutionary

groups dominated the revolutionary movement or why some groups were capable of exploiting politico-military crises. But, unlike Popkin's Public Choice approach, group analysis in this chapter extends beyond the peasantry and examines the important, if not crucial role and development of revolutionary groups and their ability to act effectively in a revolutionary situation.

The initial stage of this development was the formation of the ICP's united front organization in 1941, the Vietminh, and its attempt to establish a liberated zone in the Viet Bac region of northern Tonkin. This process was a function of transnational relations and group strengths that permitted the ICP to establish a governmental structure that effectively supplanted the colonial administration's control of the region.[76] The second variable, which is the concern of this section, focuses on the qualities of the ICP that permitted the effective control of the six northern provinces in Tonkin, and which later enabled the ICP to expand its polity throughout Vietnam. It should be noted that none of the subtheoretical approaches provide any systematic explanation of this event. Yet, this was a crucial turning point in the revolution and demarcates the transformation of the ICP from a peripheral actor to a principal challenger to the colonial regime.

The earliest indication of the fragmentation of the colonial polity was the successful establishment of Vietminh liberation committees throughout northern Tonkin following the Japanese coup on March 6, 1945. This involved the support of ethnic minorities and peasants in Tonkin and was the first clear attempt to establish "pregovernment" organizations which were controlled by the Vietminh and

carried out the functions of local government.[77] Unlike the Nghe Tinh

Soviets which alienated village elites from the rest of the peasantry,

cadres were instructed to seek "good" notables and "active and reliable"

elders to run for village committee elections.[78] It was acceptable for

Workshop Liberation Committees to have both employees and employers

elected as committee members. Every attempt was made to ensure unity

and widespread support for the Committee system. This emphasis on the

administrative control over the population rather than military

domination was a feature that distinguished the ICP from its nationalist

counterparts. It proved to be very successful, because unlike earlier

attempts by anticolonial groups to establish a military presence in a

given region, the ICP did not give colonial authorities a concrete

target. In addition, the liberation committees could gradually supplant

the administrative tasks of colonial institutions. In effect, the ICP

was establishing an alternative governmental structure that was ensured

the support of the local inhabitants by giving the committees the

appearance of a popular body.

The ICP was able to retain control of these committees by

making sure that during their formation cadre and reliable allies were

placed in influential positions. This was possible because of the

crucial role of the cadre in the initial stages of committee formation.

It was the cadre that instigated elections and instructed individuals on

the functional and representative qualities of the Committee. As a

principal organizer, the cadre could effectively influence the

composition of committees while maintaining the image that the committee

was a democratic institution that reflected the will of the people.

The superiority of the ICP's leadership and domestic organization also generated external aid that helped fund their expansion in the Viet Bac and provided a relatively safe haven from colonial authorities. This was the case with the Dong Minh Hoi, where the ICP exploited KMT aid at the expense of the Nationalists. Formed by the KMT as an umbrella organization in 1943, it was designed to unite the various nationalist factions residing in South China and it was to serve two important functions.[79] First, it would provide the KMT with a reliable ally to install in Vietnam when it chose to enter the northern and central states following the defeat of Japan; and second, it would provide the Chinese with military support and intelligence in Vietnam. However, the persistent factionalism and lack of cohesion within all of the nationalist groups prevented the Dong Minh Hoi from working effectively within South China or in Vietnam. Without any strong nationalist domestic organizations, the nationalists could not provide the Chinese with the reconnaissance they required. For the KMT, the ICP and its domestic Vietminh organization provided the only alternative to the nationalists. Led by Ho Chi Minh, the ICP demonstrated to the KMT that it could provide the necessary services without appearing to threaten the strategic imperatives of the KMT. Consequently, local KMT leaders permitted the ICP to dominate the Dong Minh Hoi and unwittingly use the Dong Minh Hoi's resources to strengthen the Vietminh.[80]

The KMT's recognition of the Vietminh following the restructuring of the Dong Minh Hoi, facilitated the Vietminh operations on either side of the border. In addition, it represented a significant

diplomatic victory on the part of the ICP and increased the esteem of the Vietminh throughout Tonkin and South China.[81] This aided their expansion in Tonkin at the expense of the Nationalist groups. Also, their strength in the north eventually provided a firm base for expanding and developing organizational strength in weak areas such as Cochinchina and Annam.

Another important factor permitting the ICP to establish a polity in the Viet Bac, and later expand this polity to other regions, was its successful alliance and assimilation of the Tho minority into the Vietminh organization. The ethnic minorities formed an important component of Vietminh's operations in the highlands surrounding the densely populated and French controlled delta regions. While both the French and the ICP successfully established alliances with the various ethnic tribes throughout Vietnam, the Vietminh/Tho alliance proved to be more successful. Aligning with the Tho had a number of advantages. First, the Tho disliked the colonial regime because of its previous abuses and this minimized the possibility that they would align with the French. Second, the Tho were the only highland ethnic minority that were familiar with the Vietnamese language. While these factors made the Tho a potentially good ally, it was the way in which the ICP integrated Tho tribesmen into the Vietminh organization that proved to be the deciding factor. Rather than align with the purpose of creating a Vietnamized elite that would permit the ICP to pacify and control the Tho, the Vietminh was used to assimilate the Tho and offer them unrestricted social mobility based on military and political talents.[82] This differed from the French who carried out contradictory policies,

one attempting to secure the loyalty of highland tribes by guarding

their autonomy, the other attempting to impose direct rule on minority

affairs. In regions where the latter policy was less effective, as with

the Tai west of the Red River, the French were assured of tribal loyalty

but the autonomy prevented assimilation with Vietnamese supporting the

French or with other tribes loyal to the French.   In many respects,

French attempts to create autonomous zones and divisions among the

ethnic minorities for the purpose of preventing alliances with the

Vietminh, severely impeded future attempts at unified and cohesive

action against the Vietminh.[83] In addition, the French were frequently

willing to withdraw support from their loyal ethnic minorities when

strategic concerns required temporary withdrawals. This strained faith

in the colonial regime's willingness to defend minorities against the

Vietminh. This contributed to the absence of coherent political support

for the French in the latter part of the Indochina conflict. According

to McAlister,

> Faced with the sophisticated military strategy
> of the tightly structured Viet Minh, the
> political divisiveness which had once
> facilitated French rule now proved to be a great
> liability. It meant that the French were forced
> to surrender to the Communists despite the fact
> that the bulk of its armed forces in Indochina
> remained intact.[84]

