

The wisdom development of Vietnamese people in Tonkin with Franco-Vietnamese higher education during 1920-1945

Trieu Huy Ha¹

Abstract

This article aims to state that Franco-Vietnamese higher education experienced a wisdom development during the colonial time in Tonkin and this educational system introduced a modern educational paradigm to local people and trained several Vietnamese intelligentsia in the early 20th century. In order to clarify that statement, this paper employs the study of documents, records, and archives and a socio-historical approach with a wide range of archived French source materials, and previous papers to shed the light on the role of Franco-Vietnamese education in local education. Besides, the logical method goes hand in hand with that theory so as to concretize typical characteristics of Franco-Vietnamese education in Tonkin between the 1920s and 1945. First, it contributed to setting an early bird framework of the modern Vietnamese educational system. Second, this education plays a crucial role in training Westernized local intelligentsia with scientific knowledge and studying opportunities for indigenous people. These people became the first generation of lecturers and researchers for Vietnamese education since the post-August Revolution in Vietnam. Reassessing

¹ *Department of Liberal Arts Education, University of Management and Technology, 60CL Road, Cat Lai City Park, Cat Lai ward, Thu Duc city, Saigon, Vietnam.
Tel: +84986493639, E-mail: huy.hatrieu@umt.edu.vn*

Franco-Vietnamese higher education is the recognition of modern French education in renovating backward education of Indochinese countries until the early 20th century.

Keywords: Franco-Vietnamese higher education, Tonkin, Vietnamese history, French education.

1. Introduction

The French completely assimilated and marked the onset of their rule the Indochina as soon as they suppressed Vietnamese patriots' obdurate mutinies in the late 19th century. The French churned Tonkin into a protectorate region which was able to enlarge France's influence with political and natural resource aspects. In the major cities of Tonkin, the French poured a huge investment to renovate infrastructure as well as upgrading traffic systems and housing (Doumer, 2015) (Hocquard, 2020). The financial allocation of France, along with a wide spread of French culture delivered a well-healed class and initiated a developing stage of colonial regions of France in Indochina. This tremendous attempt of France was challenged by long-standing historical and cultural customs in rural areas of Tonkin. A vast number of peasants along with a universal education of Confucianism diminished the capability of France to educate these groups to be absorbed French education (Hoa T. T., 2021, pp. 3-22). Besides, Tonkinese landlords had a strong recourse to the aid of France to rule their manors with rigorous regulations and the conflicting interests between landowners and peasants triggered societal upheavals inside Tonkinese societies, which jaundiced the eyes of Tonkinese farmers by arbitrary powers (Gourou, 2015). Landowners were completely patronized by the French, and

this is a glaring illustration of the French policy when they built a colonial administration in cities while maintaining feudalist-based management through the Tonkin landowner class in rural areas. Owing to the role of the Indochinese metropolis, Hanoi would offer a splendid chance for the flower of Franco-Vietnamese education, which would educate a new generation staunchly serving the French and hamper any attempts of nationalists in order to hurl the colonial authority. According to Paul Doumer, the French initially trained a class who showed their fidelity to colonial administration, but a long-haul project would be in hours of need to construct a robust version of colonies down the road. Higher education was introduced to indigenous people in Vietnam in 1902 with the early establishment of a medical school in 1902 (Official Bulletin of French Indochina, 1902). Besides, the French were fully cognizant of the role of higher education renovation for Tonkin as this point was compared with the emergent education of Japanese concurrently appealing to Vietnamese intelligentsia's attention (Shiraishi, 1975) (Thau, 2005) (Thau & Vuong, 2001). The occurrence of the Dong Du and Duy Tan movements in Tonkin heralded a groundbreaking educational revolution for the Vietnamese people which raised grave concern for France concerning its administration in Indochina. This can be seen as a weighty problem and needs an expansion of effort to remit local attempts to voice Vietnamese over the rule of France in Indochina. From 1907 to 1920, the outcome of Franco-Vietnamese education was inconsiderable due to facing controversy and disagreements among French leaders and it was not until the early 1920s that schools were fully resumed under the policy of the new governor of Indochina- Albert Sarraut. Subsequent to this turning point, the higher education of Indochina experienced a wisdom development since it functioned to train the French-based intelligentsia, yet it introduced state-of-the-art education to the local and new Vietnamese elite who were

overwhelmed with patriotism and willing to submit themselves to new Vietnam after 1945. This paper would like to bridge the academic gap in historians' awareness of the role of Franco-Vietnamese education since the French documents reveal that this new model demolished the stereotype structure of local education, which was barely influenced by Confucianism education. Factually, the French enlightened Vietnam's culture and education to refurbish this country's education to adapt it to modern education.

2. Research Objectives

This article aims to attest that the French introduced a comprehensive higher education to Tonkin and this paradigm plays a significant role in making a breakthrough for the local educational system, which needs to acclimatize a new model of French education. Also, the Franco-Vietnamese higher education contributed to enlightening the academic status of Vietnam and training an outstanding generation of Vietnamese intelligentsia over the course of the French colonial period.

3. Literature review

This research topic is a ripe area for academics. Despite being not a novel topic, this paper intends to systematize, reassess, and form recognition of the main contributions of Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Vietnamese history. Particularly, with regard to higher education in Vietnam during the period the 1930s-1945, there are various articles and works domestically and internationally referred to this topic.

