CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN TRADITIONAL VIETNAM

Purposes of Formal Education

From the practical standpoint, the main purpose of formal education was to prepare the male youth of Vietnam for the civil mandarinate, which represented the highest aspiration of every ambitious boy and the dearest wish of his family. It must be noted, however, that the majority of those who received such an education could not qualify for the service of the state, because the mandarinal examinations were exacting and highly selective. There was also a small number of learned men who, imbued with the ideals of individual liberty and peace of mind, did not aspire to compete for official posts; they either retired from society into the mountains or remained in their native villages, where they spent their time teaching, composing literary works, and sometimes practicing medicine.

Formal education was not only linked to the mandarinate but also given a moral significance. The Vietnamese people firmly believed that the learning of Chinese characters and classics would normally lead toward the self-improvement of the individual, since the wisdom of the Ancient Sages of China and the ethical principles of the Confucian school were regarded as perfect and final. Formal education, indeed, emphasized the teaching of moral precepts and the imparting of Confucius's formulas for regulating social and human relationships. Thus, prospective mandarins were not directly trained in the techniques of government, but grounded in the principles of Le, filial piety, benevolence, and the like, as it was believed that virtue and wisdom would suffice to develop devoted “fathers and mothers” of the people. Children were taught first to behave properly then to read and write Chinese characters—the scholars' language. School discipline was strictly enforced through corporeal punishment or dismissal of the non-conformist student. In brief, it can be said that formal education, based on Confucianism, aimed ultimately at the inner growth of man rather than at the impartation of information. It must be added, however, that this inner growth was oriented to and conditioned by a ready-made system of moral and spiritual values, which tended to mould the Vietnamese people into a united but static nation.
Teachers and Teacher Training

From the beginning of the tenth century to the middle of the eleventh century, formal education was mainly in the hands of Buddhist monks, who trained and recommended candidates for the service of the state. As already pointed out, Buddhism was at the height of its development at that time because of the strong support given it by the rulers of Vietnam. Among its monks were eminent scholars, charged with the education of prospective mandarins and even of future emperors. For instance, the founder of the Ly dynasty (1009-1225 A.D.), Ly Cong Uan, was reputed to have been raised and educated by the monk Van-Hanh.

With the decline of Buddhism and the establishment of the mandarinal examinations, Confucian scholars gradually took charge of formal education in Vietnam. By becoming both the educators and officials of Vietnamese society, these learned men were able to orient the course of the nation’s life toward Confucianism, and, consequently, were instrumental in shaping the national mind and habit.

As indicated in the Confucian-inspired hierarchy of Quan-Su-Phu (King-Teacher-Father), the teacher had an eminent social status in Vietnam. In fact, his students owed him great respect and usually organized themselves into a Hoi Dong-Mon (Condisciples’ Association) with a view to showing their gratitude and offering material aid to their common educator. It must be said here that many teachers eked out an uncertain living, since they received only nominal fees and occasional gifts for their work. In spite of their straitened conditions, most of them remained faithful to their profession, probably because of the high esteem in which it was held, and also because of their disdain for manual labor, which made them reluctant to take up farming or commerce.

Teachers were often recruited from among the unsuccessful aspirants for the mandarinal examinations. For the primary stages of teaching, private tutors might be hired, who had never competed for the service of the state because of their inadequate training. Here and there, however, a certain number of retired mandarins and prominent scholars entered the profession, the former having many years of administrative experience to their credits, the latter possessing deep knowledge and wisdom. Furthermore, the mandarins in charge of government-controlled schools usually displayed
real skill in the art of instruction. Commenting on the teachers in traditional Vietnam, Tran van Trai says:

Admirable in certain respects, this teaching body has, however, left very few writings. Convinced that the works of Confucius and his disciples have reached the highest degree of perfection, they [presumably] think that they would have displayed an inadmissible vanity, had they attempted to produce [literary or philosophical works] themselves. On the other hand, they dutifully lead a rigorous life, which must comply with Confucius's moral doctrine they teach. . . . 28

It is true that many teachers tried to live up to their own moral teachings and to serve as models of virtue, scholarship, and wisdom. To some extent, they helped stabilize social relationships in Vietnam.

So far as professional preparation was concerned, Vietnamese teachers had no special training in pedagogy. They tended to use the same methods by which they themselves had been taught. Recitation and memorization prevailed in the primary stages of studies. Children spent their time repeating aloud after their teacher the words or text to be learned. Then, at the top of their voices, they went over their lesson several times until they could say it without looking at their books. The clamor they made could have driven many a teacher of today to a mental hospital. Advanced students were required to memorize a vast array of Chinese and Vietnamese classics, to compose essays and poems on topics selected from this literature, and to practice writing administrative reports and requests. The teacher's explanations were mostly in the form of moral interpretations and traditional commentaries, characterized by the frequent use of quotations from classical authors. As a whole, the emphasis upon memory tended to encourage rather slavish reproductions of bookish knowledge as well as to hamper critical and original thinking.

School Organization

At the base of the teaching hierarchy was the Ong Do, charged with the primary education of children. Having no official status and receiving no financial aid from the state, he either set up his own school—which often was nothing but a room in his house—or

was hired as a private tutor by one or more families. Frequently the whole village joined in maintaining a teacher for its boys. It was also not unusual that a learned father or grandfather himself took care of the early studies of the children of the household. In brief, primary education was left to local and private initiative.

Just as the Ong Do was free to teach whereever and whenever he liked, the youths of Vietnam could attend any school they chose. Often a poor but promising student might be helped by a rich family or a generous teacher. In addition, there was no age limit for schooling, with the result that teen-agers and quinquagenarians could be seen studying in the same classroom. Pierre Pasquier, governor-general of French Indochina from 1927 to 1934, said of education in traditional Vietnam:

Education is free in Annam [Vietnam], and free in the broadest sense of the world, not at all compulsory, although widespread. There are very few illiterates. Even among the poorest peasants, there are always some who know a few hundreds of [Chinese] characters. . . 29

Education was “free” in the sense that it was largely left to local and private initiative, for it was regarded as a family or village responsibility, not as a function of the state. It was relatively widespread for three main reasons. First, it was linked to the mandarinate, which meant emancipation from manual labor, a good livelihood, and social distinction. Secondly, learning was highly esteemed, if not worshipped, by almost all of the Vietnamese people, who conceived of the scholar as a man who had absorbed the wisdom and knowledge of the ancient sages or Holy Sages (Tháng Hien). Girls were reputed to dream of scholarly husbands with refined manners, noble attitudes, and slim bodies. Illiterate men were usually looked down upon, no matter how healthy or rich they might be. Thirdly, it was relatively inexpensive to establish a family or village school, since no special building was erected for the purpose. The Ong Do used to conduct his classes in his own house, while the private tutor lived with his charges' family. A typical classroom was equipped with a desk and a divan for the teacher, several mats for the pupils to squat on, and an altar dedicated to the spirit of Confucius. Each boy had his Four Treasures (Tu Bao)—namely, ink, ink slab, paper, and writing brush.

