

# The success of the viet minh



" What impact did Western imperialism and colonialism have on Asia" That Colonialism and imperialism played a significant role in shaping the modern world and particularly Asia is a prudent Judgment. Colonialism is " a policy in which a country rules other nations and develops trade for its own benefit" and " the extension of power or authority over others in the interests of domination" (2004). 'The West', which refers to the societies of Europe and their genealogical, colonial, and philosophical descendants.

Spain, France, Britain, Canada, and the United States of America are some examples of Western societies. These countries have spread their influence and hegemony over other nations for centuries; shaping today's North America, Central-America, South America, Africa, Oceania, and Asia (Western Society, 2004). Indochina is a region that today we would consider as Southeast Asia, comprised of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam (Indochina, 2001). Its most recent and most important contact with the West came from France and America.

The West had a negative impact on Indochina because its influence damaged Southeast Asia's system of government, destroyed and diluted the indigenous culture, caused many people to lose their lives and liberty, and set the course for future economic depressions and poverty. . Under French colonisation, the Indochinese political structure went into shambles (Hammer, 1966). The puppet governments installed after French colonization were " repressive, totalitarian, and corrupt which meant that age old traditional and cultural monarchies were replaced by despots under French influence.

In little time, each country lost its own unique identity; Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam disappeared off maps and were replaced simply by 'French Indochina' (Vietnam War, 2004). Only French-speaking or French-educated people were allowed to gain high positions in government, while others were treated as second-class citizens and toiled in the fields. Opposition to these policies was punishable by exile or imprisonment. This system of government ensured absolute French political control over Indochina's administration and contributed to lost initiative among the working class people (Hammer, 1966).

This system would dominate for about a hundred years, suppressing regular riots and movements undertaken by the Indochinese people. As time went on, communism's appeal grew stronger as the repressed saw a light in forms of promised equality, housing, education, money, and better jobs (Vietnam War, 2004). Culture was also affected. Before French colonization, Vietnam was China's 'sphere of influence'. After French colonization, however, Vietnam was torn between two spheres of influence, Chinese and French. The French also imposed their influence on Laos and Cambodia.

As a result, many Indochinese people became confused. They did not know whether they should embrace the new forceful French influence, or try to live their shattered pre-existing lifestyle in secrecy (Vietnam War, 2004).

Hammer states, " the widely diffused Chinese educational system, teaching history and morality as well as language, which linked Vietnam with its past, was abolished. " (1966, p. 63). The French did whatever they could to stuff their culture down the throats of the people of Indochina; one strategy was manipulating the education system.

They implemented a policy where all public secondary education would be taught in French, not the native language of the people (Clayton, 2002). Since the beginning, France had plans to seed their culture in Indochina. Even before colonization of Indochina, French missionaries were sent around the world to spread the French culture through mission civilisatrice (civilizing mission). This policy affirmed that it was France's " duty to spread the ways of the superior beings to inferior beings with inferior ways of living" (Ty, n. d. , para. 17).