First of all, there is a series of journal articles scrutinizing Franco-Vietnamese higher education. Authors outspokenly appreciated the role of

higher education of French colonists in Indochina at that time. Pascale Barthélémy provided readers with a comprehensive overview of the colonial education of French people in some colonial regions including Indochina (Barthélémy, 2010). Le Xuan Phan with the introduction of several accurate figures from source materials articulates that higher education in Indochina instigated its heyday as soon as Albert Sarraut became the plenipotentiary of Indochina in 1922. Phan underscored a massive reconstruction of higher education under the reign of Albert and this action set the stage for pushing up the further development of local education for the Indochinese (Phan, 2021a) (Phan, 2021b). Besides lifting the quality of local education, Franco-Vietnamese higher education sowed the seed of state-of-the-art sciences to indigenous students with the training of Medical College The Higher School of Pedagogy and the School of Fine Arts, which was a means of nourishing a new generation of intellectuals and artists (Phan, 2018). Hoang Van Tuan mentioned two major educational reforms of Paul Beau and Albert Sarraut, respectively, in 1906 and 1917. Despite the quantity and the quality of lessons, higher education played a vital role in training various elite and helped them approach the positive values of French and Western civilization. Significantly, the research result was significant in the establishment of Université Indochinoise. It is putatively considered the first-class university in Indochina and a state-of-the-art educational institution under French rule (Tuan, 2016).

Additionally, Trinh Van Thao examined differences between lower education and higher education that minimal training would not be susceptible to assimilation and acculturation as being considered dangerous and would direct students to a utilitarian type. On the contrary, higher education would likely create a competition between Sino-Nom and mandarin script and Westernized languages intolerant of the Quoc Ngu

language (Thao T. V., 1993). Thao also gave researchers and readers a better understanding of three generations of Franco-Vietnamese education with a heavy focus on the Westernized students who greatly absorbed the training in Franco-Vietnamese higher education. Thao called them the 1925 generation: Westernized intelligentsia. He appreciated the role of the Vietnam Communist Party to become the vanguard and guided them to nationalism and upheavals for an independent future of Vietnam (Thao T. V., 2013, pp. 24-31). Furthermore, Tran Thi Phuong Hoa optimistically opinionated that the Franco-Vietnamese school deleted a blurred demarcation between previous education and modern Vietnamese education. It is a paramount crucial educational institution for training new Vietnamese elite and restructuring the social stratum. Students and teachers in those schools played a vital role in independent movements in Vietnam in 1945 (Hoa T. P., 2012, p. 246).

Overall, Franco-Vietnamese higher education meted out a ripe area of scholarship to cultivate several aspects of this education. Previous authors redressed obsolete conventional wisdom accusing Franco-Vietnamese higher education of being an invasive tool of the French to assimilate Vietnamese people and made a mechanism of bureaucracy with mercenaries and lackey staff (Hoang, 1967, p. 16) (Khanh, 1985, p. 178). The achievement of Franco-Vietnamese higher education was a groundbreaking change in Vietnamese education with a systematic hierarchy and rich knowledge of technological fields. Although imposing the French 'will to take advantage of local human resources, it is undeniable that Franco-Vietnamese higher education remedied the problem of Confucian schools and hasten the development of modern education. The gap of this scholarship is major achievements of Franco-Vietnamese tertiary education toward Vietnam's education with a typical case of higher education in Tonkin,

which is expected to rectify previous judgments of researchers and enjoy a special role of Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Tonkin in early 20th century.

4. Methodology

This paper employs the study of documents, records, archives, and a socio-historical approach to shed the light on the role of Franco-Vietnamese education in local education during colonial times. All archival French documents are deprived of a wide range of archives centers, including the Paris Archives Center, and National Archives Center I (Hanoi) and these sources are reliable to directly approach official texts and directives of the authority regarding the future development of Franco-Vietnamese education. The documents have been meticulously translated into English and the author only culled archival docs related to higher education.

Additionally, some handwriting of Franco-Vietnamese-based students as well as Tonkin French governors contribute to buttressing personal statements throughout the paper. As this title is a desk research paper, previous literature gave the author a hand to argue that Franco-Vietnamese education paved the way for modern Vietnamese education and recant prejudiced arguments inside several researchers' notions. Additionally, the socio-historical approach played a decisive role in shaping a solid theoretical framework for this topic in order to examine the correlation between historical context and its social impacts. Cold & Scribner (1978) argued that the socio-historical approach aimed to create an account of human processes that recognizes the essential relationship between these processes and their cultural, historical, and instructional settings (Vygotsky, 1978). The author employed this theory in order to state that the historical context of

Indochina played a critical role in improving the educational system and led to the birth of new education, which helped Vietnamese people earn academic achievements over the course of their careers. On the other hand, the historical and cultural aspects of Franco-Vietnamese education contributed to forging a healthy relationship with the academic development of the Tonkinese society and people as well as Indochinese people.

Besides, this article majorly applied the logical method to tackle the research, which is critical to generalize the main features of the Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Tonkin over the course of the 1920s-1945. Thereby, the author found two key contributions of the Franco-Vietnamese higher education, namely an introduction of modern science to the indigenous and the born of new Westernized Vietnamese intelligentsia.