While the ICP and the Vietminh were able to operate effectively

in the Viet Bac throughout the latter stages of World War II, the August

revolution required the Vietminh to quickly spread its influence

throughout Vietnam, and just as rapidly, neutralize potential rivals

through coalitions and compromise. It was during this period that the

Vietminh first controlled state institutions at a national level, particularly the administrative and coercive institutions formerly managed by the Japanese and French. Also, the Vietminh was still developing its military structure and did not have the capacity to maintain control of these institutions militarily. The need for temporary support necessitated a form of power sharing with other Vietnamese groups in which the ICP had to relinquish some of its control over the revolutionary movement until it had grown strong enough to confront its competitors and the French simultaneously.[85] This required the partial dismantling of the ICP, which was viewed as a Communist threat by many sectors of Vietnamese society.[86]

The ability of the ICP to use these coalitions to its advantage proved to be an important factor in their success against the French. This success was primarily due to the ideological and organizational basis of the united front policy which permitted the ICP to be very flexible in its alliances and organization of mass support. For example, following the August revolution, the ICP had to be sufficiently moderate as the leading component of the newly established Democratic Republic of Vietnam so as not to alienate the moderate elements within the nationalist alliance. On the other hand, it had to remain relatively progressive so as not to lose its existing popular support or fail to increase that support. In this context, the ICP recognized independence as the dominant issue, but "carefully sketched a course to independence that assiduously meandered through all sorts of other concerns."[87] Proposed political reforms included demands for universal suffrage, ethnic minority rights, and civil liberties. Economic

programs called for the abolition of numerous colonial taxes which would be replaced by more equitable forms of taxation; the confiscation of property belonging to the French, Japanese, and indigenous compradors; the nationalization of foreign banks; the redistribution of public lands; rent controls for agricultural land; and new policies for irrigation improvements and land settlements. Social and cultural policies called for eight hour work days; employment and crime prevention programs; the construction of new hospitals, schools, and child-care services; the establishment of compulsory education with allowance for minority languages; and support for numerous other sporting and artistic events. There were also special provisions that guaranteed the economic rights of capitalists, landlords, merchants, and civil servants.

The Vietminh's proposed reforms offered something to everyone. The ability of the ICP to formulate such an extensive package of proposals was in part a function of their ideological maturity. Competing groups failed to propose alternative reforms and consequently were unable to attract support on the basis of their policy suggestions. Furthermore, the domestic structure of the ICP and the Vietminh provided a trustworthy organizational base for implementing these reforms. While the ICP contained only 5,000 members during the early stages of the August revolution, each member represented access to and control of many more followers and auxiliary organizations.[88] These organizations were an important component of the Vietminh and its affiliated committees and associations.[89] This organizational framework effectively implemented

key policies such as famine relief for communities faced with starvation in 1945 and 1946.

The policies and organization of the Vietminh encouraged the temporary support of numerous groups throughout Vietnam. For example, the united front policy of the Vietminh attracted the support of various religious groups. Buddhist and Catholic associations became important supporters of the Vietminh-led independence movement following the August revolution. By the time these non-revolutionary groups became disenchanted with the Vietminh, it had become the dominating force in the revolutionary movement.[90] However, the period during which these groups supported the Vietminh provided the ICP with time to develop its organizational strength before confronting its domestic competitors and external enemies such as the French. The united front became a method of advancing the revolutionary movement while increasing the strength of the ICP relative to other revolutionary groups inside or outside of the Vietminh.

It was the ideological and organizational orientation of the ICP that was a critical factor in its ability to exploit the position of the French and its rivals in the revolutionary movement by focusing on the political dimension of the revolutionary process. The united front principle was expanded in the late 1940's when non-ICP members in the Vietminh front became suspicious of the covert influence of Communism. The ICP formed the Lien Viet which was a broad patriotic front that appealed to the nationalist sentiments of all Vietnamese. It was partially merged with the Vietminh to render the revolutionary movement more appealing to nationalists without jeopardizing the ICP's control

over the entire movement. This demonstrated the flexibility of the ICP's ideological framework and organizational structure.

The leading role of the Vietminh in the August revolution and the subsequent effectiveness of their reform proposals and efforts to implement these reforms created a situation where other revolutionary groups could not oppose the Vietminh without appearing as lackeys of the KMT or the French. This was true of other groups regardless of their revolutionary orientation. This neutralized much of the overt Vietnamese opposition to the Vietminh in the years prior to the Bao Dai solution, where the French attempted to establish a Vietnamese state that was still controlled by the French. During this period, the ICP was able to attack rival groups who were potential threats to their domination of the revolutionary movement. They effectively attacked the weaker nationalist groups which could not rely on KMT military aid after the Sino-French accords. Similarly, the sects and non-revolutionary nationalists were forced to accept the leadership of the ICP in the Vietminh or join the French. This placed both groups in a difficult position. They were forced to justify their rejection of the independence offered by the Vietminh, and at the same time were being pressured by the French to expend greater resources fighting the Vietminh. This was counterproductive for the sects who were desperately trying to fend off encroachments by colonial authorities and the Vietminh in areas under their control.

While the ICP shared government posts with nationalists in the late 1940's and early 1950's, they were simultaneously developing their control over the lower echelons of the Vietminh and the military. This

was facilitated by their ideological emphasis on the political dimension

of the revolutionary process and a membership that was committed to

inculcating this ideological framework in all participants in the

revolutionary movement. Thus, the ICP organized parallel party

organizations at all levels of the Vietminh administration and military.

This made sure that the ICP had some control and considerable influence

on the tactics and policies of the various branches of government that

were established in liberated zones. This also ensured that in the case

of problems, where the ICP was losing control over sectors of the

Vietminh or members were becoming disenchanted, it could react quickly

and replace the command structure with one of its own making.

Much of this control was the result of the careful formation of

a dedicated cadre and a united leadership. While this factor was

stressed earlier in the section on Communist parties, it should be added

that this was a crucial factor in the success of the ICP. As Douglas

Pike states, the driving forces in the lives of the ICP leadership was

their commitment to anticolonialism and the modernization of Vietnam

using a socialist/communist model.[91] Likewise, the constant emphasis

on ideological commitment was stressed at all levels of the party. This

element became an important factor in the ICP's attempt to recruit among

workers and peasants. New recruits, usually attached to the various

military organizations within the Vietminh were carefully indoctrinated

and all soldiers were expected to spread propaganda among the

population. The ICP felt that it was crucial in its war effort to

emphasize continuously the political dimension of the revolution. It

was argued that correctly inculcated cadre and personnel would become

politically reliable and enthusiastic revolutionaries. They would each

be capable of the dual task of working as a political agent and

revolutionary fighter.[92] This resulted in few desertions and

infrequent morale problems.[93]

One final point which clarifies the relationship between all of

the group attributes and the revolutionary experience of the ICP, is its

ideological conception of <u>dau tranh</u>, or the people as an instrument of

war.[94] This concept involved the complete integration of the political

and military scope of the revolutionary process, and focused on

population in its entirety as the foundation of the revolutionary

movement. This was necessitated by: 1) control of the people; 2)

forging them into a weapon; 3) hurling the weapon into battle.[95] This

was accomplished through the basic organizational instrument of the

united front, which was an "organization of organizations, casting a

vast web over the people, emeshing them."[96] According to Pike,

> These organizations become channels of communication, which is their primary use; and they make rational appeals to self-interest, which are shored up by other organizational instruments of coercion. Through organization, mobilization becomes possible. The trinity is forged. The people, now organized, mobilized, and motivated, are set against their own society to drain its coherent strength. In the end victory goes to the side that gets the best organized, stays the best organized, and can most successfully disorganize the other.[97]

Conclusion

The preceding examination of the application of ideology,

resources, organization, leadership, and membership provides a general

understanding of how the ICP and its affiliated organizations were able to establish its dominance and increase control over different segments of Vietnamese society and different geographical regions. While this is not comprehensive, it attempts to focus only on the crucial factors that distinguished the ICP from its competitors. These factors permitted the ICP to establish a challenging polity; form coalitions that strengthened the ICP's position vis a vis the colonial regime and other revolutionary groups; and finally, permitted the ICP to consolidate its power and expand its polity.

