

Chapter 2

The Establishment of the Vietnam Nationalist Party

This chapter examines and clarifies the conditions of bourgeois nationalist movements, especially the establishment of Vietnam Nationalist Party, in which, the role of economic and social factors was emphasized as the most important to create the foundation for revolution trends. Significantly, based on the birth of the economic follow capitalism, the bourgeoisie, and petty bourgeoisie class, many such as educated students, rich farmers, and sellers had a strong position in latter patriotic organizations. Through which, by the crystallization of three main milestones that are presented in terms of Nguyễn Thái Học, the foundation of the Nam Dong Publishing House and the First Cell, since December 25, 1927 VNP were officially established. From then, the appearance of VNP has been regarded as one of the three biggest revolutionary organizations in Vietnam; likewise, it supported the movement of national liberation in Vietnam to the later stages.

2.1 The Conditions for the Establishment of National Revolutionary Movements and Vietnam Nationalist Party

2.1.1 Socioeconomic Conditions

The end of World War I led to the “glory” of not only French imperialists but also others of Allied force. Despite its victory, France suffered the most in the aftermath, as its economy declined significantly, its agriculture hampered, and thousands of villages, factories, manufacturers, and infrastructures destroyed. To repair these damages, after the war, French imperialists boosted the exploitation of their colonies to gain profits for France.

In Vietnam and Indochina, after the end of World War I, colonial governments began to implement new economic, political, and cultural policies. These policies caused huge impact and structural changes in our economy and society, creating new conditions for the national liberation to adapt itself with new mankind developments.

Economically, the French colonial rulers continued their investment, exploitation and conducted various policies. The total investment of French government and capitalists increased dramatically compared to the pre-war period. From 1888 to 1918, the total investment of both French government and investors was only 1 billion Francs, during 6 years, from 1924 to 1929, and the amount of French capital invested in Indochina, especially in our country, was 4 billion Francs,¹ which was “6 times larger than that 20 years ago”.²

With such a huge investment, the French spent most of their budget on economic sectors generating huge profit, which were not in competition with their country’s production, and only provided “*materials and products which were not available in France.*”³ Among the sectors, agriculture (first and foremost rice, rubber, and industrial crops) received most investment, with a dramatic increase from 178 Francs in 1914 to 645 Francs in 1927. The total amount of French capital invested in agriculture in this period was 1272.6 million Francs.⁴ The amount of lands seized by French capitalists increased rapidly from 301,000 ha (1900), 775,700 ha (1928) to 1,200,000 ha (1930). Most of these lands were used as plantation for rubber and industrial crops. In 1930, in Cochinchina alone there were 606,500 ha of plantation.

Next to agriculture were mining and manufacturing, and the main policy of French was to limit industry in Vietnam “*because this is not a strong market to consume industrial products.*”⁵ But to serve the economic exploitation of French bourgeois, various new French companies and enterprises were established after the war, which dominated investment and business activities in Vietnam. In 1929, of both old and new enterprises, there were 50 agricultural companies, 46 industrial companies, 19 mining companies, and 31 trade companies whose headquarters were in Vietnam.⁶ Also, several other companies controlled their operations from France. Regardless of locations, all companies were under the supervision of Indochina Bank and its branches. It was once said that “*the Indochina Bank was the heart and soul of Indochina economy.*”⁷ Thanks to increased investment and technical facilities, transportation was established and consolidated. Trade was

¹Chesneaux (1995), Nguyễn (2000).

²See Chinh (1957).

³See Robequain (1939), Rouband (1931).

⁴Henry (1932).

⁵Vũ (1941).

⁶Isoart (1961).

⁷Philippe (1952).

expanded both within and outside the country. Along with economic activities, the French colonial rulers also exploited our people by various forms of tax. Apart from direct tax (targeted at people and land), they also implemented other forms of tax, including three exclusive ones on wine, salt, and opium. Tax became too heavy for the people and workers, and at the same time generated large profit for the budget of each region of Vietnam and Indochina in general. Needless to say, *“the most reactionary policy of the French was to monopolize the economy, trade and the banking sector and keep Vietnam economy in a backward state.”*⁸

Along with economic exploitation, the colonial government also conducted various political frauds and maintained an obsolete educational system to discourage and dampen the resistance of people. Since the early twentieth century, French colonialists gradually have diminished and removed the Confucian educational system, and quickly replaced it with a new structure. Accordingly, the French educational system was established and divided into grades from elementary school to colleges and universities. During the 1920s, the system of colleges and universities were expanded along with the establishment and consolidation of centers and empirical research institutes. Additionally, the French published various books, newspapers, and magazines as a way to propagandize Western culture and their exploitation policy, under the guise of such a catchy word as “civilization.” The political system from central level to provincial, district, and communal level was reformed and strengthened based on their “rural administrative reforms,” as a means to consolidate their authority as they were ready to prevent and suppress any resistance from our people. Patriotic actions, progressive and revolutionary ideologies were prohibited and destroyed.

In short, after the war, all deceptive plans and tactics were employed and implemented by the colonialists in Vietnam. Apart from economic abuse, political oppression, the cultural and ideological control of French colonialists generated profound changes in Vietnamese economy, boosted the development and enlargement of bourgeois economic relations, reduced feudal and pre-capitalist production relations, and helped capitalist economy intervene and mingle with traditional economic relations. This was a typical socioeconomic form in Vietnam, which proved the famous argument of Karl Marx: *“The invading nation always forces the defeated nation to follow its mode of production... or retains the old mode of production and gains profit from it; or combines the old and new mode of production to generate a mixed form.”*⁹

Economic prosperity also led to an increase in population. In 1931, the population of Vietnam was 17,700,000 people. Apart from the economy, society also encountered big adjustment and stratification. Representatives of the feudal system were disappearing while other classes of the new social structure arose rapidly and continuously, which constituted the society of colonial capitalism.

⁸Duan (1958).

⁹Marx and Engels (1958).

From being a superior class in the country, feudal landlords became subordinates and political pawns of the colonial government. But “*it was common in colonial era for feudalists and imperialists to cooperate.*”¹⁰ Therefore, French colonialists did their best to support landlords, protected and facilitated their power and allowed them to do whatever they wanted in rural areas. As spongers and reactionaries, feudal landlords were a target that the national liberation sought to eliminate.