5. Research Results

5.1 An introduction to modern sciences in Franco-Vietnamese higher education (the 1920s-1945)

French people implemented two educational reforms in their ruling in Indochina (1884-1945), respectively, in 1906 and 1917 (Bau, 2006). Vietnamese elites in the early 20th century were folded under the weight of Japanese reform in the late 19th century, which would be likely to make formidable capability for ill-fated countries under the rule of colonialism. Japan became a paragon of the independent country as several Vietnamese elites were determined to voyage for the independent paths of Vietnam (Thuan, 2018) (Van, 2019). Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chau Trinh were two archetypes of Vietnam's patriotism who made tremendous attempts to achieve a goal of independence for Vietnamese people following ways of the Japanese elite to renovate the country through a lens of state-of-the-art

sciences and education (Chau, 1990) (Thau, 2005). Japanese thoughts were completely grafted onto Vietnamese elites' viewpoints posed a hindrance, blunting France's effort to restabilize political climates and transplant outstanding values of France into Vietnam (Brocheux, 2022). Hence, educational reforms were critical to shun a spectacular defeat of the French toward social aspects of Indochinese societies. Paul Beau signed several directives showing his keen interest in local education. In 1906, he approved of establishing *Conseil de Perfectionnement de l'Enseignement Indigène* (Indigenous Education Improvement Council). This proves that indigenous education was a far-reaching vision aiming to educate local servants for the authorities of France. After a month of controversy, French officials reached a consensus to publish a policy for educational reform in Indochina. Accordingly, there were two ranks in the Franco-Vietnamese educational hierarchy, including primary rank and second rank. All of the subjects were taught in the French language. Sino-Nom language was gravely weakened and completely lost its position in new education. Paul Beau concurrently released a decree coded No.1514a on May 16, 1906, pressing the importance of higher education for indigenous communities in Indochina and creating the native staff for local administrations or specialized agencies under the Governor General of Indochina (Dien, 2006). Indochina University was officially established in Hanoi in November 1907. There were 94 freshmen, 62 auditory students, and 37 medical school students enrolled in the first course and the total number of students got 193 (Mus, 1927, p. 2). It seems to be plausible to argue that this directive translated a dream of local universities into reality in Indochina. The following table reveals the college member of Indochina University based on Directive 1514a, May 16, 1906

Table 1: College systems' establishment based on Directive 1514a, 16 May 1906

No.	Name of colleges	Missions
1.	College of Law and Administration (Cole supérieure de Droit et Administration)	Training local mandarin groups for France's administration
2.	College of Sciences (École supérieure des Sciences)	Training researchers in basic sciences, teachers, and lecturers
3.	College of Medicine (École de Médecine de l'Indochine)	Training doctors and nurse
4.	College of Civil Engineering (Ecole supérieure du Génie Civil)	Training experts, builders, and engineers for transportation
5.	College of Literature (Ecole supérieure des Lettres)	Training linguistics, Eastern ancient literature, History, Geography, French History, History of Philosophy, and Art.

Source: (Dien, 2006)

As a result, this policy contributed to swiftly churning conventional education into modern education. Instead, colonial administrations imposed the French language to become the official language in their higher educational system, which was instrumental in closing a gap in connection with the professional knowledge of local students.

Besides, the prevalence of vocational schools under Franco-Vietnamese higher education was a glaring illustration of profound alternation inside the educational system of higher stage and adapted to the demand of colonial education as well as France's targets in Indochina. For example, **École des Mécaniciens Asiatiques** [Asian Mechanics School] was inaugurated in Saigon and Gia Dinh Art school, respectively, in 1906 and 1913 achieving a futile result to offer medical remedies for the local and satisfying artistic demand among local communities (Les Entreprises-coloniales, 2021). Then, those facilities were professionally upgraded to become a venue for training well-qualified assistants for French people in offices and government. However, Indochina University temporarily closed in 1907. Though there is not any piece of evidence to shed light on this reason, it is hypothesized that Indochina University in 1906-1907 was a litmus test of French people in higher education in Tonkin and expected to concurrently dominate over other tendencies of education of Vietnamese patriotists.

However, the 1917 education reform of the Albert administration instituted a zenith of Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Tonkin and made a conclusion of the old style of education in Tonkin and other protectorates (Thao & Thang, 2008) (Thanh, 2014). Albert made an effort to diminish the possibility of Chinese civilization's old education and adverse influences deemed to be an obstacle for Westernize Indochina. He supposed that France would not enter into a harsh competition with other academics in the world less than an ambition to retain their learners inside a vacuum of Franco-Vietnamese education to sidestep any risks from outside thoughts (Sarraut, 1923, pp. 98-99). Hence, France administration is poised on a free-minded policy to enroll potential local students in Franco-Vietnamese higher education. *Règlement général de l'Instruction publique* [General regulations on Public Education], containing seven chapters and 556

regulations compartmentalized into Primary (*École Primaire de plein exercice*- Full-service primary schools; *Ecole Primaire Elémentaire*-Elementary Primary School and *École ménagère*-Housewife school), Secondary (*Diplôme*-Upper secondary; *Diplome de bachelier*-Bachelor, and *École professionnelle de plein exercice*-Full-service vocational school) (Gouvernement général de l'Indochine franchise, 1918, p. 607). With regard to higher education, French people disestablished *École des Mandarins à Hanoi*-Hanoi Mandarin School, *École des Travaux publics*-School of Public Works, and *École d'Administration à Hué*-School of Administration in Hue to be under solid management of Indochina University. *École de Médecine de l'Indochine* (Indochina medical college) upgraded to Indochina Health and Medicine university. Likewise, *École de Droit et d'Administration* (Law and Administration School), *École Vétérinaire* (Veterinary Medicine School), *École des Travaux publics* (Public Works School), *École d'Agriculture et de Sylviculture* (Agriculture and Forestry school), *École de Commerce* (Business School), *École des Beaux-Arts* (Arts School) elevated their levels to meet various requirements of learners. In 1923, Hanoi Medical school enrolled learners in doctoral courses. There was 137 defended dissertation in Vietnam and 112 defended dissertation by Vietnamese students in France (Tuan, 2016, p. 347). This policy proved a higher position of France in new education, the curriculum, scholarship, teachers and trainers, and the administrative structure of education. After over ten years of operation, the French built a solid system of higher education in Tonkin and the University of Indochina became a well-known college. As a result, the enumeration of French people in 1929 provided an overall regarding the fact of enrollment at college and implied its influence.