It must be added, however, that Vietnam did have public schools for advanced studies. In 1076, the emperor Ly Nhan-Ton of the Ly dynasty (1009-1225 A.D.) founded the Quoc-tu giam or National Academy in Hanoi for the education of mandarins' sons. It was not until 1252 that this imperial school was opened to the common people. A hierarchy of teachers-mandarins, inaugurated in the fourteenth century, was in charge of formal education in the administrative divisions and subdivisions of Vietnam. This system was adopted and revised by the emperors of the Nguyen dynasty (1802-1945). Thus, in the nineteenth century, each province had a government school placed under a doc-hoc or teacher-mandarin of the fourth class. A giao-thu or teacher-mandarin of the sixth class was at the head of the educational machinery of each prefecture (phu), while formal education in each sub-prefecture (huyen) was supervised by a huan-dao or teacher-mandarin of the seventh class. A new National Academy was set up at Hue in 1803 and opened to the sons of princes and mandarins as well as to the children of the common people.

In addition to the above-mentioned system of public education, there were private schools for advanced studies, which were usually conducted by retired mandarins and outstanding scholars. They had quite a large number of students because of the high esteem in which their teaching personnel was held.

It is significant to note that there was no clear-cut division of educational institutions into primary schools, secondary schools, and universities. This probably stemmed from the fact that a uniform program of studies, confined to limited phases of human knowledge, was pursued by all, regardless of age, interests, needs, and abilities. Each and every student learned at his own speed, used the same textbooks, and was taught by the same methods. Christophoro Borri, who spent some time in South Vietnam during the seventeenth century, described Vietnamese education in the following terms:

Cochin-China [South Vietnam] hath many Universities, in which there bee Readers and Schollers and Degrees; to which their Schollers are advanced by examination, as they are in China; teaching the same Sciences, using the same Bookes and Authors; namely, Zinfa or Confus [Confucius], as the PortugaIs call him; being an author of as

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30 Hue, located in Central Vietnam, was the capital of Vietnam under the Nguyen dynasty.
sublime and profound Learning and Authority with them, as Aristotle amongst us, and indeed more ancient. These bookes are full of Erudition, of rare Histories, of grave Sentences, of Proverbs and such like, all concerning good manners; such as Senca, Cato, or Cicero here with us. Many yeeres labour is spent in learning the propriety of the Phrase, Characters and Hieroglyphikes in which they are written. But that part which they account most of, and have in greatest estimation, is Morall Philosophy; comprehending the Ethik, Oeconomik and Politick. And it is a goodly sight to see and understand them in their Halls, when they reade and pronounce their Lectures aloud as if they sang; which they doe, to acustome themselves, and to get a habite, to give to every word his proper accent; of which they have a great number that signifie many several different things; whereby may be gathered, that to converse with them, it is requisite to know the principles of Musicks and Counter-point. . . . 31

As indicated by Borri, Vietnamese education was overwhelm-ingly influenced by Chinese culture. Instruction was given through the medium of Chinese characters, which were also adopted as the official written language of the empire.32 In the following section, a brief examination of the program of studies will reveal the deepness of China's cultural domination over Vietnam.

Program of Studies and Textbooks

Children began their formal schooling at the age of six or seven. In accordance with an age-old tradition, each new pupil offered his teacher a tray of glutenous rice and a live rooster to be sacrificed to the spirit of Confucius. That ceremony was called Le Khai Tam (Ceremony of the Opening of the Mind or Heart). Once the child's mind was believed to be open, he was taught Chinese characters as well as moral precepts from primers written by Vietnamese and Chinese authors. Following is the list of these textbooks:

1. Textbooks by Vietnamese authors:
   A. The Book of One Thousand Characters (Nhat Thien Tu),

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32 All official documents, business correspondence, mandarinal examinations, and classical literature were in Chinese, which was reverentially called chu nho or "scholars' language." Vietnam also had its own written language, chu nom or "vulgar language," which was formed by various combinations of Chinese characters and used mainly in popular literature.
a compilation of 1,015 Chinese characters and their meanings in Vietnamese, so arranged as to produce rhythmical effects without any meaningful sequence.

B. The Book of Three Thousand Characters (Tam Thien Tu), a vocabulary book similar to the above book.

C. The Book of Five Thousand Characters (Ngu Thien Tu), a compilation of five thousand Chinese characters and their meanings, arranged under such headings as astrology, politics, morals, and the like.

D. The First Inquiry into Learning (So Hoc Van Tan), a compendium of Chinese history, Vietnamese history, behavior rules, and study methods.

E. The Book of Five-word Verses for Children (Au Hoc Ngu Ngon Thi), a textbook of 278 five-word verses describing the delights of learning as well as the dream of a student wishing to receive the degrees of “First Doctor of First Class” (Trang Nguyen).

2. Textbooks by Chinese authors:

A. The Essay of One Thousand Characters (Thien Tu Van), a compilation of one thousand Chinese characters arranged into four-word rhythmical sentences.

B. The Classic of Filial Piety (Hieu Kinh), a compendium of Confucius’s teachings on filial piety.

C. The Precious Mirror of the Heart (Minh Tam Dao Giam), a compilation of various moral precepts taken from the Chinese classics.

D. Minh-Dao’s Book of Family Education (Minh-dao Giahuan), a textbook of five hundred four-word verses composed by Minh-Dao, a Chinese scholar living in the eleventh century.

E. The Three-Character Classic (Tam Tu Kinh), a compendium in 358 three-character rhymed sentences of Confucian philosophy and ethics and of Chinese history, concluding with incentives to study in the form of noteworthy examples of ancient times.