Vietnamese farmers accounted for 90 % of the population, and were a strong and leading force in the struggle against French in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But under the domination of the French, our people became poor and desperate, their status degraded significantly. Due to land appropriation of feudalists and colonialists who imposed high tax, natural calamity, drought, and poor crops, various farmers went bankrupt, and had to leave their villages and head to cities. But the limitation of industry proposed by French colonialists caused many farmers to “*be stuck at going back to the hometown or entering factories and mines*” because “*even a transport was controlled by two or three people, and the number of workers looking for job in factories outnumbered available vacancies...*”¹¹ Thus the majority of them had to return to hometown and worked on small farms, or became farm workers or guards of the landlords. According to statistics of the colonial government in 1931, the number of land owners in Indochina was only 2,179,500 among the total 20,170,000 population.¹² According to another French author, the number of farmers without land in Tonkin and Annam accounted for 50 %; those in Cochinchina accounted for 60–70 % of the population,¹³ most of the farmers would likely become semi-proletariat in rural areas. Meanwhile the number of colonialists and landlords accounted for 7 % population and rich farmers owned 50 % agricultural lands. French exploitative policies made the division among farmers much extensive and fast. Farmers also suffered from the oppression and tyranny of landlords, and bound by conservative customs and ways. “*Poor, unemployed, shabby, distressed, such was the situation of Indochinese farmers.*”¹⁴

But their very hardship and low status made farmers to become closer and closer with laborers. As a social group without an organized, structured, and solid economy, although bearing great hostility towards feudalists and colonialists, farmers were not able to form an independent and ordered political entity. But “*the revolution of native farmers was ripe*”¹⁵ and they only waited for a new and

¹⁰Duan (1970).

¹¹See Chinh (1959).

¹²Truong Chinh, Vo Nguyen Giap, *Vấn đề dân cày* (The issue of peasants), Ibid, p. 16.

¹³Y. Henry, *Economie agricole*, Ibid, p. 26.

¹⁴Truong Chinh, Vo Nguyen Giap, *Vấn đề dân cày* (The issue of peasants), Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁵Hồ (1980).

progressive class, to rally and lead them in their struggle for national independence and self-liberation, the laboring class.

Unlike the working class in capitalist countries, the one in Vietnam was born early and even before national bourgeois. *"It originated not when the first capitalists among national bourgeois appeared, but right when the first exploitative act of foreign capitalists occurred."*¹⁶ Prior to World War I, the number of laborers in Vietnam was only 5,000,000. In 1929, according to colonial government, it rose to 2,210,000, among them 8,600,000 worked in trade and industry sector, 8,100,000 in plantations and 5,300,000 in mines. Not to mention thousands of non-professional laborers who were either seasonal or contract workers.

Unlike farmers, laborers lived primarily in industrial centers and big cities such as Hanoi, Hai Phong, Nam Dinh, and Sai Gon, although they only accounted for 1.3 % population.

The living and working conditions of Vietnamese laborers were particularly low. The daily wage of an average worker was only 2.5–3.0 dimes, yet the wages for women and children were only one-third of that of males. The average income of a laborer was only 48 Francs, while that of a European civil servant or a trader was around 5000–6000 Francs. Laborers usually had to work with poor and primitive equipments, and virtually did everything manually. The length of working day lasted for 10–12 h, sometimes even 14 h, without any social security. This oppressed life led to the awakening and rising of class awareness among laborers as Karl Marx stated: *"Its purpose and historical mission (the laboring class) were defined clearly and undoubtedly...by the very life that constituted it."*¹⁷

Born and bred in a colonial country, apart from the similarities with international laboring class, Vietnamese laborers possessed their own characters, such as they had to suffer the trilateral oppression of the colonial rulers, capitalists, and feudal landlords; had more favorable conditions to develop a firm alliance with farmers; did not have to encounter bourgeois laborers and thus could avoid corporatism; were able to absorb Marxist–Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh ideology from the very beginning, and also inherited the national patriotic spirit, etc. These characteristics helped them rise as sole leaders of Vietnamese revolution.

Although the scheme and intention of French imperialism were to impede and prevent the development of colonial industry, their exploitation created natural factors for the establishment and expansion of Vietnamese bourgeois. As Lê Duẩn put it: *"As a result of the expansion and zest of French colonization after the first world war, a frail native bourgeois class was born"*.¹⁸

Before the war, Vietnamese capitalists constituted a minimal social class. During the war, taking advantage of the occupied-by-war French, Vietnamese bourgeois expanded their business to many economic sectors and rapidly rose in

¹⁶Duan (1965).

¹⁷Marx and Engels (1963).

¹⁸See Duan (1968).

economic strength and in political status. In the middle of 1920s, Vietnamese bourgeois were officially integrated as a class. During its development, the capitalists were split into two types: comprador bourgeois and national bourgeois. Comprador bourgeois usually acted as contractors and brokers for domestic traders and foreign capitalist companies. This class had directly affiliated interests with the imperialists and feudal landlords. National bourgeois were new, small, and suppressed by foreign bourgeois. Their budget only accounted for 5 % that of foreign bourgeois in vital economic sectors.¹⁹ Most of national bourgeois worked in light industry and manufacturing sector, such as embroidery, printing, paint production, grading, sugar production, soft production, and auto repair. There were also capitalists who established ship repair companies or ship companies (especially Bạch Thái Bưởi in Tonkin who had 30 ships and over 1500 workers). In addition, there were capitalist handicraft manufacturers which employed 15–20 laborers around cities as well as handicraft companies. Examples were the jar manufacturers in Thanh Hoa, bowl manufacturers in Bat Trang, Hanoi, embroidery manufacturers in Ha Dong, Hanoi, etc.²⁰

Along with economic development, the ideological advancement of Vietnamese bourgeois also improved greatly as compared to the early twentieth century. Since 1920s, they have improved market competition and they went to oppose corporations and syndicates. At the end of 1918, in Cochinchina (Cochinchina), the Cochinchina Company of Engineering Trade and Society was founded by great bourgeois such as Nguyễn Văn Của and Trương Văn Ban, etc.

Vietnamese bourgeois also urged and encouraged Vietnamese to develop capitalist economy and production, and pushed consumers to use domestic products to promote national economy. In 1927, Vietnamese bourgeois established the Bank of Vietnam to designate loans for individuals.

Vietnamese bourgeois even used the press to popularize their way of business. Newspapers such as Profession Popular Newspaper (*Thực Nghiệp dân báo*) of Nguyễn Hữu Thu and Bùi Huy Tín; Enlightenment (*Khai hóa*) of Bạch Thái Bưởi reflected the rights and desires of Vietnamese bourgeois to develop investments and enlarge import and export, trade and goods, etc.²¹

In addition, Vietnamese bourgeois opposed the domination and impediment of foreign bourgeois, as reflected in such notable activities as the boycott of Chinese overseas (*tẩy chay khách trú*) in 1919 and dissent over French monopoly in Sai Gon port in 1923.