Table 2: Number of students at the University of Indochina, 1929

Schools and Departments (Without School of Law)	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	Total	Intern Students in University dormitories		
						Fellows	Paying	Total
1. School of Medicine [École de médecine]						141		
1.1 Department of Doctor	13	7	3	3	26	16	1	
1.2 Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences	2	1	-	-	3	0	0	
1.3 Department of Certificate of Pre-Medicine (PCN)	15	-	-	-	15	4	2	
1.4 Department of Indochinese Medicine	48	18	8	20	94	74	11	
1.5 Department of Indochinese Pharmacy	12	3	2	-	17	14	0	
1.6 Department of Student Midwives	8	11	-	-	19	19	0	
2. Graduate School [École supérieure]						21	1	22
3. School of Education [École d'éducation]								
3.1 School of Public Works [École des travaux publics]	40	16	19	6	81	50	10	60
4. School of Business and Post-Telephone-Telegraph [Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et Post-Téléphone-Télégraphe]								
4.1 Department of Business	12	12	8	-	32	24	2	30
4.2 Department of Post-Telephone- Telegraph	6	9	-	-	15	4	0	
4.3 Department of Radiotelegraph	3	4	-	-	7	0	0	
5. School of Agriculture [École d'agriculture]								
5.1 Department of Agriculture	9	3	3	5	32	28	2	30
5.2 Department of Forestry		3	4	5				
6. School of Animal Sciences [École des sciences animals]								
6.1 School of Fine Arts [École des Beaux-Arts]								
6.2 Department of Paintings	10	6	9	6	31	17	1	36
6.3 Department of Architecture	8	-	8	-	23	18	0	
TOTAL	220	140	101	50	511	33	54	392

Source: (Gouvernement Générale de l'Indochine, 1929, p. 345) (Wongsupan, 2017, p. 311)

According to the table, 511 students experienced a new education at Indochina University in 1929. Meanwhile, many students also chose this university for their internship. This figure was 392 students in the same year. In the following years, Albert Sarraut continued to apply *Règlement général de l'Enseignement supérieur* (General regulations on higher education). This policy made a spurt for a restructuring of local higher education. It was not until 1945 that the network of universities in Tonkin was critical to approach state-of-the-art tendencies of modern education. Those institutions were beneficial for Indochinese students to broaden their knowledge in the sciences, which they were unable to be experienced with the ambit of Confucian schools. By virtue of the French language in higher education, both Vietnamese and Indochinese students seized an excellent opportunity to study in a professional environment of academics and approach scientific accomplishments.

In the first years of enrollment, the French conducted an investigation to classify the origin of students and the number of Tonkinese students who were superior to other groups of students in 1920. Particularly, the following pie chart reveals the proportion of Indochinese students based on their permanent residence in the French people's division in 1920.

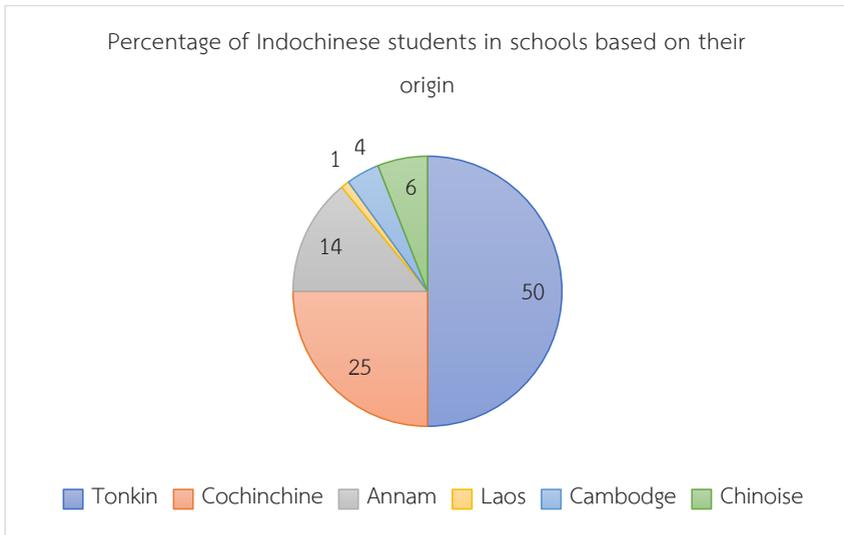


Figure 1: Percentage of Indochinese students in schools based on their origins in 1920 (Legrandjacques, 2016)