NOTES

[1] Charles Tilly, Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984), pp. 28ff..

[2] This differs from the Socio-historical model which focuses on classes and broader social and political structures (ie. states). However, it is important to note that neither Skocpol's nor Tilly's theoretical framework utilizes individuals (as is the case of the social psychological model) or societies (as does the general systems model) as a principal unit of analysis.

[3] Another method of determining the population within the polity model is to identify the government and then identify the population over which that government exercises control. However, in the context of revolutionary Vietnam, it is better to identify the population and then identify all of the governments exercising control within the population, and designating the principal revolutionary force and the colonial administration as the primary reference points. See Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., Inc., 1978), p. 52.

[4] Ibid., p. 52.

[5] Ibid., p. 54.

[6] Ibid., pp. 54ff.. Interest refers to the shared advantages and disadvantages resulting from group interaction. Organization describes the extent of common identity and unifying structure within the population and among groups. Mobilization indicates the extent to which groups control resources and can utilize these resources in a "joint" effort. Opportunity designates three elements that describe the relationship between interest and current conditions: power, repression, and opportunity/threat. Power is the extent to which the outcomes of group interaction are favourable. Repression refers to the increasing cost of collective action. And opportunity/threat identifies the extent to which a group is vulnerable to the claims of other groups enhancing or reducing the likelihood of interest realization.

[7] For Tilly, collective action in its simplest form consists of "people's acting together in the pursuit of common interests ...", and results from "... changing combinations of interests, organization, mobilization, and opportunity." Ibid., p. 7.

[8] In this conflictual setting, Tilly describes politics along five crucial continuums where the extreme position in each represents a revolutionary situation: 1) transfer of power, 2) social change, 3) illegitimacy of political action, 4) scale of collective action, and 5) locus of action with "underdogs". Charles Tilly, "Revolutions and Collective Violence", Handbook of Political Science: Macro-Political

Theory, vol. 3, eds. F.I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, (Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Welsley Pub. Co., Inc., 1975), p. 501.

9 Cf. ibid., p. 61.

10 The Public Choice model assumes that individuals exist as self-maximizers and function on the basis of a cost/benefit calculus. While I do not refute the partial validity of this position, I have argued throughout this thesis that this assumption is not sufficient as an overall explanation of behavior, particularly in the revolutionary context.

11 Similar to Tilly's notion of multiple sovereignty is Peter Amann's description of revolution as the breakdown, momentary or prolonged, of the state's monopoly of power. Although Amann emphasizes the role of "habits of obedience" in his discussion of power struggles within the state, he also attempts to address factors that indicate group strength (ie. organization and support), and their role in determining potential conflicts at the state level. Peter Amann, "Revolution: A Redefinition", Issues in Comparative Politics, eds. Robert J. Jackson and Michael B. Stein, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1971), pp. 370-385.

12 Tilly, "Revolutions and Collective Violence", p. 521. It should be noted that one of the weaknesses in Tilly's model is his inability to explain how these "proximate causes" come about. It is Skocpol's approach that provides the theoretical dimension remedying this problem by focusing on structural developments at the domestic and international level (particularly changing transnational relations).

13 There are a number of circumstances where multiple polities may exist but not be classified as revolutionary. For example, polities that were recognized as sovereign and independent prior to any conflict are classified as a special category of war. Varying forms of conflict between an incumbent regime and a subordinate polity, and classified as either a revolt, rebellion, uprising, coup, coup d'etat etc.. See Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, pp. 191f.. According to Tilly, revolutionary situation or multiple sovereignty can only be ascribed to cases where,

> a government previously under the control of a single polity becomes the object of effective, competing, mutually exclusive claims on the part of two or more distinct polities. (Ibid., p. 191).

It also exists where significant parts of the population honour the claims of competing polities. Revolution is manifested when previously aquiescent members of this population are confronted with incompatible demands from the incumbent regime and "form an alternative body claiming to be the government ... and [these] previously acquiescent people obey the alternative body.": paying taxes, supplying its army and

administration with men and supplies, honouring its symbols, and yielding "other resources despite the prohibitions of a still existing government they formerly obeyed." Ibid., p. 192.

[14] Ibid., p. 208.

[15] Ibid., pp. 204f.. Tilly describes examples of these obligations as major government services providing employment, welfare, protection, and access to justice. In the case of colonial Vietnam, one should include repeated promises by the colonial administration that it would implement political and socio-economic reforms.

[16] Ibid., p. 209.

[17] This is clearly indicated in Vo Nguyen Giap's assertion that the French did not understand the political nature of the "war of liberation", and consequently focused on the military aspect of the war. Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army, (facsimile edition), (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pub., 1962), p. 42. I would argue that this was the result of an ideological orientation that neglected the crucial contradictions between the nature of colonial rule and the attempts to fight an enemy in a manner that reinforced and enhanced the negative and repressive qualities of colonialism. This weakness was used effectively by the ICP to coalesce grassroot support for the revolutionary movement, and is reflected in their emphasis on the ideological inculcation of the masses. For an interesting description of the inability of the French military to grasp the nature of the revolutionary movement, and their refusal to accept the fact that the Vietminh was capable of challenging the French Expeditionary forces see Lucien Bodard, The Quicksand War: Prelude to Vietnam, Trans. Patrick O'Brian, (Boston: Little Brown, 1967), passim.

[18] Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, p. 217.

[19] For a fuller discussion of these factors see ibid., pp. 217ff..

[20] It was pragmatic in the sense that the leadership within the ICP was able to modify the basic ideological framework to suit the needs of a revolutionary party in an Asian colonial society. Despite the fact that policy directives from the Comintern, on occasion, hindered the effectiveness and adaptability of the ICP (as with its emphasis on the leading role of the proletariat in a peasant based society), the ideological impact of the Comintern was vital to the success of the ICP. The Comintern provided the ICP with "revolutionary experience" and vital guidelines for developing an effective revolutionary movement: Vietnamese communism is beholden to this ideological framework for its "constant strictures on the need for discipline and organization and against terrorism and adventuristic acts," and faith in the certainty of ideological prescriptions, and the "whole complex structure of the united front". William J. Duiker, The Comintern and Vietnamese

Communism, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1975), p. 42.