However, due to their affiliation with foreign bourgeois, at least the French, the nature of Vietnamese bourgeois was twofold. On the one hand, they objected to oppression and hampering of French bourgeois and joined the struggle against French for national independence; on the other hand (mainly) they easily joined

¹⁹See Nguyen Khanh Toan (ed.), *Lịch sử Việt Nam*—tập 3 (Vietnamese history—3rd volume), Ibid, p. 174.

²⁰See Binh (1959).

²¹Nguyen Cong Binh, *Tìm hiểu giai cấp tư sản Việt Nam thời Pháp thuộc* (Introduction to Vietnamese bourgeois during the French occupation), sdd, p. 114.

in hand with colonialists and feudalists to protect their shared rights. Therefore, “*Vietnamese bourgeois were not able to play such a role as Chinese and Indian bourgeois....*”²² “*With the mentioned economic conditions and nature of Vietnamese bourgeois and landlords, Vietnam was not able to formulate a successful revolution for national liberation of bourgeois character and led by the bourgeois* (see Footnote 22).” Due to their submissiveness, “*apart from acting as minions, bourgeois sought no more than profiting from imperialists*” (see Footnote 22).

Apart from extending its exploitation and governance, after the First World War, the colonial government was particularly concerned about investments in urban areas. In 1930, the total budget for urban development in Vietnam amounted to 130 million Indochina dongs. Beside the extension of old cities such as Hanoi and Sai Gon, several new cities were established such as Hai Phong, Da Lat, Nha Trang, and Da Nang. Urban and rural districts were extended in size and their infrastructure such as streets, bridges and houses improved so they would be upgraded to commune-level towns and district-level towns. It could be said that, along with the colonial exploitation of French colonialists, urbanization has also developed rapidly since the early twentieth century, especially since the end of 1920s, reflecting a new picture in our country. As cities were expanded, petty bourgeois increased radically in number. In the early twentieth century, urban residents accounted for only 3.6 % total population, in 1930 this rate increased to 8 % and 10 %. In Hanoi alone, in 7 years from 1921 to 1928, the population rose from 75,000 to 126,000. In 1930, Hai Phong’s population was 12,000. Among urban residents, petty bourgeois accounted for a large part and played different roles such as teachers, students, pupils, officers, independent intellectuals, small craftsmen and traders. The number of elementary and secondary teachers alone in 1929–1930 was 12,000²³; there were around 328,000 elementary students, 7545 secondary students, 509 college and university students, and 130,000 officers having license tax.²⁴ In 1930, the number of professional craftsmen was 210,000. Particularly in Tonkin, professional craftsmen accounted for 7 % of rural population. The number of neo intellectuals (Tân Học) was still nominal, with only 2000 people in 1930.²⁵

Living conditions of urban petty bourgeois were both low and perilous. Living expenses in cities rose dramatically. In Hanoi alone, post-war living costs increased by 65 % compared to the pre-war period.

Apart from rising expenses, urban population also suffered from different taxes. Only a minor fraction of officers and intellectuals were highly paid, while most of them had to rely on minimal wage for living, not to mention that they were

²²Le Duan, *Một vài đặc điểm...*, Ibid, p. 7–8.

²³P. Lesvi, *Indochine*, Paris, 1931, p. 205. See also: Trinh (2009).

²⁴Annuaire Statique de l’Indochine (1923–1928), pp. 84–88; adopted from Vietnamese history, 2nd volume, p. 176, Gourou (2003).

²⁵The Asiatic review, 1937, T. 33, Number 14, p. 365. Adopted from C.A Mkhitarian (ed.), Vietnamese modern history, p. 34.

devalued and exploited by European colonialists and officials. Students and pupils were not allowed to develop their intellect and were subject to the French obscurantist educational system.

With urban extension came changes in customs, lifestyles and psychology of a large population living under the influence of Western culture and technology, as shown in newspapers written in French and the national language. Sino education was removed (in 1919) and replaced by the growth and domination of France–Vietnam schools and Western educational institutions that regulated both training curricula and contents. New printing equipments and institutes came into being, paving way for the development of printing and publication. In 1929, there were 153 newspapers and magazines published in Vietnam, by contacting new opinions and ideas in newspapers and books, the ideology and psychology of a number of citizens, especially urban citizens, greatly changed; outdated feudal customs and lifestyles were at risk and limited. Reasonably, the transformations in lifestyles, living conditions and customs made it easier for urban petty bourgeois (students, pupils, intellectuals, etc.) to receive new ideologies, including democratic capitalism, thus became more aware of their identities and followed the right path to maintain personal, community, and national interests.

Being heavily exploited and loving their country, most of the petty bourgeois, especially intellectual bourgeois were willing to join movements against imperialists. The Communist International stated: “*The petty bourgeois played an important role in colonial and semi-colonial countries... They were the toughest representatives of not only personal rights of petty bourgeois but also common and objective rights of the whole national bourgeois.*”²⁶ Our Party also affirmed that bourgeois “were important revolutionary agents and reliable supporters of the laboring class”²⁷ and the reality of our revolutionary history in the 1920s confirmed these arguments.

In short, the transformations in socioeconomic configuration, the formation and development of colonial capitalism as a new economic structure, new economic sectors and social classes, especially the bourgeois and urban petty bourgeois, although small, created materialistic conditions for the reception of new ideas and helped define the character, content and direction of Vietnamese national movements in the early twentieth century.

2.1.2 Ideological Conditions

With the large-scale invasion and exploitation of French colonialists in our country in the early twentieth century, Vietnamese society saw a combination and interaction of different economic and social relations resulting from different modes

²⁶C.A Mkhitarian (ed), *Vietnamese modern history*, p. 34.

²⁷*Report on 6th Congress of the Communist International on colonialism.*

of production. Apart from obsolete feudal and pre-capitalist relations were the emergence and expansion of capitalist relations (some resulting from Vietnamese domestic feudal society, and others from external forces via colonialism). These economic and political relations developed contradictory and overlapping interests between diverse classes. Excluding traditional conflicts between landlords and farmers, our society also developed more rigorous struggles, such as between our nation (including the people) and colonialists, between national bourgeois and foreign bourgeois. These conflicts had to be promptly solved if further development was to be initiated.