After mastering the contents of the above textbooks, the student was capable of studying the Chinese and Vietnamese classics in preparation for the mandarinal examinations. As pointed out by
Christophoro Borri, these books are "full of Erudition, or rare Histories, of grave Sentences, of Proverbs and such like." Emphasis was put upon the famous Four Books and Five Classics of the Confucian school, which are:

1. The Four Books (Tu Thu):
   A. The Analects (Luan Ngu), a work of twenty short chapters or books condensing the sayings of Confucius and of some of his disciples. This is the most important source of material on Confucianism.
   B. The Great Learning (Dai Hoc), a treatise dealing with Confucius's conception of the Superior Man (quan tu) as viewed by one of his disciples, Trang Tu.
   C. The Doctrine of the Mean (Trung Dung), an exposition of the philosophical presuppositions of Confucian thought, dealing particularly with the relationships between human nature and the moral order of the universe.
   D. The Book of Mencius (Manh Tu), a collection of the writings and sayings of one of the earlier Confucian thinkers. This is one of the first attempts to systematize Confucian philosophy.

2. The Five Classics (Ngu Kinh):
   A. The Book of Poetry (Kinh Thi), a collection of 305 rhymed ballads in various meters. Most of them were written by different authors under the Chou dynasty (about 1182-598 B.C.). This book contains valuable information about the customs, traditions, usages, mores, governmental machinery, etc., which existed in ancient China, particularly in Chou times.
   B. The Book of Records (Kinh Thu), a collection of historical documents from Yao the Great (about 2757-2258 B.C.) to Duke Mu of Ch'in (about 659-621 B.C.).

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34 Trang Tu lived in China in the third century B.C.; his anglicized name is Hsun-tzu.
35 Mencius (372-289 B.C.) firmly adhered to Confucius's belief in the innate goodness of man and the adequacy of the feudal system to develop that goodness.
C. The Annals of Spring and Autumn (Kinh Xuan Thu), a historical critique of political practices in ancient China, from about 722 B.C. to 481 B.C.

D. The Book of Changes (Kinh Dich), dealing with the principles of cosmic and social evolution as interpreted and preserved by the Confucian school.

E. The Book of Rites (Kinh Le), a compilation of the various ceremonial observances in ancient China.

The program also included Chinese history, Vietnamese history, ancient poetry, and even some basic military tactics. Popular literature—particularly satirical and fictional works—was regarded as unworthy of the scholar’s efforts and thus might not be studied along with the Holy Sages’ teachings.

The Mandarinal or Triennial Examinations

The Vietnamese system of mandarinal examinations was patterned after the Chinese one and initiated under the Ly dynasty (1009-1225). It remained in its embryonic form until the second quarter of the thirteenth century when its procedural rules were set up by the reigning family of Tran (1225-1400). In 1246, the emperor Tran Thai-Ton decreed that mandarinal examinations be held periodically—every seven years. This interval was reduced to three years under the Hau Lee dynasty (1428-1527 and 1533-1789). After rising to power and unifying the country, the Nguyen family (1802-1945) revitalized the system of triennial examinations, which, up to the early part of the twentieth century, were as follows:

1. The Thi Huong (Regional Examination) was held in eight provinces all over Vietnam in the years of Ty, Ngo, Mao, and Dau (The Mouse, The Horse, The Cat, and The Cock). It generally consisted of three or four progressive examinations in which candidates were asked to: (a) interpret excerpts from the Confucian classics, (b) write essays on ancient literature, philosophy, politics,

36 For further details regarding the system of mandarinal examinations see Tran van Trai, op. cit., pp. 71 ff.

37 In the sixteenth century, the Mac family usurped the power but had only a short-lived triumph.

38 In the nineteenth century, regional examinations were held in Thua-thien, Gia-dinh, An-giang, Binh-dinh, Nghe-an, Thanh-hoa, Nam-dinh, and Ha-noi.
history, and the like, (c) compose poems and rhythmic dissertations on philosophical or lyric topics, and (d) compose panegyrics and administrative reports or requests.

Examiners and supervisors were appointed by the imperial government. A few days before the examinations started, these mandarins ceremoniously took up residence in the trang-thi, a walled campus erected for the purpose. It is to be noted that examiners were carefully selected so as to avoid nepotism. Mandarin might never participate in an examining board which conducted the examinations in their own provinces; nor might they do so whenever and wherever members of their families were candidates.

Most candidates came from a selected group of students who had passed the provincial and eliminatory examinations. They were required to secure from the Notables of their native villages a certificate of “good life and conduct,” which would indicate that they had always abided by the moral and legal laws of the empire. Those students who were reputed to lead a bad life from the moral and even occupational standpoints were excluded from the regional examinations.

Early in the morning of the opening session, all candidates gathered in front of the four doors of the trang-thi, each of them having his own tent, bench, mat, canteen of tea, box of food, and other supplies. They loudly answered when their names were called, and received their officially stamped examination books, which they had submitted to the examining board beforehand. Once in the trang-thi, they set up their tents and got ready for the tests. When all candidates had settled down, the examinations began in an atmosphere of tense silence. At noon, the Midday Stamp (Dau nhat-trung) was printed on each book. From this time on, those who had finished their writings might submit them and

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39 The provincial examinations (thi khoa) were held every six months. They aimed at stimulating the interest of the people in formal education. The candidates who passed these were exempt from all military and corvée services for six months or one year, in accordance with the grades they received. In addition, the mandarins in charge of each provincial system of education were required to hold eliminatory examinations within their jurisdiction in the year in which regional examinations took place. The purpose was to eliminate unprepared students from the list of candidates to the mandarinal examinations. Usually, those requirements did not apply to mandarins' sons.

40 As a rule, actors, shoemakers, dyers, and the like, were not allowed to compete for the mandarinate, since their occupations were regarded as degrading. This custom fell into desuetude toward the end of the nineteenth century.
go out by the front door. The same process was repeated during the next two or three days.  

Examiners and supervisors were confined within the walls of the trang-thi until they finished their work, which often lasted thirty or forty days. The candidates receiving the highest marks gained the degree of Cu-Nhan (Rising Man, equivalent approximately to Master of Arts), whereas graduates with low grades became Tu-Tai (Blossomed Talents, equivalent approximately to Bachelors of Arts). The latter were exempt from all military and corvee services for three years. They were also entitled to participate in future regional examinations, without having to take the provincial and eliminatory tests. But, if they failed to get passing marks in their second attempt, they lost their Tu-Tai degree and were obliged to begin all over again. The Rising Men, on the other hand, might receive posts as mandarins-teachers (seventh or sixth class) or positions in the provincial administration. Many of them, however, continued their studies in preparation for the general examinations.