21 For an interesting account of the ICP obsession with analyzing past mistakes and finding the "correct way", from a French perspective, see Lucien Bodard, The Quicksand War: Prelude to Vietnam, passim.

22 The most famous network was led by Phan Xich-Long, who directed several uprisings from 1911-1913 and later in 1916. According to Ralph B. Smith, this group, sometimes called the Phat-Te (Buddha-Virtue), was found in the southern provinces of Cholon and Gia Dinh. By 1916 there were associated groups in the provinces of Thu Dau Mot, Tay Ninh, My Tho, Tan An, Tra Vinh, and links with a number of villages in Cambodia. Other groupings of secret societies included those following the Taoist "soil-spirit" cult of Cao Van Long in Long Xuyen, Ben Tre, and Ba Ria; the Nghia Hoa societies in My Tho, Vinh Long, and Long Xuyen; and finally the Dong Bao Ai Chuong sects in Sa Dec province. Ralph B. Smith, "The Development of Opposition to French Rule in Southern Vietnam 1880-1940", Past and Present, No. 54, (Feb. 1972), pp. 108ff..

23 Ibid., p. 111.

24 See Alexander B. Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), pp. 31ff.. The White Lotus-style secret society was based on a religious hierarchy and governed in the context of a messianic religious framework. In the case of Phan Xich-Long it was Buddhism. The Triad society (sometimes called Heaven and Earth Societies) was more egalitarian and worked upon the basis of a "fraternal compact". According to Woodside:

> The power of the Triads, being more democratically distributed inside the organization than the White Lotus groups, often spread more quickly, with younger men finding it easier to work their way up to the top of the leadership. (Ibid., p. 33).

However, this rendered the Triad groups more susceptible to internal schisms, more so than in the White Lotus societies.

25 Cf. Smith, "The Development of Opposition to French Rule in Southern Vietnam 1880-1940", p. 112.

26 Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, p. 34.

27 Ibid., pp. 34f..

28 Thus, ideology is action-related and influences how an actor will behave within a given set of perceived circumstances. This implies that ideology is more than just ideas, it is ideas that are in the

process of being translated into action. See the use of Mullin's conceptual framework in Chapter One.

29 The VNQDD and Thanh Nien shared the same motto: "First make a national revolution; then make a world revolution." Huynh Kim Khanh, Vietnamese Communism 1925-1945, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 92.

30 See the section on the world historical context of ideology in Chapter Four. The socialist concepts of Sun Yat-sen in China and the influence of Communism in France on Vietnamese who were working and studying in the metropole helped spread the essential concepts of Marxism and Leninism. This was primarily the result of Vietnamese intellectuals, who formed the bulk of the early revolutionary movement, and their search for western ideas that would aid in the overthrow of colonialism.

31 Ibid., fn. 2, p. 92.

32 Ibid., p. 92.

33 Cf. I. Milton Sacks, "Marxism in Viet Nam", Marxism in Southeast Asia, ed. Frank N. Trager, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), pp. 120f.; John T. McAlister, Jr., Vietnam: The Origins of Revolution, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), pp. 85f..

34 Ibid., pp. 86f..

35 Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle of Indochina, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), p. 83.

36 Woodside, Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, p. 64.

37 Ibid., p. 179.

38 Huynh Kim Khanh, Vietnamese Communism 1925-1945, pp. 93f..

39 Ho Chi Minh, who founded the Thanh Nien in Canton in 1925, was vice-president of the Peasant International (Kresintern) which was formed under the aegis of the Comintern. In this capacity Ho stressed the role of the peasant in the revolutionary process and incorporated this emphasis in the Thanh Nien. As early as 1924, in an address to the Fifth Comintern, Ho argued that peasants in the French colonies were "ripe for insurrection", and that the only reason for the failure of earlier peasant uprisings was lack of organization and leadership. See Ho Chi Minh, "Report on the National and Colonial Questions at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International", On Revolution, ed. Bernard B. Fall, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pubs., 1967), p. 67.

Ho also argued that the it was the responsibility of the Communist International to bring the peasants of colonial societies into the

revolutionary movement. See Ho Chi Minh, "Armed Insurrection:", cited in Pierre Brocheux, "Vietnamese Communism and the Peasants: Analogy and Originality in Vietnamese Experience", Vietnamese Communism in Comparative Perspective, ed. William S. Turley, (Boulder, Co. : Westview Press, 1980), p. 78. In 1929 Ho attacked the Chinese Communists for their willing collaboration with the Kuomintang in the suppression of peasant organizations and revolutionary activity. He argued:

> Victory for the proletarian revolution is impossible in agrarian and semi-agrarian countries if the revolutionary proletariat is not actively supported by the mass of the peasant population.... The party of the proletariat must coordinate the peasant movement with the goals and the revolutionary operations of the proletariat in the industrial centers.... The organization and preparation of coordinated action, if possible should be the main goal of the revolutionary party in agrarian and semi-agrarian countries. [Emphasis in original]. (Ibid.).

Furthermore, Ho states that the proper role of the vanguard is to agitate among the peasants, lead the masses by helping them to organize and formulate programs emphasizing social differences in the countryside, and place the peasant movement under the guiding control of the party.

[40] Gareth Porter, "Proletariat and Peasantry in Early Vietnamese Communism", Asian Thought and Society, Vol. 1, No. 3, (Dec. 1976), p. 336.

[41] Ibid.. According to Porter, Ho redefined the term "proletarian" in his lectures such that it could not be distinguished from "worker and peasant masses". This emphasized Ho's contention that both the peasantry and the proletariat were the principal forces of the revolution.

[42] During this period Ho Chi Minh was acting as a representative of the Comintern and was not involved in the activities of the Thanh Nien. He left the party's headquarters in South China in 1928 and spent time in Siam, Moscow, and Western Europe, not returning until 1930 when he was called back to unify the Communist parties formed after the breakup of the Thanh Nien.

[43] "Theses on the Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies and Semi-Colonies", in Helene Carrere d'Encausse and Stuart R. Schram, Marxism and Asia: An Introduction with Readings, (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1969), p. 237.

[44] William J. Duiker, "The Revolutionary Youth League: Cradle of Communism in Vietnam", The China Quarterly, No. 51, (July-Sept. 1972), p. 480.

