

French beliefs, standards of behavior, and values.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, French education created a new type of elite, which would eventually provide leadership for the nationalist movement. Many of these leaders had "the mind of a sceptic who would accept nothing which he could not verify from his own experience or by his own thinking."<sup>2</sup>

#### EARLY RESISTANCE AGAINST FRENCH RULE

Opposition to French rule began almost as soon as the French had occupied Cochinchina in 1862. It was led by all types of people, including peasants and fishermen, who were not prepared to abandon their time-honored culture for that of people separated from them "by thousands of mountains and seas."<sup>3</sup> The resistance movement grew to revolutionary proportions after the French conquest of Annam in 1885. The so-called pacification program, like its British counterpart in Myanmar, was most intense until 1895, but it extended in Vietnam to 1913. In a particularly vicious campaign from 1909 to 1913, the French hounded the resistance leaders and murdered them one by one. The peasantry harbored and supported the leaders of the resistance movement, known as Can Vuong (aid the king), which included the scholar-gentry, the Vietnamese mandarin class. In the decades before 1900, the mandarins appeared to believe that the French occupation of their lands might spell loss of political control but not a cultural or spiritual loss. By 1900, however, a new generation of maturing mandarins grew apprehensive that the educational and cultural impact of French culture had become pervasive. They were haunted by the image of *mat nuoc* (losing one's country), not merely in political terms but more seriously in the sense of their future survival as Vietnamese. Mandarins thus fell into three groups: those who had collaborated with the colonial masters, those who withdrew to the villages in a sort of passive noncooperation, and those who struggled desperately through participation in the resistance movement to bring new meaning and ethnic salvation (*chua quoc*) to the populace.<sup>4</sup>

Two major events in Asia influenced the direction of the Vietnamese opposition to French rule. One was Japan's spectacular rise as an industrially and militarily strong nation, and the other was China's reform movement and overthrow of the decadent Ch'ing monarchy. Two Vietnamese anticolonialist leaders, Phan Boi Chau (1867-1940) and Phan Chau Trinh (1871-1926), were directly influenced by these happenings in eastern Asia. Born into a mandarin family, Phan Boi Chau passed the regional examination in 1900 and had by 1902 acquainted himself with the writings of the Chinese reformer Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. In that year, Phan Boi Chau published a book, *Ryukyū's Bitter Tears*, superficially dealing with the loss of sovereignty of the Ryukyū Islands to the Japanese but in reality alluding to the Vietnamese loss of freedom at the hands of the French. Two years later, Phan Boi Chau and a number of his pupils and associates launched the Duy Tan Hoi (Reformation Society). This organization, standing for revolutionary monarchism, secured the support of Prince Cuong De and decided to secure outside assistance to achieve its nationalist ends. In 1905 Phan Boi Chau secretly went to Japan, where he met the Chinese scholar Liang and through him the top Japanese leaders, who promised liberal scholarships to Vietnamese students but no military assistance to

overthrow French rule. Shortly thereafter, Phan published his *History of the Loss of Vietnam*, which quickly went into five editions in China and clandestinely circulated all over Vietnam. Soon there were scores of Vietnamese students enrolled in Japanese institutions, including the military academy.

For Phan Chau Trinh, however, monarchy as an institution had become outdated. He was a firm believer in democracy and an advocate of a Western-style republican constitution. He led a tax resistance movement in 1908 and was arrested and later deported to France, where he was in exile and for periods of time in French prisons until 1925. A few months after his release, he managed to reach Saigon, where he perceived that politics had changed so much during his long absence that he could not take part in the nationalist movement even if he wanted to.

#### THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT PROPER

In the second decade of the twentieth century, the purpose and leadership of the nationalist movement underwent gradual changes. The effects of French education had begun to show. Many young individuals from well-to-do families with the benefit of higher education in Vietnam and France became nationalist leaders. Many of the more than 100,000 Vietnamese who saw wartime service in France joined the nationalists in making modest demands for participation in the councils and for a larger number of positions in civil service. Nearer home, a large group of Vietnamese youth had crossed over into China after the Chinese revolution of 1911. In 1913 they established the Association for the Restoration of Vietnam and instigated a number of small uprisings in Tongking and Cochinchina.

In the 1920s, many underground secret organizations sprang up—Marxist and non-Marxist alike. The most prominent was the VNQDD (Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, or the Vietnamese Nationalist Party), founded in 1927. Organizationally modeled on the Chinese Kuomintang Party, it adopted Sun Yat-sen's principles of nationalism, democracy, and the people's livelihood.

Ho Chi Minh (the name being one of his numerous aliases) was born in 1890 into a modest mandarin family. He left Vietnam as a cabin boy on a merchant vessel and after many odd jobs in England and France established his reputation as a good pamphleteer in leftist circles in Paris. He appeared in 1919 outside the Versailles Conference with a petition asking for the right of self-determination for his country. Active in the French Socialist Party, he attended its congress in 1920, voting with the majority that decided to form the French Communist Party. In 1923 he visited Moscow as the party's delegate to the Peasant International. He quickly gained attention of the Soviet hierarchy and in 1924 was sent to Canton, ostensibly as a translator to assist Mikhael Borodin, adviser to the KMT, but really to organize the Communist movement in Vietnam. A year later, he formed the Association of Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth, or the Thanh Nien. Over a period of two years, Ho trained about 250 men in Marxist techniques, got some of them enrolled in Whampoa Military Academy in China, and sent some others to Russia for studies in Marxism. In 1930 Ho fused the three prominent Communist groups in Vietnam into a single party and significantly named it the Indochina Communist Party, although there were few Communists then in Laos and Cambodia. By