It is evident that an overwhelming majority of Tonkin students went to Indochinese schools, accounting for half of the total number of students. Cochinchinese students ranked second position and got 25%. Meanwhile, a modest 13 percent of Annam students enrolled in a course in schools, and a mere 4 percent of Cambodian students and only 1 percent of Laotian. Franco-Vietnamese schools received ample attention from several Vietnamese students coming from major cities of Indochina. Their provenance was from the moneyed classes or middle-class families in Vietnamese society. Tonkinese students became a dominant group among other ethnic groups in Indochina as Hanoi was the capital of French Indochina. Also, Tonkinese students effortlessly approached Franco-Vietnamese higher education for the reason of easy commuting and the long-standing tradition

of academic-preferred soul compared to other regions of Vietnam (Binh, 2014). According to Tuan (2016), it was estimated that there was 62% of students originated from middle-class families, and approximately 20% of students from wealthy families (Tuan, 2016). Several people gave a barrack of stricture to the inequality in their education. Understandably, Franco-Vietnamese schools became universal in major urban of Vietnam since they failed to trespass the bamboo hedge of Vietnamese villages that had a deep-rooted prejudice over foreign elements and succumbed to admitting a new way of education. Meanwhile, the introduction of Franco-Vietnamese higher education was a novel field for Vietnamese, so the number of students from rural areas of Vietnam was inconsiderable. Moreover, the increasing industrialization in cities rapidly accelerated social division. The social disparity made the impoverished unable to experience a new education. However, France administration did not remit efforts of commoners to be enrolled in higher education. Even the authority fueled local students' belief in this education via a wide range of distinguished and excellent student scholarships to boost their studying careers. According to a report from Indochina University, the number of wealthy students only accounted for 20%, and the remaining students originated from commoners, accounting for 70% (Giang, 2006). Although most of the better-off students had a higher likelihood of achieving the most distinguished diploma, it is undeniable that there was an equilibrium of academic opportunities despite different levels of social classes.

Besides, the number of students also shows an upward tendency over the course of the period of 1939-1945. This period is deemed to be a halcyon day of the Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Tonkin as Tonkin became a reliable educational destination for students coming from various states of French Indochina. Likewise, the system of higher education was a

complete version and appealed to the rising admission of local students. For example, the following table illustrates the fact through their admission between 1939 and 1945.

Table 3: Enrolled students at Indochina University depended on student's origin (1939-1944)

Origins	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
French	88	89	138	206	313	371
Tonkin	394	428	419	476	556	681
Cochinchia	132	137	136	187	223	212
Annam	92	117	149	172	202	218
Cambodian	8	8	11	8	15	23
Laos	7	6	8	6	5	12
Others	11	20	14	20	11	11
TOTAL	732	805	875	1085	1325	1528

Source: (Gouvernement général de l'Indo-Chine Indochine, 1940) (Legrandjacques, 2016, p. 89) (Phan, 2021)

According to table 3, the number of students in student groups gradually rose within five years. Until the last year of inspection, all groups reached their peak in the number of students. Notably, the highest learners were Tonkin, Cochinchinese, and Annam. Meanwhile, the number of Laotians, Cambodians, and other groups was volatile throughout the period. Overall, the number of Indochinese students showed an element of increase over the course of the colonial period since this educational system kindled students' hope for academics at home. Indochinese parents, who worked

for the French, were cognizant of the role of Franco-Vietnamese education and encouraged their children to be trained in this academic sphere. Thereafter, the French consistently operated colleges and facilitated local students to enroll in a course at all Franco-Vietnamese colleges in Tonkin due to the higher degree of local staff in colonial societies. Therefore, it is biased to state that French people aimed to stupefy indigenous people with enslaving thoughts. Charton appreciated in 1944 that: *"At the start of the year, it welcomed more than 1,300 students. It may emulate the Universities of France, of which it claims quality, of which it adopts the spirit and the traditions, of which it applies the programs (Charton, 1944)."*

With regard to human resources for Franco-Vietnamese universities, the number of lecturers in this period is unstable. The budget in the initial stage of the reform was insufficient to coax French teachers and lecturers from leaving their country to have an outset for a new career in a remote country. Armand Degorce and Adrien Le Roy de Barres were the first Medical school lecturers in Hanoi in 1922. The financial assistance of France increased to 367 million USD in the second reform of Albert Sarraut (Sarraut, 1923, p. 45). However, Franco-Vietnamese universities still underwent an understaff situation since employing French professors to depart for academic courses in Indochina was a palpable difficulty to the weather while the capability of local lecturer employment was out of question. Hence the leading obstacle to higher education was the deficiency of teaching resources. According to the Director of Indochina University, 22 lecturers were preaching in economics courses there (National Archive Center I, 1922). In 1933, Profess Escarra at Paris University of Law voyaged to Indochina to take an examiner for first-year students at Hanoi School of Law. Professor Lemaître at Paris University of Medicine came to Hanoi for student exams and research (Gouvernement général de l'Indochine, 1934, p. 109). The first Medical

student defended their graduation thesis in their country and it was a remarkable achievement of higher education in Indochina. Therefore, French lecturers were pioneering lecturers in training the early generation of Franco-Vietnamese higher education. It was not until 1940-1945, that there were eight professors at Law University and 13 professors at Health and Medical University (Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer , 1946). These people contributed to educating the first intellectual generation and imparting French values of culture and sciences to indigenous people.

5.2 The birth of new Vietnamese intelligentsia

First of all, higher education during the period of French rule brought state-of-the-art education to Vietnamese people in the early 20th century. It is undeniable that new methods of education started in the first decade of this century. For example, Tonkin Free School was a coinage of new education when new pedagogical methods were introduced to students and this school was an employed model of school structure of 慶應義塾大学 (Keiō Gijuku Daigaku) in Japan (Huy, 2021, p. 1928). Thanks to reformative trends in some Eastern countries, Phan Boi Chau heightened the number of Vietnamese students overseas to study in Japan. His objective was the supreme objective of national salvation and to topple France's administration in Vietnam. The role of education was immensely helpful to assist Vietnamese patriotists to achieve their goals smoothly, so a series of education reform proposals floated to seek a path for Vietnam's independence. Of course, however, France administration would not let Vietnamese activists pull off their plans. As a result, a new education was implemented and officially superseded the old style of education in 1917 as analyzed. With the wisdom development of Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Tonkin, the number of Vietnamese people gradually rose between 1906 and 1945 and made a wide gap compared to European students. The French

continued to enumerate the number of students who relied on the origin between 1935 and 1944 to unveil the correlation between the local and the French throughout the development of Franco-Vietnamese higher education in Indochina. This survey contributed to accessing the influence of that educational system on indigenous students.