45 Huynh Kim Khanh, Vietnamese Communism 1925-1945, p. 93.

46 Duiker differs from Huynh, stating that it was the VNQDD that
was unwilling to form an alliance with the ICP. I think that it is fair
to say that both are partially correct. During this period both the
VNQDD and the Thanh Nien were prone to internal factionalism and had
representatives at different organizational levels. It is quite likely
that the power struggles in each organization, and the ideological
diversity prevalent in each group (ranging from strict nationalism to
international socialism), policies and programs favouring alliances
seldom corresponded. Also, the increasing ideological strictness of the
ICP, and KMT raids on the ICP's headquarters in Canton, increased the
animosity between the VNQDD and ICP. In addition, the defeat of the
VNQDD at Yen Bay forced many of its followers to rely heavily on the
KMT, thereby influencing their attitude towards Communism. It is also
possible that the various factions and subgroups within each
organization may have initiated different offers at various times
without the knowledge of other members of the main organization. Cf.
Ibid., pp. 92ff. and Duiker in, The Comintern and Vietnamese Communism,
pp. 9ff.. and "The Revolutionary Youth League: Cradle of Communism in
Vietnam", p. 486. In the latter work he states that the VNQDD made
overtures to the Tan Viet and a group called the Youth party, but never
with the Thanh Nien.

47 This only fueled the existing jealousies and ideological
clashes already prevalent in VNQDD-Thanh Nien relations.

48 See Duiker, The Comintern and Vietnamese Communism, p. 20.
This would only be a factor if the organizational shift was known by the
KMT. In any event, the Thanh Nien's affiliation with the CCP was reason
enough for the KMT to suppress its activities.

49 The DDCSD is translated as the Indochinese Communist Party.
But, in order to distinguish it from the later ICP I will only refer to
it in its Vietnamese form.

50 See Porter, p. 335.

51 See Huynh Kim Khanh, Vietnamese Communism 1925-1945, pp.
124ff..

52 Ibid., pp. 99ff..

53 Ibid..

54 Duiker, The Comintern and Vietnamese Communism, pp. 24ff..

55 Sean Kelly and Collin Mackerras, "The Application of Marxism-
Leninism to Vietnam", Marxism in Asia, eds. Sean Kelly and Collin
Mackerras, (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 202. The fact that the top
leaders shared similar mandarin, gentry, and intellectual/professional

backgrounds may have facilitated this ability to form a consensus on many issues. In fact, the education of the ICP elite was a factor that distinguished them from the elite of their rivals. See, Douglas Pike, History of Vietnamese Communism, 1925-1976, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), p. 67.

[56] As Pierre Brocheux points out, there was a persistent dialectic over the role and function of class conflict and the necessity of overriding this conflict in order to establish a united front against colonial domination. This created practical problems as the party vacillated between policies emphasizing class conflict and those which emphasized national liberation. "Les communistes et les paysans dans la révolution vietnamienne", Histoire de l'Asie du Sud-Est, ed. Pierre Brocheux, (Lille: Presse Universitaire de Lille, 1981), p. 256. This problem, while never entirely resolved, was rectified at the practical level with the initial implementation of a popular front policy from 1936-39, and the united front policy from 1941-45. The latter focused on the need for tax reform that would benefit all levels of the peasantry, policies that would protect middle and poor peasants from being forced into tenancy, and progressive reforms for agricultural labour that would establish minimum salaries and better working conditions. The united front policy included these proposals but included a broader national appeal directed against colonialism. Both of these programs attempted to minimize the implications of class conflict in order to unite various classes in the united struggle against colonialism. Another difference was the emphasis on using legal and semi-legal organizations and democratic institutions in the popular front policy. The united front approach focused more closely on the creation of a revolutionary force that could confront the regime militarily.

[57] See Porter, "Proletariat and Peasantry", passim. Cf. Huynh Kim Khanh, Vietnamese Communism 1925-1945, pp. 111ff..

[58] Ibid., p. 197.

[59] Ibid., pp. 197f..

[60] Ibid., pp. 195f..

[61] The ICP was able to expand its presence and visibility through the overt political activity of La Lutte and its role in the institution of popular fronts throughout Vietnam. While the popular fronts were unable to generate unity among indigenous political and religious organizations, or pressure the colonial regime to implement reforms, they did increase popular awareness of the ICP and portrayed the ICP as a credible and viable alternative to the existing poltical organizations.

62 Cf. ibid., pp. 194ff. and Hue-Tam Ho Tai, <u>Millenarianism and Peasant Politics in Vietnam</u>, (Cambridge, Mt.: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 129.

63 See Pierre Brocheux, "L'Occasion Favorable", p. 146.

64 David G. Marr, "Vietnam: Harnessing the Whirlwind", <u>Asia-The Winning of Independence</u>, ed. Robin Jeffery, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), pp. 187-188.

65 See Marr, <u>Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945</u>, pp. 325ff.. Borrowing from the Red Army, the concept of the protracted struggle was used to instruct individuals how to fight in numerous ways without expecting immediate results or growing apathetic. The altruistic struggle involved conscious actions that increased the chance of survival for the group while increasing the risk of death for the individual. Equal emphasis was also given to the concept of the cooperative struggle, where individuals pool resources and capacities to accomplish tasks that could not be done individually. Another concept, borrowed from the Soviets, was the notion of emulation. In this case individuals were encouraged to excel or equal others with primary emphasis on the recognition of those furthering collective objectives.

66 Cf. Jayne Susan Werner, <u>Peasant Politics and Religious Sectarianism: Peasant and Priest in the Cao Dai in Viet Nam</u>, New Haven, Ct.: Monograph Series No. 23, (Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1981), pp. 6ff..

67 Ibid., p. 13. Catholicism was not seen as an alternative by many Vietnamese because it was frequently perceived as the religion of the conquerors.

68 Hue-Tam Ho Tai, <u>Millenarianism and Peasant Politics in Vietnam</u>, p. 87.

69 Ibid., p. 104.

70 See Werner, p. 21.

71 According to Werner,

> Peasant dependents of certain village notables and district of province-level administrative officials seemed to have joined Caodaism subsequent to their superiors' membership. Village and district notables established Cao Dai cults in which they became the officiating dignitaries. When the founder of a cult was a landowner, it could often be determined that his relatives, his tenant farmers (<u>ta-dien</u>) or day laborers and other economic dependents, ere among the first to join as his tin-do [new believer]. High-

ranking administrative officials, whether still in office or retired, who became Cao Dai dignitaries, could also often gain large followings in the areas where they worked. (Ibid., p. 25).

[72] Hue-Tam Ho Tai, Millenarianism and Peasant Politics in Vietnam, p. 152.

[73] Ibid., p. 154.

[74] See ibid., Chapter Nine (The Hoa Hao Ideology).

[75] Ibid., p. 121.

[76] The latter variable was discussed in the preceding chapter and focused on: 1) the extent to which changing transnational relations prevented the French and Japanese from suppressing revolutionary activity in Tonkin, and permitted the Chinese to aid the development of a revolutionary force in northern Vietnam; and 2) the degree to which class transformations continued to exacerbate schisms between different sectors of Vietnamese society that could be used advantageously by the ICP to organize mass support.