At this moment, the utmost historic missions were the struggle against French imperialists to restore national independence, the removal of subordinate feudal landlords to return lands to farmers, the liberation of farmers and laborers from capitalist oppression and development of a better society under communism in Vietnam. They were according to the foreseeable path of Vietnamese revolution and the natural revolutionary progress in colonial countries, which started with October Revolution.

But since the late nineteenth century, despite relentless attempts and developments of our patriotic movements, which included both violent armed struggles and peaceful negotiations with diverse and varying methods, there was no social force able to recognize the correct path of Vietnamese revolution.

Vietnamese had deep love for their country. Since the first act of invasion by French, bearing that rich tradition, our people have been united to conduct the heroic resistance to aggression. Our persistent war to protect the motherland was a vivid embodiment and gallant chant of independence, freedom, patriotism and huge sacrifice of our forefathers. Unfortunately, our armed revolutions in the second half of nineteenth century (including the Royalist movement (Cần Vương) and other spontaneous peasant efforts) were turned into bloodbaths. Failure of the national movements in the late nineteenth century was mainly due to the lack of an advanced class that was able to gather the population and lead it to ultimate victory.

As leaders of the resistance to French in the late nineteenth century, most of the intellectual mandarins came from feudal backgrounds. In response to the shameful surrender of Nguyen court, these mandarins supported the population, organized and involved them in the struggle against French invaders. *“But the strong resistance of mandarins basically did not come from any remaining source of feudalism, rather, from the national spirit of independence, from a thousand-year culture embedded in them and the people, and erupted under the name of the Royalist movement”*.²⁸

However, as products of feudalism, which would soon become obsolete, these mandarins were not able to surpass their shortcomings originating from their backgrounds and contexts. Most of the early revolutionaries such as Phan Dinh Phung

²⁸The Central Committee of Researchers on the Party's History, *Ba mươi năm đấu tranh của Đảng (tập 1)* (30 years of the Party struggle) (1st volume), Su That Publisher, Ha Noi, 1966, p. 11.

and Hoang Hoa Tham aimed to drive away the French, but were unable to identify the enemies of Vietnamese revolution, who were colonizers and feudal landlords having surrendered the French, the exploiters and enslavers of our people. They did not realize that the goal of revolution was to regain independence and establish a democratic republic country in which people would have control over the state and enjoy other democratic rights. In essence, *“they did not successfully recognize the mission of Vietnamese revolution, its enemies, motivations, and the leading revolutionary class.”*²⁹ Therefore, despite being deeply patriotic, feudal intellectual mandarins were not capable of attracting and mobilizing the people and nation in national liberation. It resulted in the ultimate failure of all patriotic struggles. But the failure of the late nineteenth century national movements indicated that the old methods of armed rebellion created by intellectual mandarins could not lead to ultimate victory.

In the early twentieth century, Western capitalist ideas swiftly entered our country via China and Japan, creating new opportunities and prospects for Vietnamese national liberation movements. In the new international and national context, our national movements for liberation entered a new stage with different characteristics and inclinations.

The first inclination started by Phan Bội Châu took the form of armed revolution against French imperialists to restore national independence.

Another trend was formed by Phan Chu Trinh, which aimed to implement social reforms by opening the economy, upgrading culture (by relying on French colonialists), and then develop the country based on European capitalism.

With the above contents and goals, our national movements for liberation were more advanced compared to those in the late nineteenth century. But in some respect, the dual nature of having both violent and reformative inclinations in the early twentieth century showed the ineptitude of bourgeois movements. Patriotic mandarins who followed each inclination, despite their profound and genuine devotion, were not able to mobilize and unite the people under a single party, with common policies, methods and goals. The methods to attain national liberation of Phan Bội Châu and Phan Chu Trinh contained progressive aspects, but also exposed their deficiencies in understanding of nationalism and democracy. While *“Phan Chu Trinh wanted to rely on the French to make reforms”*, *“Phan Bội Châu hoped to lean on Japanese to drive away French. This course was dangerous; it was no less than chasing out one enemy while welcoming another.”*³⁰ In conclusion, the said inclinations did not generate common policies and approaches to guide the whole national movement, and were not able to guide the fight for national independence to victory. Under the influence of the October Revolution, revolutionary movements of worldwide proletariat and laborers erupted dramatically and insistently attacked the front and back of imperialism.

²⁹Le Duan, *Giai cấp vô sản với vấn đề nông dân trong cách mạng Việt Nam* (Proletariat with the issue of farmers in Vietnamese revolution), Ibid, p. 26.

³⁰Chinh (1975).

In colonial and dependent nations, various struggles of the working class also broke out to demand for life improvement and reject aggressive imperialists. Early in 1919, in Korea, the population united to commence a revolution against Japanese imperialists. In May, another nationalistic and democratic uprising named May Fourth took place in 150 cities and 20 provinces of China, attracting over 10 million dissenters. This vigorous movement generated favorable conditions to establish the China Communist Party in July 1921.

Apparently, the triumph of October Revolution triggered a wave of remarkable struggles in every Western and Eastern country. In several countries, the proletariat began forming their own party. Accordingly, on March 6, 1919, Lenin and his communist comrades met in Moscow and decided to establish the Third International—International Communist. Upon its introduction, the Third International began to promulgate Marxist–Leninism and lessons from the October Revolution on a global scale, and reinforced revolutionary movements in countries significantly.

Thanks to the victory of October Revolution, Nguyễn Ái Quốc, a prominent nationalist and pioneer among Vietnamese patriots, was enlightened by Marxist–Leninism and discovered the truth: “*Only socialism and communism could liberate oppressed peoples and international workers from slavery.*”³¹ He also recognized that: “*There was no alternative to national liberation and independence other than proletarian revolution*” (See Footnote 15). With this mindset, in the 18th Congress of French Socialist Party in Tours (December, 1920), Nguyễn Ái Quốc voted to support the Third International and helped establish the French Communist Party, becoming the first Vietnamese communist.

After learning about Marxist–Leninism and lessons from the October Revolution, Nguyễn Ái Quốc started to disseminate Marxist–Leninism from France to Vietnam. In the period of 1921–1925, he wrote approximately 80 articles (excluding *Bản án chế độ thực dân Pháp*) published on newspapers such as *L’Humanité* (Humanity), *Đời sống công nhân* (The life of workers), *Correspondence international* (International Correspondence), *Pravda* (Truth), etc.... These articles and his inspiring activities gained huge popularity in Vietnam, and inspired patriotism and revolutionary consciousness among our people.