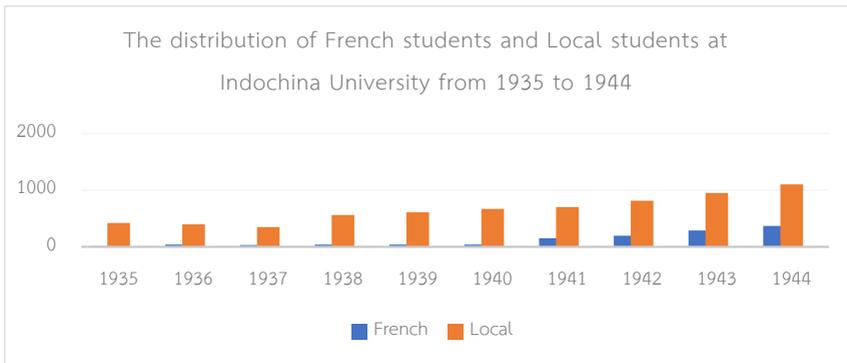


Figure 2: The distribution of French and Local students at Indochina University from 1935 to 1944 (A. Charton, 1949) (Gouvernement général de l'Indo-Chine Indochine, 1940) (Tuan, 2016)

Figure 2 depicts the distribution of French learners and indigenous students at Hanoi University between 1935 and 1944. According to the chart, the number of local students is predominant compared to European students. This figure had a stable increase throughout the period, and eventually, it reached a peak at roughly 1100 local students in 1944. Despite the upward trend of French students, this number was much less than local learners. Thus, it is no denying that the French-trained a generation of well-qualified staff for their administrative affairs and indirectly trained excellent Vietnamese students. The rise of local students reveals that Franco-Vietnamese higher education became the scholarly objective of Indochinese people and

the opportunities of being trained in this system were ample for indigenous students. To typify this evidence, Gilbert Gidel at the Paris Department of Law appreciated Vietnamese students. He evaluated that value of the Vietnamese copies was much better than the French's. Some copies showed that authors got exceptional qualities of precision and finesse of mind (Gidel, 1934). Besides, numerous Vietnamese students won scholarships so that they could follow an international course in France. According to Thao (1993), there were 208 Indochinese students granted France government scholarships (196 Vietnamese people, 9 Cambodians, and 3 Laotians) (Thao T. V., 1993, p. 272). Except for political viewpoints, this educational background contributed to training gifted students. Several of the students had bright careers and submitted themselves to the August Revolution in Vietnam in 1945.

Besides, Franco-Vietnamese higher education functioned in training new intelligentsia in Vietnam. In fact, the number of Westernized intelligentsias was on the rise in Vietnam while the number of Confucianism-oriented students strikingly declined in Vietnamese society. The new intelligentsia were the first avant-gardes in Western knowledge and education. These first students perceived new ideologies from contemporary schools of theory in the Age of Renaissance and Enlightenment from the 15th to 18th century in France and Europe. As a result, those people reshaped their perception to acknowledge the role of individualism and the supreme values of creation and humanism. This led to a transformation in their worldview and lifestyle in the burgess class in the major cities of Tonkin inside Indochina. The majority of Westernized intellectuals had a penchant for a down-to-earth explanation, and they made their tremendous attempt to prove a viewpoint with reliable evidence scientifically. After their graduation, most of the intelligentsia lingered to seek a permanent jobs in cities instead of leaving.

As a result, they quickly acclimatize to city life and indirectly engendered a norm of city lifestyle and distinguished elite in those cities. Westernized intellectuals played a vital role in propagating modern thoughts and their avidity for national liberation in a new way.

Furthermore, by virtue of Franco-Vietnamese higher education, several of the excellent intellectuals were eagerly dedicated to their research and contributed to the development of local sciences in Tonkin. For example, Medical students were likely to be educated in state-of-the-art medical methodology and down-to-earth theories to practically operate their experiments. *La chronique d'Indochine Health and Medicine College* [The chronicle of Indochina Health and Medicine College] was released with ten issues, which gleaned prominent pieces of research and major guidelines for students of Indochina's Medical sciences. The majority of articles reflected novel papers of research on tropical diseases, which had a proliferation of academic discoveries in new diseases in a specific geographical region of Indochina. In a congress of the Tropical Medical Association, a variety of valuable reports were delivered to professors and students at the School of Medicine (École supérieure de médecine et de pharmacie, 1938, pp. 19-20), which can be seen in the pioneering research on Vietnamese modern sciences.