[77] This was influenced by the capacity of the ICP's ideological framework to provide a viable evaluative and policy context that correctly assessed the organizational and strategic needs of the Vietminh during the early 1940's.

[78] "Instructions of the General Committee of the Viet Minh, April 16, 1945", in Vietnam: The Definitive Documentation of Human Decisions, Vol. 1, ed. Gareth Porter, (Stanfordville, NY: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc., Pubs., 1979), pp. 27-29.

[79] The Dong Minh Hoi was formed by the KMT after an earlier attempt at unification on the part of the nationalists dissolved because of internal disputes.

[80] See King C. Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 60ff..

[81] Chu Van Tan, Reminiscences on the Army for National Salvation, Tran. Mai Elliot, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1974), p. 139.

[82] John T. McAlister, Jr., "Ethnic Minorities and the Viet Minh: A Key to the Indochina War", Southeast Asian Tribes, Minorities, and Nations, ed. Peter Kunstadter, Vol. II, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 799.

83 See ibid., pp. 789f. This policy increased traditional mistrust and accentuated the different interests among the various ethnic minorities.

84 Ibid., p. 790.

85 See William J. Duiker, "Building the United Front: The Rise of Communism in Vietnam, 1925-1954", Communism in Indochina, eds. Joseph J, Zasloff and Mcalister Brown, (London: Lexington Books, 1975), pp. 19ff..

86In November 1945, the ICP was officially dissolved in order to ease fears that the Vietminh was a communist threat, although it continued to function and grow during this period. Nevertheless, this reduced the likelihood that the KMT would act unilaterally to install a Nationalist group in the political leadership of the newly established Democratic Republic of Vietnam; and second, this facilitated the formation of coalitions with Nationalists and other sectors of Vietnamese society who were suspicious or opposed to Communism. It also created confusion in the metropole over arguments concerning the necessity of reestablishing French power in Vietnam in order to combat Communism. However, the decision to dissolve the party partially alienated the ICP from many proponents of International Communism who accused the ICP of deviationism, affecting their relationship with other Communist parties. Cf. Philippe Devillers and Jean Lacouture, End of a War: Indochina, 1954, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pubs., 1969), p. 13.

87 Truong Buu Lam, Resistance, Rebellion, Revolution: Popular Movements in Vietnamese History, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1984), p. 42. The following discussion is based on ibid., pp. 42f.

88The is estimated that the Vietminh controlled 1,000 out of 1,334 villages in Cochinchina in 1946. By the end of war support for the Vietminh had dropped to 35% of the Cochinchinese population. Given the fact that the ICP was weakest in the South, it was still greater than Cao Dai which was the next largest group in Cochinchina. See Werner, p. 50. It is estimated that the official Communist party, the Lao Dong (Workers Party), grew to 100,000 in the early 1950's. There was a steady growth in the membership of the ICP following the August revolution. This growth continued after the formation of the Lao Dong in the early 1950's.

89Ibid., p. 43.

90For example, the Catholic hierarchy supported the Vietminh form August 1945 to 1948. By the first half of 1949, Catholic authorities were attempting to remain neutral to Vietminh and French overtures. However, by October 1949, the Vietminh attacked Catholic enclaves in specific areas. According to Fall, this may have been the result of the hardening of the Catholic position on Communism or the extent of clergy

control in these areas. Nevertheless, as late as 1953, there was still some Catholic support for the Vietminh although most of the clergy had sided with the Franco-Nationalists. See Bernard B. Fall, Le Viet-Minh, (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1960), pp. 166ff.

[91]Douglas Pike, History of Vietnamese Communism, 1925-1976, (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1978), p. 67.

[92]George K. Tanham, Communist Revolutionary Warfare, Rev. edition, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Pubs., 1967), pp. 63f.

[93]Ibid., p. 64.

[94]See Douglas Pike, PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), pp. 220f.

[95]Ibid., p. 220.

[96]Ibid., pp. 220f..

[97]Ibid., p. 221.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Summary

The purpose of this thesis has been to develop a model of
revolution that improves upon the approaches that have attempted to
explain the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam. Consequently, I
have followed a number of steps: first, it was necessary to examine the
predominant traditional universal models of revolution, and demonstrate
the theoretical inadequacy of these models; this is followed by an
analysis of the advantages of using two newer models in the Historical
Sociological approach which incorporates two important variables, the
international and group conflict component of revolution. Both of these
variables are either missing or undeveloped in the traditional universal
approaches, and yet, they constitute a crucial aspect of the
revolutionary process. The concept of ideology is included at this
stage in order to rectify what I consider to be weaknesses in Skocpol's
and Tilly's models.

The second step provides a general historical outline of the
various phases in the development of the Vietnamese revolutionary
movement. This gives the reader a basic understanding of the historical
developments, which are not discussed chronologically in the later
analysis of the applicability of theoretical approaches to Vietnam. The
historical development of Vietnam is divided into three periods: the

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pre-revolutionary, transitional, and revolutionary phases. These divisions are based on the changing configuration and orientation of the indigenous groups opposing the colonial regime. The first phase encompasses the initial development of anticolonial groups employing traditional methods of organization for the purpose of restoring traditional monarchical and Confucian institutions. The second phase marks the growing influence of western ideas and the gradual rejection of traditional methods of organizing. It constitutes a new direction in the anticolonial movement. This cannot be called revolutionary because the various groups representing the anticolonial movement at this time still focus on the restoration of many traditional institutions. While concepts of democracy and revolution were being examined during this period, it was not until later that groups were formed on the basis of revolutionary ideologies proposing the transformation of traditional and colonial socio-economic and political institutions.

Phase three is the most important period because it focuses on the actual inception of revolutionary groups and describes the various characteristics of their development. This phase covers approximately four decades and is divided into four stages which distinguish important changes in the revolutionary movement. The first stage demarcates the genesis of the revolutionary movement and the creation of principal revolutionary groups from 1925-1931. This stage also includes the first major setback to the revolutionary movement and chronicles the temporary demise of the domestic organizations of the VNQDD and the ICP. The second stage describes the Popular Front period from 1935-1938 and the resurgence of revolutionary groups, and their subsequent suppression by

the colonial regime following the defeat of the Blum government. The third stage examines the formation of the united front under the banner of the Vietminh and the developments following the August revolution until 1949. The years following 1949, until the Geneva accords in 1954, constitute the final stage. This is distinguished from the prior stage because of the transition from a stalemate between colonial and revolutionary forces to the general offensive of the Vietminh supported by the Communist Chinese.