2. The Thi-Hoi (General Examination) was held in the capital—in Hue (Central Vietnam) under the Nguyen dynasty—in the years of Thin, Tuat, Suu, and Nui (The Dragon, The Dog, The Water-Buffalo, and The Goat). It followed the procedure laid down for the regional examination. The same fields of study were covered, but more erudition and detailed interpretation were required. Often the emperor himself selected the examination topics.

Unless they were already mandarins of the sixth class or teachers-mandarins of the fifth class, the Rising Men (cu-nhan) were qualified to compete in the thi-hoi. Also eligible was a certain number of outstanding Blossomed Talents (tu-tai) and meritorious students from the National Academy. The candidates receiving the highest marks were entitled to participate in the Thi-Dinh (Court Examination); their names were placed on the Chanh Bang (Main Tablet). Other graduates, whose names were put on a Pho Bang (Supplementary Tablet), had to put up with their relatively inferior laurels and might be appointed as heads of subprefecture (tri-huyen) or

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42 For more details concerning the candidates to the general examination see Tran van Trai, op. cit., pp. 93 ff.
acting heads of prefecture (*dong-tri-phu*). Those who failed to qualify were allowed to compete again; while waiting for the next general examination, they might hold teaching positions or receive subordinate posts in the provinces.

3. The *Thi-Dinh* (Court Examination), held in the imperial palace, consisted of only one composition on a topic selected by the emperor, who was also the final authority in the grading of examinees. The three top graduates were proclaimed “Doctors of the First Class” and entitled to high positions in the provincial administration. Next came the “Doctors of the Second Class,” who might be appointed as heads of prefecture (*tri-phu*) or given responsible posts in the various ministries. Below these two groups were the “Assistant Doctors,” who were usually placed on the list of “expectant officials” from which appointments were to be made. It is to be noted that the *Thi-Dinh* could be regarded as the final stage of the *Thi-Hoi*, since its main purpose seemed to help the imperial government classify the new “Doctors.”

Elaborate ceremonies were held in honor of the successful candidates, who knelt down to receive their caps and gowns from the *Giam-thi* (mandarin in charge of examinations) and were taken to the Court by the Minister of Rites. There they prostrated in front of the emperor while their names were solemnly called. An imperial banquet followed, gathering both examiners and graduates in the Ministry of Rites. The new “Doctors” also made a formal trip to the Imperial Garden and finally went out to parade in the streets.

Considering the many honors and privileges bestowed upon the “Doctors” and mandarins, it is not surprising that the highest aspiration of any ambitious male youth of Vietnam was to succeed in the mandarinal examinations. Not many candidates, however, could qualify even for the degree of *Tu-Tai* (approximately Bachelor of Arts), as the number of graduates was sparingly fixed in advance by imperial edicts. Usually there were no more than one hundred *Tu-Tai* and fifty *Cu-Nhan* for each regional examination center, although ten or twelve hundred candidates competed.

In summary, formal education in traditional Vietnam was Confucian-inspired and, as such, had a moral significance. It stressed

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43 The three “Doctors of the First Class” were also called the “Three Stars” (*Tam Khoi*) of the empire. Very rarely were there graduates having enough marks to be honored by such designations.

44 Data obtained mainly from Duong Quang Ham, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
the teaching of moral precepts and the imparting of Confucian formulas for regulating social and human relationships. The teaching profession was held in high esteem, and many teachers lived up to their own moral teachings and helped stabilize social relationships in the country. As there was no special training in pedagogy, teachers tended to use the same methods by which they themselves had been taught. So far as school organization was concerned, primary education was left to local and private initiative, whereas public schools were set up for advanced studies. There also existed a number of private schools conducted by retired mandarins and outstanding scholars. The uniform program of studies was based mostly on the Chinese and Vietnamese classics, since popular literature was regarded as unworthy of the scholar's efforts. Finally, the recruiting of mandarins was done through highly competitive examinations in which only a small percentage of candidates could qualify. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the education of the masses was performed mainly through the family, the guilds, the youth groups, and the like.
CHAPTER IV

OTHER EDUCATIVE AGENCIES IN TRADITIONAL VIETNAM

The Family

As already pointed out, the family was and, to a lesser extent, still is the basic social institution and the primary educative agency in Vietnam. Not only did the individual acquire most of his behavior patterns, habits, knowledges, and attitudes within his family, but he often was more devoted to it than to his country as a whole. This does not imply that patriotism did not exist in Vietnam. On the contrary, throughout their history, the Vietnamese people have always been aware of their national unity, as evidenced in their many struggles against foreign domination. Family interests, however, took precedence over national ones in peace-time, since blood ties were all-important in Vietnam. As popular sayings go, "a drop of blood is better than a pond of water."

The education of a child began with its conception. Explicit instructions were given to secure proper pre-natal influences and to ward off undesirables or evil influences. The common belief was that the foetus needed education and that the behavior of the expectant mother could affect the future personality of the child. Thus, the husband was forbidden by custom to have sex relations with his pregnant wife, because this was regarded as unfavorable to the physiological development of the child and might lead to its early death or at least to its dumbness. The expectant mother might not eat certain types of food—such as eel, turtle, frog, crab, and the like—which were regarded as both dangerous and vulgar; nor might she quarrel, gossip, and use abusive words. She was expected to sit or walk in a careful and somewhat dignified manner, to listen to the reading of the Holy Sages' works, and to display genteelessness, good taste, magnanimity, sincerity, and other qualities, which could supposedly be absorbed by the foetus. She was also told to abstain as much as possible from looking at abhorrent things, attending funeral ceremonies, or passing by a cemetery, a "haunted" tree, etc., so as to keep evil spirits away from her unborn child.

Usually, the mother herself nursed and raised her children, who clung to her all day long. They learned from her not only the necessary habits and skills for everyday living, but also definite
behavior patterns and moral precepts. Specifically, they were taught to be polite toward their elders, to use a proper language, to bow gracefully, to perform ceremonial prostrations before the altar of ancestors, and to show respect, obedience, and love to their parents. In brief, they were helped by their mother to adapt themselves to the expectations of the Vietnamese society. It is not surprising that the educative role of the mother has always been regarded as of vital importance in Vietnam. "Genteel mother, generous child," says a popular proverb; also, "if the child is spoiled, it is the mother's or grandmother's fault."