Moreover, numerous Vietnamese students made a considerable contribution to local sciences. Dang Van Ngu defended his graduation thesis entitled *Contribution à l'étude étiologique et clinique des abcès du foie au Tonkin* [Contribution to the study etiological and clinical liver abscess in Tonkin] with an intimate guidance of Professor Henri Galliard at the School of Medicine. Then, he continued researching parasitic and contagious diseases in Japan from 1943 to 1949 and officially became a lecturer at the School of Medicine after the August Revolution by Vietminh. Ton That Tung

was a distinguished researcher at the Hanoi School of Medicine. In 1938, he courageously rebelled to prop up French people's discrimination since local students were not entitled to study internal medicine; eventually, he was able to register for a course. In 1939, he defended his medical thesis on the subject: *La vascularisation veineuse du foie et ses applications aux résections et lobectomies hépatiques* [The vascularization veins of the liver and its applications to hepatic resections and lobectomies], resulting from dissection of more than 200 livers, and awarded a silver medal awarded by the Faculty of Medicine of Paris. He also became a lecturer at the Hanoi School of Medicine post-1945. Likewise, Dang Thai Mai was an intellectual given higher education. He reminisced about his time at the University of Education in his autobiography and that his years of studying at Hanoi University of Education helped him gain remarkable achievements. In addition to the practical goal of supplementing the training of teachers dedicated to teaching literature and literary history and inspiring the students. Professors were keen on the questions of method from both an aesthetic and historical point of view. Commenting on texts allowed him to familiarize himself with archival and documentation techniques to explore new opinions and bring new insights into the future (Mai, 2021, p. 291). Also, he expressed his gratefulness to the French professor. Mai supposed that he wholly absorbed the methods of Milon in literature critique. He was impressed by pedagogical methods in all periods of Milon, which significantly benefited Mai's further research (Thao T. V., 2013, p. 312).

Besides, the establishment of l'École supérieure des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine (College of Arts in Indochina) encouraged various local students to be professionally trained under the curriculum of Franco-Vietnamese higher education. To Ngoc Van, who is considered one of the most influential Vietnamese artists, experienced the training at this college. Also, Van taught

at this college during his post-graduating period and became the first generation of Vietnamese artists subsequent to the August Revolution in 1945. Not only art, but literature research had a sharp rise of Westernized intellectuals experiencing higher education under French rule. Duong Quang Ham², Nguyen Khanh Toan³, Hoang Ngoc Phach⁴, Do Xuan Hop⁵, Dao Duy Anh⁶, and Pham Quynh⁷ were vanguards of the academic sphere of Vietnam and became the first people that restructured the educational hierarchy of Vietnam after 1945 and released a variety of valuable scientific books for Vietnamese students. These people greatly benefited from colonial higher education to run their careers and build national Vietnamese academic backgrounds.

² Duong Quang Ham (1898-1946), is a Vietnamese writer and literary researcher. He has several books regarding Vietnamese literature and *Việt Nam văn học sử yếu* is considered the first book related to a history of Vietnamese literature.

³ Nguyen Khanh Toan (1905-1993), is an erudite scientist in many fields of history, philosophy, and linguistics with rich knowledge of East and West cultures. He possesses more than 500 books, treatises, essays, research works published in dozens of newspapers and magazines both at home and abroad.

⁴ Hoang Ngoc Phach (1896-1973), is a Vietnamese novelist. He is famous for his first Vietnamese novel entitled "To Tam". He has a wide range of publications regarding Vietnamese literature.

⁵ Do Xuan Hop (1906 - 1985) was a famous physician and a general of the Vietnam People's Army. In 1929, he graduated from the College of Medicine and Pharmacy and became a medical doctor from 1944. He was a Lecturer at the Indochina School of Medicine and Pharmacy between 1932 and 1945 and became one of the people in the first generation of doctors after 1945.

⁶ Dao Duy Anh (1904-1988) is a Vietnamese historian. He contributed to translating a wide range of Sino-Nom based historical books into Latinized Vietnamese language. He was the author of *Việt Nam văn hóa sử cương* (The history of Vietnamese culture), *Đất nước Việt Nam qua các đời* (The history of Vietnamese borders, territorial and marine land), etc, which are seen to be the most important textbooks for Vietnamese students.

⁷ Pham Quynh (1893-1945), is a Vietnamese cultural researcher, journalist, writer and mandarin of the Nguyen Dynasty (Vietnam). He was a pioneer in promoting the Quoc Ngu script and using the Vietnamese language. He is the author and translator of many articles and books on literature, philosophy, aphorisms, fables, operas, and songs in Vietnamese, translated into Vietnamese and written as essays. Almost all of his works were published in Nam Phong magazine.

6. Conclusions

To capitulate research findings, this article proposed a rational change in historical perspectives on the role of Franco-Vietnamese higher education to the wisdom development of Vietnamese people in Tonkin so that some prejudice that the French benefited from Franco-Vietnamese education to shape obscurantism and train a generation of myrmidon must be redressed through scrutinizing archival documents of the French. This article aims at the enlightenment of Franco-Vietnamese higher education to reshape the educational hierarchy as well as educate Vietnamese people with an advanced curriculum and pedagogical methods. Obviously, the French docs unveil that Franco-Vietnamese higher education is a turning point in the history of Vietnamese education despite some disadvantages in universal education. To be honest, the final objective of the French is creating a generation of French-based officials, not for universal education. However, some proofs let us understand that the opportunities for the Vietnamese in Franco-Vietnamese higher education were equitable. Objectively, the development of Franco-Vietnamese higher education brought Vietnamese people in Tonkin a great advantage of modern education rather than a didactic and obsolete education of Confucian schools. This is the first time Vietnamese higher education students have experienced state-of-the-art education with a richness of pedagogical methods, down-to-earth theories, and achievements of humankind sciences in the world. Thus it is undeniable that Franco-Vietnamese higher education opened up a bright vista for the development of Vietnamese people and local sciences and sharpen the directions of the French to shape a comprehensive higher education in Tonkin.