The second step provides the basic historical background for the next step, which critiques the subtheoretical models that have been applied to colonial Vietnam. This is important because step three focuses on the inability of the four principal subtheoretical approaches to provide models that are theoretically operative and consistent with historical evidence. The third step is broken down into four major sections, of which three correspond to the general theories discussed in step one. A correspondence exists between certain subtheoretical approaches and certain of the more general or holistic models. For example, in the case of the Traditional Sociological approach used by Mus and McAlister, the emphasis on cultural transformations, societal disequilibrium, and various forms of frustration is subject to some of the criticisms already leveled at the General Systems and Social Psychological models. While the approaches examined in step three represent a different level of theorizing, given they have a narrower scope and a specific orientation towards Vietnam and peasant societies in general, they encounter similar problems to those faced by the

general theories from which they drew their principal assumptions about revolutionary processes.

Similar to the Traditional Sociological approach, the Moral Economy models and Paige's structuralist framework also inherit some of the problems associated with the general theoretical model from which they borrow their principal concepts. Employing the Neo-Marxist notion of class and the role of capitalist development, the Moral Economy and Structuralist models are faced with an unenviable task of extending their primary emphasis on socio-economic developments to an explanation of revolutionary processes in developed and undeveloped regions of Vietnam. In both these models this requires an explanation of why revolutionary groups were not consistently successful in all regions, at least until the liberation of the Viet Bac zone prior to the end of World War II. And, when the Vietminh did establish a liberated zone, the socio-economic analysis of these models fails to include the important political context that permitted this development.

Popkin's Public Choice model, while not directly connected to any of the general theories in step one, requires examination because it provides such a lucid critique of all the subtheoretical models which focus on broad societal or socio-economic transformations. Popkin's emphasis on the individual calculus for maximizing economic well-being highlights the discrepancies in the other models, particularly, the differences between developments at the regional and individual level. However, Popkin's rational self-maximizing peasant model does not explain the international and group factors surrounding the early formation of the ICP's support, nor does it explain the inability of the

colonial regime to combat the initial and subsequent growth of the revolutionary movement in the 1940's.

In all of the subtheoretical models there is no effort to systematically account for changing transnational relations or examine the political dimension of group conflict. These two variables are crucial if one is to understand the revolutionary process in colonial Vietnam, and this is one of the principal reasons why the socio-economic emphasis of the subtheoretical models fails to adequately explain the Vietnamese revolution. The inclusion of transnational and group conflict variables in one model provides an important theoretical component that helps explain why the ICP dominated the revolutionary movement and why the revolutionary movement developed in a particular manner.

It was in steps four and five that an alternative model was formulated. While each of these steps focuses on separate aspects of the revolutionary process, together they form a holistic approach to the Vietnamese revolution. Step four utilizes the principal components of Skocpol's model and includes ideology in its examination of international influences. It divides the revolutionary process into three variables: 1) the international context and its effect on the historical development of socio-economic and political structures and ideas, and how this influenced revolutionary developments; 2) the actual transformation of domestic socio-economic and political institutions, which gives some indication of the changing political and economic relationship between the state and society; and 3), the analysis of

transnational relations affecting the colonial regime's ability to maintain its hegemonic rule over Vietnamese society.

The international context of step four provides the general background surrounding the establishment of the colonial regime and the international factors influencing the unique colonial policies and socio-economic development. It also discusses the impact of world events and the concepts of societal and political change accompanying these events which influenced the Vietnamese and their conception of anticolonialism. Both of these elements helped form Vietnamese society and influence the nature and course of the revolutionary movement. This establishes the context of the second important variable in step four, the role of socio-economic and political developments and their impact on the relationship between the state and Vietnamese society.

Socio-economic and political developments in colonial Vietnam affected the revolutionary movement in three ways. First, the constantly increasing tax and monopoly burdens forced the colonial regime and the economic elite to increase their reliance on coercive expropriation. Second, land concession policies of the colonial regime and the increasing financial burdens being placed upon the peasantry resulted in significant changes in traditional landownership patterns. Consequently, these two factors resulted in the structural transformation of Vietnamese society. Traditional methods of social and economic mobility became less secure as the administration demonstrated its willingness to protect the economic interests of French residents and the Vietnamese elite who collaborated with the colonial authorities at the expense of peasants and the dissident scholar-gentry. The lower

strata of the peasantry became increasingly fluid as more peasants were forced to work in various occupations and at different locations in order to earn enough income to live and pay taxes. Indebtedness and the economic power of indigenous and colonial elites forced numerous peasants into sharecropping arrangements or into the agricultural labour force. Individuals profiting from French protection became increasingly reliant on the strength of colonial institutions to maintain the economic structure and control the supply and mobility of labour. Finally, political and administrative changes both ensured and facilitated this transformation. These changes were intended to enhance colonial control while simultaneously reducing bureaucratic expenses affecting the socio-economic structures and the political balance of the village. The restructuring of village administrations permitted new forms of economic exploitation, particularly with respect to the expropriation and privatisation of communal lands and the economic domination of particular sectors of Vietnamese society. These changes in the political landscape of colonial Vietnam reinforced the reliance on colonial institutions for the maintenance of the political and economic status quo. However, unlike the conclusions implicit in the subtheoretical approaches, these socio-economic and political institutional developments did not, out of necessity, culminate in revolution.

The subtheoretical models are correct in assuming that the socio-economic and political institutional transformation are important variables in the development of antagonisms and conflict between different sectors of society and the state. However, they fail to

account for the fact that unless something occurs that seriously impedes the state's control over its central means of coercion, there is little chance that a revolutionary movement will develop to the point where it can challenge the incumbent regime. Spontaneous revolts or localized and decentralized uprisings are ineffective against the resources of the modern state. It takes another important variable to create a situation where revolutionary groups have an opportunity to organize support throughout the country, and to centralize and coordinate their operations against the state. One of the few factors that can create the appropriate circumstances affecting the state to this extent is a change in transnational relations.

The pivotal argument in Skocpol's approach to revolution is that states succumb to revolution only when circumstances prevent the effective use of the regime's means of coercion. For Skocpol, it is transnational relations that bring about politico-military crises which in turn affect the state's capacity to maintain its rule through normal channels and existing institutions. For the state that must rely on coercion in its relations with large sectors of the society in which it governs, which was the case in colonial Vietnam, the politico-military crisis affects the fundamental relationships permitting the state to maintain and control the principal economic and political structures of that society. While a state that does not rely on as much coercion may also be confronted with politico-military crises, these crises will not affect its ability to govern to the same degree as its more coercion-prone counterpart. The fact that transnational relations have an important effect on the politico-military apparatus of the state

explains why transnational relations are such an important part of the revolutionary process.

The final section in step four is the analysis of transnational relations and their impact on the colonial regime. This becomes the crucial factor determining the emergence of a revolutionary situation. In other words, the major transformation of transnational relations during and following World War II created a situation where the colonial regime was no longer capable of exerting the same degree of control over Vietnamese society. The increased interference in Vietnamese affairs by Japan and China during the last two stages of the revolutionary phase both constrained the ability of colonial authorities to limit the activities of revolutionary groups and influenced the rise and expansion of more powerful revolutionary organizations.