During this time, the rapid development of Chinese revolutionary movements also made great influences and impacts on Vietnamese revolution. In Vietnamese political and ideological atmosphere, on books and newspapers, on news received from overseas, the Three Principles of Sun Yat Sen and Xin Hai Revolution were respectfully propagated by Vietnamese intellectuals. Leaders of Chinese Communist Party such as Sun Yat Sen, Huang Xing, and Hu Hanmin were celebrated by many Vietnamese writers. The honorable death of 72 martyrs at Huang Hua Guang spurred deep emotions within Vietnamese patriotic youth at that time.

³¹Hồ (1980).

The May Fourth Movement (1919), cultural movements, and especially revolutionary causes from 1923 to 1925 generated deep implications for Vietnam while Vietnamese bourgeois was emerging. The Three Principles and Theory of Sun Yat Sen created new prospective for Vietnamese progressive revolutionaries. Not a few Vietnamese would like to learn from Chinese nationalism (resistance to Qing dynasty) to promote Vietnamese nationalism (resistance to French colonizers).

Exposed to October Revolution via the activities of Nguyễn Ái Quốc and Vietnamese overseas and other international revolutionary movements of which the French proletarian movements and Chinese revolutions were most relevant, Vietnamese patriots developed ideological differentiation. Some (mostly youngsters), having high political sensitivity, followed the example of October Revolution and went to Thailand and China in search of a proper way to liberate their people and nation. Most of these youngsters were later trained by Nguyễn Ái Quốc and recruited into our first socialist organization named VRYL (established in June, 1925). Other youngsters stayed within the country to participate, organize, and direct patriotic movements, with their highest peak as the great cause for democracy and freedom in 1925 to 1926.

This cause was launched by the press activities of several young intellectuals in Cochinchina. From 1922 to 1923, on *La Tribune indigène* (The Indigenous Tribune) of Phạm Phú Khai and Bùi Quang Chiêu, numerous articles were published to criticize the prominent colonialists in Cochinchina at that time such as Cognag (Cochinchina Governor); Outrey (representative of French National Assembly in Cochinchina); and De La chevrotière (the most intransigent bourgeois in Cochinchina). Other newspapers such as *L'Indochine* (Indochina) of the lawyer Monin and *La voix libre* (Voice of Freedom) of Professor Ganobsky voiced their protests over the corruption and tyranny of French authorities. While denigrating individuals among the evil higher-ups in Cochinchina, they also asked for the rights of Vietnamese landlords and bourgeois who had conflicting interests with French bourgeois.

The most contemporary progressive newspaper was *La Cloche fêlée* (The Broken Bell) of Nguyễn An Ninh, a Western-influenced intellectual who were prominent among Cochinchinese bourgeois, petty bourgeois and intellectuals at that time. The newspaper rigorously attacked not only French authorities, but also the whole French colonial system to vindicate its nationalism.

Apart from newspapers written in French in Cochinchina, there were patriotic and democratic newspapers publicly or privately distributed throughout the nation, and helped directly or indirectly awaken the spirit of nationalism and support national movements. Since 1925, while sending petitions to Governor General Varenne to demand for the release Phan Bội Châu and mourning of Phan Chu Trinh, etc., patriotic newspapers started quite a few stirring and rousing activities. *Profession People Newspaper* in Hanoi described the widespread petition for the release of Phan Bội Châu and Phan Chu Trinh. *Indochina Times* (Đông Pháp thời báo) in Sai Gon supported the appeal to mourn for Phan Chu Trinh and release Nguyễn An Ninh. The *Pháp Việt nhất gia* condemned colonialism, opposed the Indochina Bank, strongly criticized the policy of “France–Vietnam Fraternity”

(Pháp Việt *đề huề*), and requested freedom of speech.³² Publishing houses relentlessly published books and newspapers which inspired patriotism and nationalism, such as Great Learning Publishing House (Cường học thư xã) in Sai Gon; Quan Hai Publishing House (Quan Hải tùng thư) in Hue; *Nam Dong Publishing House* (Nam Đồng thư xã) in Hanoi, etc. They were representatives of a new social class, young petty bourgeois intellectuals, in the field of culture and ideology.

In the field of national revolution, the movements were even more stimulating. The first two movements were the boycott of Chinese overseas (1919) and opposition to monopoly in the trading port of Sai Gon (1923). These were early struggles for economic rights of Vietnamese bourgeois against foreign bourgeois. Then, early in 1925, Governor General Varenne, a member of the France Socialist Party, came to Sai Gon and encountered demonstrations and petitions asking for civil rights, including freedom and democracy. The false promises of Varenne finally caused the advocacy of France–Vietnam fraternity by hack writers such as Bùi Quang Chiêu to be criticized by progressive newspapers. Patriotic movements reached their highest peak with the appeals to release Phan Bội Châu, mourn for Phan Chu Trinh and hold funeral for Lương Văn Can. During the period of 1925–1926, movements led by petty bourgeois youngsters and intellectuals spread throughout the country. Last but not least, the murder of Governor General Merlin (June 19, 1924) by Phạm Hồng Thái in Guangzhou strongly aroused nationalism in our country, and stimulated democratic awareness in petty bourgeois youngsters and intellectuals who were passionately searching for a way to national salvation.

As democratic and nationalist movements sparkly developed, new ideas were brought to the people and led to the formation of political groups and patriotic, revolutionary organizations such as Vietnam Revolution Union (Việt Nam nghĩa đoàn), Restoration of Vietnam Association (Hội phục Việt), Vietnam Unification Association (Hội Hưng Nam), Youth Party (*đảng Thanh Niên*), most notable and distinguished of which were three revolutionary organizations: *VRYL* established in June, 1925; *VNP* in December 1927 and *NVRP* in 1928.

Although originating at the same time and from similar socioeconomic conditions and backgrounds, these three organizations adopted different political ideas and approaches. While *VRYL* and *NVRP* ultimately followed socialist revolution, *VNP* was not able to detach from the bourgeois doctrine, despite various amendments of its Political Program and Statute. Nevertheless the founding and operation of *VNP* left lasting impressions in our national struggle to resist the French and liberate our country.

Apart from general conditions, the founding of *VNP* was affected by particular historical and ideological prerequisites, especially neo-patriotism and bourgeois doctrine. In Vietnam, after the First World War, under new socioeconomic and ideological conditions, patriotism and nationalism were elevated to a new height. The national revolutionary ideas of *VNP* inherited and advanced the democratic and revolutionary ideas already shown in former Vietnamese national movements.