On the other hand, the source of discipline was the father, who was the "roof" or "pillar" of his family, the religious link between the dead and the living, and the lawmaker and judge within his home. His absolute authority over his children was upheld by law, but tempered by customs and traditions. He had, indeed, the legal right of correcting and disinheriting any of his offspring, who might not leave "the familial roof" without his permission. He was allowed to adopt male heirs as well as to arrange his children's marriages as he wished. In other words, he partook of the emperor's quasi-sacred character in the management of his family. In practice, however, parental love and devoted care for children prevailed in Vietnam. This was mainly due to the wholesome influence of Buddhism and Confucianism, which taught the Vietnamese people benevolence, gentility, compassion, and charity. It was also believed that "to have a child is to receive the grace of Heaven." In this connection, a certain author says:

By a son, a man gains heaven; by the son of a son, he gains immortality; by the son of this grandson, he rises to dwell in the sun. But if a family dies without a male child, the celestial dwellings are closed to him, and his parents and grandparents for whom they had already been opened are expelled forever. . . .

Indeed, a house became a home only after the birth of a child —particularly a boy. Although ancestor worship imperatively demanded male descendants, girls were also wanted so as to bring about harmony between the am and the duong.47

45 For more details concerning the legal rights of the Vietnamese father see Crivaz, op. cit., pp. 34 ff.
47 According to a Sino-Vietnamese belief, everything in nature is constituted by the interplay of two energy-modes or principles: the am and the
Regardless of sex, most children in Vietnam were brought up strictly. They were expected “to be seen and not heard,” to be served last whenever there were guests, and refrain from climbing on trees, from playing with knives or fire, and from cursing or fighting. They were required to ask for parental permission before going out, to announce their return politely, and to wait for their parents at meal time. As suggested by the popular saying Yeuv cho vot, ghet cho choi (Flog whom you love, neglect whom you hate), beating was the usual method of discipline, allowed by custom and supported by law. Thus, the father felt it was his legal right and moral duty to correct his children, whenever the latter did not conform to the behavior patterns of the group.

When children reached the age of six or seven, family education began to be differentiated according to sex. As we have seen, boys were expected to enter upon formal education, which would theoretically lead to the mandarinate. Practically all male children in Vietnam were taught some Chinese characters in school or at home. Not many of them, however, could go beyond the primary stages of formal education. The main reason seemed to be that it took tremendous efforts of memory to retain the Chinese classics and their commentaries—not to speak of the Chinese characters themselves. Furthermore, it is obvious that the unique program of study did not appeal to all of the boys; nor was it adapted to individual needs and abilities.

Those children who were not able or willing to take up formal education were trained in the skill of their fathers—farming, handicrafts, or trades. Even medicine was transmitted from father to son and often jealously kept within the family. The way of life of past generations was thus perpetuated, leaving little room for change. It must be added that most parents determined the occupations of their children. Since learning was highly esteemed, there was the tendency to encourage, if not to force, every boy to follow

__**duong.**__ Whereas the former is conceived to be female, fertile, breeding, dark, cold, wet, and mysterious, the latter is held to be masculine, procreative, bright, warm, dry, and active. In other words, the am is believed to be the negative principle in nature, and the duong the positive one.

48 Vietnamese medicine was empirical and based mainly on Chinese medical lore. Practically no knowledge of anatomy or physiology was available, as religious beliefs did not allow autopsies. The Vietnamese traditional physicians were not required to have a license in order to practice their profession; they mainly used herbs as remedies.
“the path of the ink and the ink slab.” This did not usually result in what sociologists call “parent-child opposition,” as filial piety was the main foundation of the Vietnamese family. It did create, however, a group of maladjusted individuals, who were practically good for nothing because of their inadequate literary knowledge as well as of their lack of vocational training.

Girls received their education from their mothers. Although educational practices varied among families and classes, the Vietnamese girls were trained and expected to possess four particular qualities or virtues (tu due). First, they had to know the management of a household—such as cooking, needlework, child care, and the like. Secondly, their manners had to be graceful, but not lascivious; their dresses neat and nice-looking, but not coquettish. Thirdly, they had always to speak politely and not to laugh “the house off.” Fourthly, they had to be sincere, generous, respectful, as well as to know the duties owed a husband, a mother-in-law, and others of the husband’s relatives.

The most imperative demand upon the Vietnamese girls, however, was to be chaste. It was not unusual that a bride, who had lost her virginity for one reason or another, was repudiated by her husband on the second day of their marriage. To this day the Vietnamese people as a whole still maintain the above custom, in spite of many social changes wrought by Western influences, warfare, and crises.

Closely connected with the family system, and possibly as a preventive measure against unchastity, was the strictly separate social life for men and women, which did not allow any free association between the sexes. After early childhood, girls were kept apart from boys’ play groups. The belief was that the female element is weak and influenceable, whereas the male element is strong and aggressive. As popular sayings go, “a straw placed near a fire will eventually burn.” Furthermore, three or even four generations might live under one roof and include a large number of daughters-in-law, grand-daughters-in-law, as well as cousins of both sexes. Yet, promiscuity was rare, probably because social intercourse between men and women was characterized by decorum and formalism rather than by spontaneous demonstrations of friendship, affection, or love. It must be added that social and penal sanctions against adultery were rigorous, if not cruel. Thus,
adulteresses might be thrown to the elephants, whereas adulterers were likely to be banished from their families.

Since there was no free mingling of the sexes, courtship was practically non-existent in Vietnam. Marriages were mostly arranged by parents with the help of professional match-makers. Boys and girls had little choice, if any at all, in the selection of their mates. Inspired as always by the doctrine of filial piety, the Vietnamese people regarded the institution of marriage as a means of ensuring posterity, and, thus, did not give much attention to spontaneous love and individual preferences. This could account for the careful selection of a daughter-in-law, as shown in the many consultations with professional fortunetellers, who were supposedly capable of determining the compatibility—or lack of it—between a boy and a girl as well as between two families. Often, nuptial bonds were arranged when the children were very small. There were cases in which the bride saw her husband for the first time on the wedding day. Furthermore, parents usually made every possible effort to secure for a son a wife from a family belonging to the same social class. Wealth seemed to be only a secondary factor in marriage arrangements, although it was customary for the groom’s family to send gifts to the bride’s parents. These presents were expected to form a part of the girl’s dowry, which also included whatever her family could give her. A wealthy father might refuse marriage gifts from a poor groom, and even allow the married couple to live in his house.