The growing presence of Japan in the early 1940's encouraged militancy among the Vietnamese and later neutralized colonial forces in the coup on March 6. The increased willingness of the KMT to initially support the development of the Vietminh as an anti-Japanese ally aided the ICP in the expansion of its domestic revolutionary organization. While these were crucial factors influencing the development of a revolutionary organization that was ready and capable of taking advantage of the temporary political vacuum following the surrender of the Japanese, this does not explain why the ICP and its front organization, the Vietminh, was capable of translating this temporary political advantage into a powerful challenge to French authorities in their effort to reestablish colonialism, and to other groups which were challenging the ICP's dominance in the revolutionary movement.

Step five provides the theoretical framework used to explain those aspects of the revolutionary process that are not included in the preceding step. This last step focuses on five variables affecting the ability of revolutionary groups to mobilize support and act collectively. While group conflict is the context in which these variables function, it is the array of group characteristics in the revolutionary process that determines to some extent which groups dominate the revolutionary movement, and to what extent these groups successfully challenge the incumbent regime. This does not exclude the vital impact of transnational relations, but rather, takes the analysis one step further by examining group attributes that permit revolutionary groups to exploit politico-military crises induced by changing transnational relations.

Using Tilly's analysis of group resources, organization, leadership, and membership, step five examines the basic attributes and strengths of the predominant groups in colonial Vietnam. In order to render these four attributes more operational the concept of ideology is included as a means of clarifying the functional role of Tilly's concept of resources and organization, and placing these attributes in a broader context of leadership, collective action of the membership, group conflict, group mobilization, and the revolutionary process in general. This is important if one is to understand the fundamental differences between the principal groups in Vietnam, and the reason why the ICP was so successful in its domination and direction of the revolutionary movement.

The final aspect included in step five is the group attributes of the ICP and Vietminh which permitted the establishment of a viable polity. This polity became the principal challenge to the rule of the colonial regime. While the French had used the internal divisions and perpetual conflict between Vietnamese groups as an important basis for securing their domination of Vietnamese society, the ICP were able to unite diverse elements under a central command. This presented a formidable force which colonial authorities previously had never had to confront. Although Communist China played an important role in strengthening the ICP-led Vietminh to the point where it could challenge the French militarily, much credit must be given to the ICP, prior to its receiving CCP aid, for its organization and mobilization of sufficient support to permit the establishment of a region in Vietnam entirely under the control of revolutionaries. While this section does not examine the numerous details, both organizational and strategic, that precipitated a Vietminh-ICP victory, it does indicate crucial variables that explain why the Vietnamese revolutionary movement was successful in the context of particular transnational alignments. In other words, Tilly's general model of group conflict, with the inclusion of the concept of ideology, offers a more satisfying explanation of the revolutionary process and the reasons why particular groups were able to exploit revolutionary situations and capitalize on politico-military crises confronting the incumbent regime.

Conclusion

The study of revolution from a theoretical perspective, in the context of an actual case study, is advantageous from a number of points of view. First, the careful examination of the important variables within different models of the revolutionary process indicates to what extent these variables are historically relevant and theoretically operative. In other words, to what extent does a model's variables reflect a significant aspect of an actual historical revolutionary process, and are these theoretical abstractions capable of being identified with concrete and historically identifiable institutions, structures, and groups? One can assess the degree to which a model's emphasis on certain variables, and their theoretical function in the revolutionary process, corresponds to the more concrete historical understanding of the revolution under examination.

The second advantage of this approach is that it offers a method of comparing the adequacy of different models by demonstrating their respective ability to maintain a high degree of explanatory consistency between theoretical precepts and historical evidence. This is extremely important if one is to argue that one model is better than another. It means that it is not sufficient that a model of revolution be logically and internally sound, its explanation of the revolutionary process must also correspond to historical evidence.

While this may appear axiomatic, the criticisms of the various models of revolution in this thesis demonstrate an inability on the part of some models to maintain either internal logical coherence or close

correspondence between theoretical explanation and historical evidence. In varying degrees, this criticism is applicable to both the general and subtheoretical approaches to revolution. This is one reason why I chose to merge two theoretical models that emphasized the historical dimension of analysis and did not attempt to fit all events into a rigidly structured causal model. The formation of this syncretic version permitted a more convincing explanation of revolution in colonial Vietnam precisely because its theoretical orientation made allowances for the historical uniqueness of the Vietnamese revolution. This was a function of the particular variables emphasized in this model, its holistic orientation, and its approach to revolution using historical evidence. This does not mean that other models examined in this thesis did not rely on historical evidence. Rather, they failed to establish consistency between their explanation of the revolutionary process and the available historical evidence. This was in part a function of the limited variables they employed, and the extent to which they ignored variables that should have been included.

Despite the advantages of combining Skocpol's and Tilly's models of revolution, there is one disadvantage. Unlike the general models discussed in Chapter One, the Historical Sociological tradition has difficulty formulating a cohesive universal model of the revolutionary process. Rather, Skocpol's and Tilly's models excel in their explanation of the historical uniqueness of given revolutions. Instead of placing all revolutions in the framework of one single abstract model that focuses on generalized revolutionary behavior or developments, Skocpol and Tilly focus on political processes that occur

in particular revolutionary and non-revolutionary circumstances. This gives the analysis direction and orientation, without forcing the explanation to remain within the strictures of a more rigid theoretical framework.

I call this a disadvantage only in the sense that the traditional emphasis of the Social Sciences is the formulation of generalizations that are more universal in application. However, because of the multi-causal nature and complexity of revolutionary processes, attempts to postulate generalizations concerning revolutionary processes have resulted in models similar to those criticized in Chapters One and Three. In this context, what may appear as a disadvantage is fundamentally a strength. The reluctance of Tilly and Skocpol to formulate general models in the tradition of General Systems, Social Psychological, and Marxist/Neo-Marxist approaches results in explanations that more accurately reflect given historical circumstances. This does not mean that attempting to formulate general theories is misguided. But at present, such theories are incapable of generating convincing holistic and more universal models of revolution.

Finally, it should be noted that while this thesis does not pretend to have resolved the numerous contentions and disagreements surrounding the study of revolution, it has successfully explored the possibility of combining two important approaches to revolution, and demonstrated to some extent the potential explanatory capacity of this approach in the case of the Vietnamese revolution. With respect to the historical aspect of this thesis, the primary analytical and theoretical element of this work did not permit further historical analysis. But,

as I have maintained explicitly and implicitly throughout the thesis, the proper explanation of any event requires both theoretical and historical components. Despite the theoretical emphasis of this thesis I have endeavored to place most theoretical discussions in some historical context, particularly when this pertained to the analysis of revolutionary processes in colonial Vietnam. As an exploration of the possibility of improving existing approaches to revolution, the limited historical component of this thesis provides an important reference point for judging the validity and merit of combining Skocpol's and Tilly's models of revolution.

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