³²See Nguyen (1984).

The political ideology of VNP was first and foremost a result of democratic and national movements in the period of 1925–1926. At this time, driven by patriotism and democratic ideas, most of the founders of VNP actively joined the demonstrations for the release of Phan Bội Châu, mourning for Phan Chu Trinh and funeral of Lương Văn Can. Its crucial members were especially fond of and had close relations with Phan Bội Châu. Trần Huy Liệu, before establishing *Great Learning Publishing House* (Sai Gon), had spent some time in Youth Party. During and after this time, he was extraordinarily drawn to the revolutionary ideas of Phan Bội Châu. Nguyễn Khắc Nhu, who proposed the principle of Strong Party, Enlightened Party (*Chính Đảng cương, minh Đảng nghĩa*), soon came into contact with Phan Bội Châu and was largely influenced by his revolutionary ideas. Later, by instructing Đặng Đình Điền to meet with Phan Bội Châu in Hue and nominating him honorable president of the Party, the leaders of VNP made themselves spiritual adherents of Phan Bội Châu.

Based on the above analyses, it would be right to say that the bourgeois revolutionary and democratic approach of VNP, with *its center as revolutionary nationalism*, was an upgraded incarnation of Vietnamese nationalism. This revolutionary approach was actually a solid combination of bourgeois nationalism and national patriotism formed and developed under new historical conditions of Vietnamese national movements in 1920s.

When researching on the courses of VNP, Nguyen Khanh Toan precisely commented that: “In terms of political courses, VNP was more complete than other revolutionary organizations before the war. Of these organizations, some followed constitutional monarchy, some only focused on fighting the French; some led the country towards capitalism but was unclear as to what political system to be established. VNP was more definite. It represented the tendencies and interests of progressive national bourgeois”.³³

Ideologically, the founding of VNP was a denial of compromise and reformism in political ideas and a continuation of nationalism that already existed before the First World War. Particularly, the ideological foundations of post-war bourgeois democratic national revolution in Vietnam were the French bourgeois revolution and the Three Principles of Sun Yat Sen.

Bạch Diện said in his book *Nguyễn Thái Học và Việt Nam Quốc dân đảng* (Nguyễn Thái Học and VNP): Vietnamese revolutionary ideas in the years 1925–1927 strictly followed the French revolution in 1789 and theories of Montesquieu and Rousseau, which were advanced at that time. Moreover, the Xinhai Revolution of China generated new motivation for Vietnamese youth. It was said to be the most invigorating instead of “comfortable” comfortable and promising instead of the word “fresh” fresh.³⁴

This new motivation provided the founders of VNP with a new revolutionary inclination and theoretical foundation to define the basic tenets of its Political

³³Nguyen (1960).

³⁴Bach Dien, *Nguyễn Thái Học và Việt Nam Quốc dân đảng* (Nguyễn Thái Học and VNP), Ibid, p. 9.

Program. Nguyễn Thái Học, as a student, hated French history but was interested in Vietnamese history and especially fond of studying the history behind French Revolution. Other members of Nam Dong publishing house (the first organ of VNP) were primarily adherents of Sun Yat Sen. Along with publishing books to stimulate patriotism, Nam Dong publishing house also translated and printed books on the Three Principles and actively promoted them.

Theoretically, the French revolutionary ideas from 1789 to 1794 and the Three Principles of Sun Yat Sen were fairly complete revolutionary theories, and contributed greatly to the formation of political doctrine of VNP. In reality, the political courses of VNP were deeply affected by French revolutionary ideas and The Three Principles of Sun Yat Sen.

Needless to say, the founding of bourgeois class and strong spreading of bourgeois thoughts in Vietnam became decisive factors for the establishment of VNP.

2.2 From Nam Dong Publishing House to the Formation of Vietnam Nationalist Party

2.2.1 Overview of the Founder Nguyễn Thái Học

The founder and highest leader of VNP was Nguyễn Thái Học. He was born in 1901 (the year of Buffalo) in Tho Tang, Vinh Tuong district, Vinh Phuc province. Born to a family of middle farmers, in 1907, Nguyễn Thái Học was sent by his family to study Confucianism with a Confucian teacher; he then studied at Viet Tri elementary school. During his home-stay education, especially after learning about the failure of Thai Nguyen uprising started by Doi Can, Nguyễn Thái Học began to nurture his hostility to the French.

After graduating from elementary school in 1921, Nguyễn Thái Học entered the Hanoi School of Pedagogy. During his study there, to express his inner opposition to colonialism, Nguyễn Thái Học from time to time publicly criticized the attitude of French teachers, so much that the Director of Sûreté Général Indochinoise said that: “*Nguyễn Thái Học was an argumentative and stubborn student.*” Hating the French, Nguyễn Thái Học also despised French history, but was eager to learn Vietnamese and French Revolution history. In 1925, listening to advice from friends he joined an exam for Ministry Clerk (Thừa phái). After succeeding in the exam however, he did not serve the French. In search of more general economic knowledge, he enrolled in the Business College.

At this time, nationwide Vietnamese patriotic movements developed dramatically, such as petitions for the release of Phan Bội Châu (1925) and for the funeral of Phan Chu Trinh (1926). Eruption of national movements influenced the thinking of Nguyễn Thái Học, who was already nurturing his will for national independence and people's happiness. Governor General A. Verenne made empty commitments for reforms to lighten the people's protest. In this context, in 3 years

from 1925 to 1927, Nguyễn Thái Học continuously sent requests to Varenne to inform his “*Comprehensive Social Reform Program*.” In the early 1927, he even appealed to the Tonkin Resident Superior to permit the publication of *Nam Thanh* (Voice of Vietnamese) weekly newspaper to protect and support the native industry, but was rejected. Additionally, Nguyễn Thái Học wrote several articles with the hope that his reform ideas would be shown to people. But all letters and articles to colonial authorities and newspapers were unanswered and rejected by the gatekeepers. This fact discouraged his desire to work together with the French to help his people. Since then he concluded that: there was no alternative other than violence to expel the French from his country and save his people.

To fulfill this strong urge, at the end of 1927, Nguyễn Thái Học together with Hồ Văn Mịch sought permanent residence at the headquarter of Nam Dong publishing house with Phạm Tuấn Tài, Phạm Tuấn Lâm, and Hoàng Phạm Trân (Nhượng Tống). There, it was easier for him to discuss and formulate action plans with other young patriots.