Marriage took place early in Vietnam, mainly because of the religious and social pressure for male progeny. As a result, the adolescence period was reduced to a minimum. The average age for boys at marriage was about nineteen and for girls seventeen. Wedding ceremonies were held in both the bride’s and the groom’s homes. In accordance with the doctrine of filial piety, the future

49 For instance, a girl born in the year Dan (The Tiger) might not be married to a boy born in the year Hoi (The Pig), as it was believed that she would bring him disaster or even death. The Tiger, people said, would eat up The Pig. Fortune-telling still exists in Vietnam, although it is not so widespread as it was some decades ago.

50 In rural areas, those averages were lower: sixteen for boys and thirteen for girls. Also, it was not unusual that the husband was much younger than his wife. Such were the cases of many poor girls, who were “purchased” rather than wed because of their working abilities.
spouses made ritual prostrations before the ancestral altars as well as before their parents.

Through marriage the bride became a member of her husband’s family, in which she shared in the housework under the more or less strict supervision of her mother-in-law. She was expected to treat her father-in-law and other male members of the family with deference but not with intimacy, to be on friendly terms with her sisters-in-law so as to avoid quarrels, and to be faithful and submissive to her husband. She might occasionally go back to her parents for a short visit, during which she could give vent to her grievances. Virginia Thompson summarizes the position of women in the Vietnamese society as follows:

... a woman is always under male authority, first as a daughter, then as a wife or concubine. Only as a mother has she any real authority. Their exclusion from the ancestral cult is the basis of this unfavoured position, though in practice their status is higher than that designated by law, and distinctly above the position of Chinese women. Certainly women are the hardest workers in an Annamite [Vietnamese] family and the only members who have any commercial ability. The average Annamite’s [Vietnamese’s] attitude towards women is uncomplicated by love—which is a theme of literature that seems to be confined to written expression. A wife is a “younger sister” to her husband or “elder brother,” the classical expressions of Annamite [Vietnamese] conjugal affection. ... A wife is her husband’s inferior and she merits his affection only when she cares suitably for their home, and has presented him with the male offspring indispensable to insuring his comfort in the spirit world.51

The inferior status of the Vietnamese women was due not exactly to “their exclusion from the ancestral cult,” but rather to the paternalistic family system in Vietnam, in which male dominance was sanctioned by both custom and law. They were not allowed to participate in religious ceremonies because they were believed to be “impure.” Indeed, sex matters—such as menstruation and childbirth—were regarded as unclean and thus tabooed.

The Vietnamese wife’s position in her husband’s family and in the village was strengthened if she bore a child, especially a boy, who would continue “the incense and fire.” She was considered as having received “the grace of Heaven,” and, consequently, was treated with increasing deference. Her husband could now refer to her as “the mother of his child,” and was likely to take side with her whenever domestic conflicts arose.

51 Thompson, op. cit., p. 40.
On the contrary, a woman without a child was a disgrace to her husband and to herself. Her barrenness was believed to be a "natural" consequence of her "bad" conduct, which had made her unworthy of becoming a mother. Her incapacity to bear a child might be taken as a strong ground for her repudiation or, at least, for her husband to take a concubine. Needless to say, the lot of the concubine, who usually came from a poor family, was worse than that of a wife.

Divorce was frowned upon as a disgrace to all concerned, in particular to the wife, for whom remarriage was difficult, if not impossible. It can be said that the success of a marriage depended upon its permanence rather than upon the spouses' happiness. Widowers were expected to remarry so as to provide their children with motherly care, whereas widowed mothers were not supposed to "take another step." Besides, a childless widow who remained faithful to her dead husband was highly esteemed in traditional Vietnam.

After the father's death, the oldest son became the head of the family. In the division of property, all the children had equal rights. The oldest son, however, received the huong-hoa (property for "incense and fire"), since he was in charge of the ancestral cult. If the widowed mother did not remarry, she was given an honored place in the family. Usually, she lived with the oldest son and was a life beneficiary of the huong-hoa.\footnote{Secondary wives or concubines usually lived with their own children after the death of their common husband. If they were childless, they might stay with the new head of the family, who was duty-bound to support them.} The division of property entailed the establishment of new homes, in which man was the master by virtue of law and custom.

**Activity Groups of Children and Youth**

Social life in traditional Vietnam was characterized not only by the strict separation of the sexes, but also by the scarcity of organized groups of children and youth for recreational purposes. During early childhood, brothers and sisters were allowed to play together. School-age boys engaged in flying kites, fishing, swimming, and wrestling. Other games included the danh-khang, in which the players, using a long stick, attempted to hit a short one placed on the ground or thrown to them by a playmate; the da-cau, which required certain skill in keeping a shuttlecock in the air with the
feet or knees; and the *danh-du* or swinging game, which was similar to that found in Western countries. In brief, boys sought the companionship of their age-mates as soon as they were able and allowed to step out of the family circle. Although children's play groups were not usually supervised by adults, well-to-do parents often attempted to induce their sons to associate with playmates coming from families of equal or superior social standing and wealth. According to a popular saying, "near the ink one blackens, near the lamp one shines." The Vietnamese parents, indeed, were aware of the importance of play groups in determining the behavior pattern of children and in shaping their attitudes.

Girls above ten usually stayed at home with their mothers and were trained in household work. In rural areas, however, they had some freedom from parental control, as they were often engaged in collecting grass to feed the oxen and water-buffaloes or in taking these animals to the meadows. They were thus allowed to participate in "boys' games" without any interference from the elders. But, as soon as they reached puberty, they were kept apart from boys' groups.

It is significant to note that games requiring vigorous physical effort were not socially approved in Vietnam, although wrestling and, to a lesser extent, archery and fencing were practiced and enjoyed. For the majority of the Vietnamese people physical exertion was associated with manual labor and, thus, was avoided, if not disdained. This might be due partly to the influence of the scholars who, being the dominant class in Vietnam, set up the standard for the masses to follow. Indeed, the Confucian scholar usually disdained the display of force and confined his exercise to a slow walk. He was supposed to behave in a dignified and genteel manner, as symbolized by his long nails. It must be added, however, that he sometimes enjoyed watching wrestling and cock-fighting.

As already pointed out, most Vietnamese students organized themselves into Condisciples' Associations with a view to helping their common teachers. Such groups were usually of permanent character, continuing into adulthood. They were often strengthened by the custom of "sworn brotherhood," which bound men to each other through pledges of mutual help and fidelity. In fact, friendship was highly valued in Vietnam, partly because it had a moral and religious basis.
Other groups, including young men of all walks of life, were organized mainly for recreational purposes. Their members gathered together to drink or feast, to play cards or Chinese chess, to visit pagodas and historic sites, to frequent professional entertainers' houses, and so on. Apart from these types of recreation and amusement, the students' groups were also engaged in composing poetry
and rhythmic prose, in painting, and in playing various musical instruments.

Young women's groups were often of a transitory character, formed to carry on a specific activity of the moment—such as, visit to a pagoda, weaving, watching processions, and the like. They were usually limited to the immediate neighborhood area or to the family circle. It is to be noted that the kitchen was often a center of gossip, in which women met to exchange news and to chew betel.

**Miscellaneous Educative Agencies**

Artisans and merchants organized themselves into guilds, each of which had a "patron saint." Through apprenticeship, skill in handicrafts and in commercial methods was handed down from generation to generation. Relations between masters and apprentices were dominated by moral and religious considerations, especially by the doctrine of filial piety. Group solidarity as well as respect for tradition tended to hamper the introduction of innovations in methods and techniques. As a result, initiative and progress were lacking.

The theater was and, to a lesser extent, still is one of the most important agencies for mass education. Indeed, the drama was a diversion which every one could afford to see. All the provincial capitals and large towns had their own theaters. Itinerant troupes went from village to village, playing at the communal house or in well-to-do families. Theatrical performances were enjoyed on such occasions as weddings, village fairs, festivals, and the like. Many of the plays had themes based on the Chinese Annals, and often vividly illustrated moral precepts and religious teachings. Commenting on the Vietnamese theater, Virginia Thompson says:

"The Annamite [Vietnamese] theatre is exclusively traditional in presentation, and historical in dramatic material. Plot has none of the importance given to it in the West, and no effort is made to achieve a realistic presentation. Old names and places are used to depict current events. . . . There is no room for individual interpretation. The drama is a synthesis of Annamite [Vietnamese] life with eleven type-characters: the king, princes, dignitaries, civil and military mandarins, warriors, and finally men and women of honourable and of servile condition. Likewise the hierarchal spirit world is synthetically represented. The value of the performance is social: its symbolism makes of it an allegory in which the traditional costumes and stereotyped gestures at once permit the spectator, forearmed with knowledge and in spite of sketchy scenery and props, to assign to every performer his role. This effort to depict the universal and
the abstract in human life, rather than the local and realistic, in the theatre makes the Annamite [Vietnamese] drama akin to the Greek.\footnote{Thompson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 48-49.}

No matter how conventional or unrealistic it might be, the theatre provided an indirect medium of instruction for the masses, whose formal schooling, if any, was very limited.

Mention is to be made of the professional storyteller, who found his audiences at village inns, in streets, on market days, and during festivals. His recital, often accompanied with a musical instrument, depicted historical and current events. Along with the theater, he was an important although indirect agent of mass education.

In brief, it can be said that the family constituted one of the most important educative agencies in traditional Vietnam. The individual acquired most of his behavior patterns, habits, knowledges, and attitudes within his family. Other educative agencies included the guilds, the youth groups, the theater, and the like, which provided important although indirect media of popular education.
CHAPTER V

A BRIEF EVALUATION OF EDUCATION IN TRADITIONAL VIETNAM

The Book of Three Characters (*Tam Tu Kinh*) begins with one of the most fundamental beliefs of Confucius: Man’s nature is innately good. This reveals the primary aim of Confucian education, which is to develop and maintain that innate goodness of man so as to create order and harmony in every home, in every village, and throughout the empire. To this end, moral cultivation is stressed.

In traditional Vietnam, education was Confucian in character, and, as such, instrumental in shaping human and social relationships according to the ethical principles of “The Master.” The Superior Man or Prince (*Quan-tu*)\(^{54}\) served as a model for individual conduct. This Confucian gentleman is conceived to be always filial as a son, kind as a father, loyal as a mandarin, righteous as a husband, sincere as a brother or friend. He is expected to exercise five qualities, namely, self-respect, sincerity, magnanimity, earnestness, and benevolence. He wholeheartedly observes the rites and ceremonies prescribed for each particular situation, follows the rules of good taste, obeys the inner law of self-control, and performs his duties with ease. In brief, he embodies the teachings of Confucius in his conduct, manners, and motives. He lives by the Confucian principle of *Trung-dung* or Middle Way—a principle of balance, moderation, constancy, reciprocity, and fellow-feeling. Not only does he try to establish his character, but he also endeavors to help others attain moral perfection. In other words, he is political-and social-minded.

As a result, it can be said that correct and harmonious relations between men were usually maintained in Vietnam, which showed a relatively high degree of stability and unity. Almost everybody—from the emperor to the humblest man or woman—was grounded in Confucianism, which practically permeated the entire nation. A unique system of moral and spiritual values was adopted by all, thus reducing emotional conflicts to a minimum. Each individual knew his place in his family, in his village, and throughout the country. He was, so to speak, adjusted to the orderly society of

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54 See Noss, *op. cit.*, pp. 361 ff.
Vietnam, in which patterns of behavior and rules of social intercourse, handed down by the Ancient Sages of China and regulated by both law and custom, tended to promote mutual understanding and respect and to smoothen group living.

Although formal education, with its single curriculum based mainly on the Confucian classics, did not give direct training in the methods and techniques of government, it grounded prospective mandarins in the ethical principles which were the foundations of the Vietnamese society. At this point, it must be said that Confucianism merges ethics and politics. Indeed, for Confucius and his followers, government should be based upon virtue, and should operate for the benefit of the people just as parents lovingly care for their children. It is contended that so long as there are virtuous rulers, the people will be virtuous and obedient. A good example is likely to prevent misbehavior and crime, whereas laws and regulations may breed lawlessness. Commenting on the political philosophy of Confucius, John B. Noss says:

... It rested on the faith (common to most ethical philosophers in ancient China) that all men are born with a natural tendency toward good, and become corrupt only when environment and education make them so. Basic changes in man's nature are, consequently, not to be sought; the thing that needs changing is man's habits, his accustomed modes of thought, judgment, and behavior in society. Man's nature being originally pure, what it chiefly requires is moral and logical cultivation along lines that will bring out its native rightmindedness and goodness.55

This political philosophy is, indeed, basically optimistic. It also implies that the good life is moral and spiritual rather than legalistic and materialistic, and that a well ordered state is the result not of legislative measures but of love and good will. The primary task of the ruling class is to set good examples for the people to follow, since men are responsive to good in their leaders. Confucius is quoted as saying to a Chinese baron:

... If you showed a sincere desire to be good, your people would likewise be good. The virtue of the prince is like unto wind; that of the people like unto grass. For it is the nature of grass to bend when the wind blows upon it.56

If there were cases of abuse of power and graft, they were partly restrained by the force of Confucian idealism.