It was also interesting that before dropping school to focus opposing the French, in 1927, Nguyễn Thái Học led young patriots to organize the funeral of Phan Chu Trinh at Hai Ba Temple (Hanoi) and encouraged quite a few dropped youngsters and students to hold the funeral for Lương Văn Can— one of the crucial members of the Tonkin Free School (Đông Kinh Nghĩa Thục) movement. Activities that aroused strong patriotism in youngsters made Nguyễn Thái Học even more determined to resist the French.

2.2.2 *Nam Dong Publishing House and the Creation of “The First Cell”*

As said, as part of the wide and stirring political movements in Vietnam from 1925 to 1926, a large number of printing and publishing houses were born, including Nam Dong publishing house. Its foundation resulted from democratic and national movements, and was also the factor that boosted them more and more. By publishing books to advocate patriotism and democracy, publishing houses contributed to the awakening of national and revolutionary spirit within people, especially young intellectuals, who were enthusiastic in finding a way for revolution. But their operations did not cease at the propaganda of patriotism, and further developed to “*the combination of scattered ideas*.” Trần Văn Giàu put it: “*Nam Dong publishing house of Phạm Tuấn Tài was the most notable. It promoted patriotism, revolutionary nationalism and the Three Principles and was the first organ of VNP.*”³⁵

³⁵Giàu (1975).

History can attest to this because after some preparation at the end of 1926, Nam Dong publishing house officially began its operations³⁶ in Hanoi. Founders of this publishing house were teacher Phạm Tuấn Tài (Mộng Tiên) and teacher Hoàng Phạm Trân (Nhượng Tống) and Phạm Tuấn Lâm (Dật Công). The office of Nam Dong publishing house was in the 6th of 96 Street (near Trúc Bạch Lake, opposite side of Long Chau pagoda). Under the leadership of Phạm Tuấn Tài, Nam Dong publishing house formed close relations with the publishing house *Thục Nghiệp* and other young patriots such as Nguyễn Thái Học, Phó Đức Chính, Hồ Văn Mịch, Lê Văn Phúc, Lê Thành Vĩ, Nguyễn Thái Trác, Vũ Huy Trân, Nguyễn Hữu Dật, Vũ Hiến, Phan Ngọc Trúc, Nguyễn Văn Lô, Trần Vĩ, and Lưu Văn Phùng.³⁷

The purpose of Nam Dong publishing house was to publish, edit and promulgate books to arouse patriotism. In its article “*Kính cáo với các bạn độc giả*” (Forewords to readers) it was put that: “*The purpose of Nam Dong publishing houses to publish books which facilitate the education of people. To this end, the published books must be chosen carefully and sold at a low price for popular readers.*” Books created by Nam Dong publishing house were of many types as they could be edited, composed and translated (often with comments). There were historical, political, social and literary books; some books were only published in one volume while some in two, and others even had five volumes such as *Giương thiếu niên* (*Example of Youngsters*) with total of 250 pages.

Books were usually published once, except for *Tiểu sử và Học thuyết Tôn Dật Tiên* (Biography and doctrine of Sun Yat Sen) written by Dật Công (Phạm Tuấn Lâm) and Nhượng Tống (Hoàng Phạm Trân) that was first printed in November 1926 and republished in 1927. A famous book named *Một bầu tâm sự* (Words from the heart) by Trần Huy Liệu was produced by both Nam Dong publishing house in Hanoi and Great Learning Publishing House in Sai Gon.

From 1926 to its closing year in 1928, Nam Dong publishing house issued around 20 books that could be split into these categories:

- On Vietnam: books such as *Giương thiếu nhi* (*Examples of youth*), *Trung nữ vương* (*Trung king*), etc.
- On China: books on Sun Yat Sen, The Three Principles and Chinese revolutionary stories.
- On Korea: books such as *Nhà vua cách mạng Mạc Tư Danh* (*Mac Tu Danh—A revolutionary king*), *Triều Tiên vong quốc sử* (*History of the lost Korea*).
- On India: books on Gandhi.

A single book called *Giương thành bại* (*Examples of Victory and Failure*) introduced the revolutions in less-developed countries and famous quotes in the world.

³⁶See: “Góp phần nghiên cứu lịch sử chính trị Đông Dương thuộc Pháp” (A contribution to research on the political history of French—occupied Indochina), *Ibid*.

³⁷Hoang (1965). According to Huynh (1982). Phạm Tuấn Tài was a teacher; Phạm Tuấn Lâm and Hoàng Phạm Trân were journalists.

All of the above books were published in Vietnamese. Only a work by Phạm Tuấn Tài named *Ce que disent les grands homes* was published in French, containing French renowned quotes and translation of the editor.³⁸ After a while these books were confiscated, and the publishing house was closed since the French alleged that these books contained self-political intents. Although closed, Nam Dong publishing house still remained a meeting place for patriotic members who opposed the French. In the middle of 1927, Nguyễn Thái Học and Hồ Văn Mịch sought stable residence at its headquarter, and together with the founders of Nam Dong publishing house, proposed to establish a nationalist party to restore independence with its first organ being “The First cell” (Đệ nhất chi bộ). According to Phạm Tuấn Tài in his *Tuyên cáo các đồng chí* (Announcement to my comrades), Nguyễn Thái Học and members of Nam Dong publishing house initially wanted to form this party on August 26, 1927³⁹ because “they found the French to be uncooperative...thus had to rely on revolution.”⁴⁰

But Nguyễn Thái Học, Phạm Tuấn Tài and Nhượng Tống initially had disagreements as to the methods and approaches to revolution. Nhượng Tống wanted to conduct peaceful revolution. To defend his intent, Nhượng Tống designed a six-year action program. In 6 years, various cooperatives would be established to unite different groups of people and produce enough supply for self-sustainability, and then asked for autonomy from the French. If the French rejected, school boycotts, economic and labor strikes would be organized to disrupt the overall function of French colonial government.

The six-year program of peaceful revolution of Nhượng Tống was wholeheartedly refused by Nguyễn Thái Học, Phạm Tuấn Tài, and Phạm Tuấn Tài. Nguyễn Thái Học argued that: “*The colonizers brought steel and blood to invade Vietnam, we cannot allow ourselves to use bare hands to oppose their weapons. Just take the Tonkin Free School as an example. A handful of bare-handed mandarins could not do anything and many were slaughtered, others were exiled to Con Dao. Today, going with peaceful revolution is like falling into the old blunder and failure.*”⁴¹

To avoid that old “blunder”, Nguyễn Thái Học decided “to use steel and blood”, meaning resorting to armed struggle to restore independence. After various arguments between members of Nam Dong publishing house, this approach was finally accepted by the majority. At last, all members decided to establish a secret party that would employ armed revolution. To this end, Nguyễn Thái Học

³⁸Documents on Nam Dong Publishing house can be found more in: Vũ Khiêu (ed.), *Phạm Tuấn Tài, cuộc đời và tác phẩm* (Phạm Tuấn Tài, life and works) (memoir), CTQG Publisher, Hà Nội, 2002, pp. 15–58.