55 Ibid., pp. 359-360.
The system of mandarinal examinations was organized to select men of high mental ability for the service of the state. It had a democratic foundation, since the poorest boys was eligible for the mandarinate, membership in which was based upon merit. Furthermore, the mandarinal examinations were designed to test the candidates' capacity for remembering and expounding the Chinese classics and Vietnamese annals in terms of Confucian precepts. As a consequence, most officials were so well grounded in Confucianism that they actually deserved the appellation of "fathers and mothers of the people." It can be said that Confucius's dream of a government based on virtue was to a certain extent realized in Vietnam, in which the ruling class was more concerned with educating the masses than with governing them through legal methods and techniques. Indeed, it was believed that education in moral character would eventually replace all penalties, as every individual would be helped to realize and accept his responsibilities and duties. Analyzing Vietnamese law, Virginia Thompson says:

... Penalties have no defamatory character as they have in the West. Once the criminal has served his sentence he is received back wholeheartedly into society's bosom. Punishment, thus, has far more the character of an expiation which generously wipes out the fault and leaves the offender as he was before.

If penalties are the extraordinary means used by the sovereign to teach his people virtue, rites are the normal method. To insure social harmony, the Annamite [Vietnamese] code prescribes rules for every sentiment upon all occasions. ... Unlike the more negative Occidental conception of punishment only for infractions of the moral code, the Annamite [Vietnamese] legislator used rites as a positive means of making ethical practices obligatory. Basically it was believed that rites would foster appropriate moral sentiments and a feeling of unity in the people. Rites gave force to Confucius's teachings, and his precepts, in turn, enforced ritual.57

As we can see, Confucianism permeated every aspect of life in Vietnam, which was as much a cultural as a political unit. This unity was upheld by the Confucian scholars, who enjoyed a great prestige throughout the nation. Even though a large majority of those who took up formal education could not qualify for the mandarinate, they acquired a large body of high-quality literature, which probably helped to maintain standards of taste in Vietnam. Their ideals and manners generally served as models for the masses and tended to promote a real appreciation of certain intellectual

57 Thompson, op. cit., p. 38.
and aesthetic phases of life. In the words of two French scholars, the principles and results of classical education "proved that in Vietnam, like in the West, there existed an intellectual way of living and using leisure-time, which gave a true culture to men and varied, less than one might have thought, from one end of Eurasia to the other."58

Yet education in traditional Vietnam also had its defects. The program of study, designed to prepare candidates for the mandarinal examinations, failed in many respects to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the masses of artisans, merchants, and rice-growing peasants. Even though the learning of the Chinese classics gave the Vietnamese people a uniform system of moral and spiritual values, too much emphasis was put on bookish knowledge to the detriment of scientific investigations. It was believed that the traditional writings of the ancient sages of China, which Confucius and his disciples had compiled or codified, would suffice for all practical purposes of life. Learning was conceived to be continued and heartfelt meditation or reflection upon the wisdom of the past. As a result, education in traditional Vietnam was characterized by conservatism and erudition, which tended to prevent innovations in the different fields of human endeavor. No wonder that technological advances, if any, were insignificant, and that empirical knowledge prevailed throughout the nation. To this day the Vietnamese people still use many of the farming techniques, commercial methods, and handicraft skills that their forefathers acquired ten or twelve centuries ago.

The emphasis upon memory and upon ability to write according to a rigidly determined style tended to discourage original thought. The result was that, with a few exceptions, Vietnamese students and scholars were but faithful imitators of the Ancient Sages, engrossed in memorizing ready-made formulas without trying to find out whether they could have better ideas or modes of expression. Some of them probably could recite pages after pages and reproduce them in their essays, in which personal judgments and critical thoughts had no place. All that obviously restricted intellectual activity and created mechanical routine or mental passivity.

So far as scholarly knowledge was concerned, its range of information was very limited, since Confucian-dominated education in Vietnam tended to ignore the contemporary world and its various civilizations. Any idea or activity which could not be accounted for in the classics was usually regarded as fantastic, if not immoral. No wonder that many fields of human endeavor—such as industry, technology, and the like—were neglected, and that Vietnam, like China, was culturally isolated from other nations.

Furthermore, the Vietnamese scholars, imbued with a bigoted pride in their intellectual attainments and in the finality of the Confucian ideals, were inclined to disregard other realms of knowledge and to exhibit a literary bias and a narrowness of outlook, which more than often condoned self-satisfaction and discouraged all progress. Many of these men had little or no preparation for dealing with the problems which they had to face in their everyday living. As a result, they often were socially maladjusted, since they were too proud to work in the rice-field and unable to take up most remunerative occupations. Some of them were, so to speak, kept alive thanks to their wives' commercial ability.

Commenting on education in traditional Vietnam, Virginia Thompson says:

... Confucianist education ignored the world and bred in its students a verbose formalism and complacent pedantry akin to that of the mediaeval scholastics. Absolutism in the government was paralleled and upheld by an intellectual despotism exercised from birth, by and through the educational system, upon administrators and people alike in support of the existing order. The lack of a vital national culture resulted in a complete spiritual stagnation, which was the heavy price paid by Annam [Vietnam] for China's moral domination.59

As pointed out in an earlier chapter, the scholars were at the top of the social pyramid and enjoyed a great prestige in Vietnam. Their ideals and habits were to a great extent taken over by the masses. The mandarinate, recruited from among their class, received many privileges and honors from the emperor. It is therefore not surprising that the scholars usually had a hostile attitude toward any political or social change and made every effort to uphold absolute monarchy. Their motives stemmed from their belief in the adequacy of the existing regime to maintain order and prosperity throughout the empire, and also from their selfish desire to per-

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59 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 27.