³⁹Phạm Tuấn Tài, *Tuyên cáo các đồng chí* (Announcement to my comrades). See full material in: Phạm Tuấn Tài, *cuộc đời và tác phẩm*, Ibid, pp. 518–527.

⁴⁰Tống (1949).

⁴¹Bach Dien, *Nguyễn Thái Học và Việt Nam Quốc dân đảng* (Nguyễn Thái Học and VNP), Ibid, p. 21.

united his close friends in Hanoi until there were about 10 people; they then organized “*The First Cell*”.⁴²

Thus, it could be said that Nam Dong publishing house was the first organ that gathered and aroused the spirit of nationalism and patriotism of young intellectuals who desired to liberate their nation by violence. It was virtually the first entity that led to the foundation of VNP. After “The First Cell” was found, Nguyễn Thái Học and his comrades actively worked and contacted other local patriotic groups to attain more members and organize a conference to establish VNP at the end of 1927.

2.2.3 Operations of “*The First Cell*” and Establishment of Vietnam Nationalist Party (December 25th, 1927)

After its founding, “*The First Cell*” primarily worked closely with local patriotic groups and individuals to form a political party. During this time, relations between “*The First Cell*,” Nam Dong publishing house and Vietnamese Nationalists (Việt Nam Dân quốc) group of Nguyễn Khắc Nhuin Lang Thuong Palace, Nguyễn Thế Nghiệpin Bac Ninh, and Hoàng Văn Đào and Hoàng Văn Tùngin Thanh Hoa became closer and closer. Particularly, *Vietnamese Nationalists* of Nguyễn Khắc Nhu (Xứ Nhu) in Lang Thuong Palace since the period 1925–1926 had close association with *Profession Popular publishing house* and *Nam Dong publishing house* in Hanoi. Also at this time, Xứ Nhu began to express his views on social reforms on *Profession Popular Newspaper* (Thực nghiệp dân báo), *Annam Magazine* (An Nam tạp chí), etc. Through these activities, he was able to contact Phan Bội Châuin Hue and following Phan’s advice, he established the group *National Seekers of Talented* (*National Seekers of Talented*) which adopted peaceful revolution. However, it was soon suppressed by the French. This changed the approaches and methods of Xứ Nhu from *peaceful revolution* to *violent revolution*. With the most prominent figures of *National Seekers of Talented*, close friends and the last members of Hoang Hoa Tham movement, Nguyễn Khắc Nhu established *Vietnamese Nationalists* at the end of 1927 and actively prepared for riots against the French. Their first targets were Dap Cau, Bac Ninh, and Pha Lai. The plans were made beforehand on November 11, 1927 and necessary contacts were created in advanced. Xứ Nhu sent his men to contact Nam Dong publishing house and asked for joint actions. His request was received by the majority of Nam Dong publishing house. Accordingly, *Nhượng Tổng* wrote a proclamation urging all localities to support *Vietnamese Nationalists* when it started the riot in Bac Ninh. However, the riot of Xứ Nhu failed because during weapon preparation, a man accidentally triggered a grenade at the manufacturer in *Che Village*

⁴²Bach Dien, *Nguyễn Thái Học và Việt Nam Quốc dân đảng* (Nguyễn Thái Học and VNP), p. 23.

(Bac Ninh). The whole plan was discovered and the French quickly suppressed it. But Xú Nhu and other important members escaped and *Vietnamese Nationalists* was retained.

After the failed attempt, the connection between Nam Dong publishing house and *Vietnamese Nationalists* became even closer, fostering conditions for the later unification of VNP and *Vietnamese Nationalists*. Clearly, the preparation for armed revolution against French of *Vietnamese Nationalists* aroused patriotism within Nam Dong publishing house, and helped support the armed approach of Nguyễn Thái Học and other members. After this event, “The First Cell” increasingly enlisted more members and prepared for the founding of a political party.

Apart from membership recruitment, “*The First Cell*” hurriedly made organizational and ideological foundations for a destined political party in Vietnam. In the night of 24th and early morning of December 25, 1927, a conference to establish VNP chaired by Nguyễn Ngọc Sơn took place at Lê Thành Vĩ’s house in The Giao village (Hanoi), but was later discovered and it was decided to be again held at the headquarter of Nam Dong publishing house. Participating in the conference, apart from members of “the First Cell,” were representatives from Hanoi, Hai Phong, Nam Dinh, Hung Yen, Thai Binh, Ninh Bình, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, Hai Duong, Kien An, Ha Nam, Phu Tho, Vinh Yen, Tuyen Quang, and Thanh Hoa. After discussions, the conference decided to organize a secret political party named VNP. Its aim was to rally nearly all Vietnamese people regardless of class and religion to commence national revolution, using violence to regain independence for Vietnam. Its *Statute* and *Program of Action* were approved at the Conference. The Statute indicated its guiding purpose and organization, membership requirements and set democratic centralism as its working principle. In addition, it specified the structure and functions of its General Committee, Province Chapter, Region Chapter and Cell, and indicated the interval between two regular meetings for 6 months or more.

The conference also elected an Interim General Committee consisting of 15 members and responsible for 7 subcommittees. Nguyễn Thái Học was appointed Party President and Nguyễn Thế Nghiệp became Vice President.

As for structural development, the party emphasized the need to establish public unions among soldiers, considering it one of the main orientations in structural development.

As for publicity, *Revolutionary soul* (*Hồn cách mạng*) journal would be published as the party’s house organ. In addition, the Party would establish a Publishing Committee consisting of four party members, namely Nhượng Tống (Chief), Ngô Thúc Định, Nguyễn Triệu Luật, Trúc Khê (Ngô Văn Triện), responsible for compiling books used for propaganda.

Thus, the conference on December 25, 1927 was considered the origin of VNP, one of the largest Vietnamese political parties at that time. Its establishment and development marked a turning point in the evolution of bourgeois national movements, and with other political parties, brought Vietnamese movements for national liberation to a new historical stage (Map. 2.1).



Map. 2.1 The organisational structure of VNP (12/1927-2/1930)

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