7. References

- Charton, A. (1949). Cultural evolution of Indochina. *Journal of Foreign policy*, 12(1), 51-68. Retrieved Nov. 10, 2021, from https://www.persee.fr/doc/polit_0032-342x_1947_num_12_1_5478
- Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer . (1946). AN.OM – No dossier: 1323: Rapports du Commissaire Fédéral à l'enseignement. In F. G. l'Indochinne. Paris: Unpublished.
- Barthélémy, P. (2010). L'enseignement dans l'Empire colonial français : une vieille histoire? [Education in the French Colonial Empire: an old story?]. *Histoire de l'éducation (History of Education)*(128), 5-27.
- Bau, P. T. (2006). *Vietnamese education in modern history*. Hanoi: Education Publishing House.
- Brocheux, P. (2022). *Dong Duong - mot nen thuoc dia nhap nhang (giai doan 1858-1954)*. Ho Chi Minh City: World Press.
- Charton, M. (1944). *Indochine Illustrated Weekly*. Hanoi.
- Chau, P. B. (1990). *Full Works* (Vol. 3). Hue: Thuan Hoa Publishing House.
- Dien, D. T. (2006). *University of Indochina via archival documents*. National University of Hanoi. Hanoi: Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer à Aix-en Provence - CAOM. Retrieved Nov. 10, 2021, from <http://100years.vnu.edu.vn/BTDHQGH/Vietnamese/C1787/2006/03/N7403/>
- Doumer, P. (2015). *L'Indo-Chine française: Souvenirs (The Indochina)*. Ho Chi Minh City: World Press.
- École supérieure de médecine et de pharmacie. (1938). *Annales de l'École Supérieure de Médecine et de Pharmacie de l'Indochine*. Hanoi: Imprimerie d'Extrême-Orient.
- Giang, V. M. (2006). *National University-A developmental and mature period*. Hanoi: Vietnam National University Publishing House.

- Gidel, G. (1934). AN, AJ/16. 8339: École supérieure de Droit/ Rapport du professeur Gilbert Gidel de 1934. Hanoi: Unpublished.
- Gourou, P. (2015). *Les Paysan du Delta Tonkinoise [The peasantry in Tonkinese Delta]*. Ho Chi Minh City: Youth Press.
- Gouvernement général de l'Indochine. (1934). *Rapports au grand Conseil des intérêts économiques et financières et au Conseil de gouvernement, session ordinaire de 1934*. Hanoi: Imprimerie d'Extrême-Orient.
- Gouvernement général de l'Indo-Chine Indochine. (1940). *Rapports au Conseil de Gouvernement indochinois 1910-1939*. Hanoi: Imprimerie G. Taupin et Cie.
- Gouvernement général de l'Indochine française. (1918). *Direction générale de l'Instruction publique, Code de l'Instruction publique*. Hanoi: Imprimerie d'Ex-treme-Orient.
- Gouvernement Générale de l'Indochine. (1929). *Gouvernement Générale de l'Indochine (1910-1939) (Vol. 2)*. Hanoi: Imprimerie de l'Extrême-Orient.
- Hoa, T. P. (2012). *Franco-Vietnamese education in Tonkin (1884-1945)*. Hanoi: Social sciences Publishing House.
- Hoa, T. T. (2021). Ownership and Distribution of Communal Land in Central Vietnam from the Late 19th Century to 1945. *Vietnam Social Sciences*, 4(204), 3-22.
- Hoang, N. T. (1967). Educational policies of the French colony in Vietnam. *Journal of Historical Review*(96).
- Hocquard, C.-É. (2020). *Une Campagne au Tonkin (A campaign in Tonkin)*. Hanoi: Hanoi Publishing House.
- Khanh, V. N. (1985). *Researching Vietnamese education before 1945*. Hanoi: Education Publishing House.

- Legrandjacques, S. (2016). Hanoi at the heart of student mobility, 1880-1945. *Bulletin of the Pierre Renouvin Institute*, 43(1), pp.89-102. Retrieved Nov. 10, 2021, from <https://www.cairn.info/revue-bulletin-de-l-institut-pierre-renouvin-2016-1-page-89.htm>
- Les Entreprises-coloniales. (2021, Nov. 3). *École des Mécaniciens Asiatiques*. Retrieved Oct. 21, 2022, from https://www.entreprises-coloniales.fr/inde-indochine/Ecole_Rosel-Saigon.pdf
- Mai, D. T. (2021). *Dang Thai Mai: Autobiography*. Hanoi: Hong Duc Publishing House.
- Mus, C. (1927). *La Première Université Indochinoise*. Hanoi: Imprimerie G. Taupin & Cie.
- National Archive Center I. (1922). *GGI/R10. 4165 : cours professés à l'Université indochinoise par les fonctionnaires en service aux services économiques de l'Indochine, 1921-1927*. Hanoi: Unpublished.
- Official Bulletin of French Indochina. (1902). Decree of Jan. 8, 1902, creating a School of Medicine in Hanoi. *Official Bulletin of French Indochina*.
- Phan, L. X. (2018). *L'enseignement du Vietnam pendant la période coloniale, 1862-1945 : la formation des intellectuels vietnamiens. [The Teaching of Vietnam during the Colonial Period, 1862-1945: The Training of Vietnamese Intellectuals]*. Lyon: University Lumière Lyon 2.
- Phan, L. X. (2021, Aug.22). *University of Indochina- A generalization of the up-and-down history (Part 2)*. Retrieved Nov. 10, 2021, from Tia Sang Online Newspaper: <https://tiasang.com.vn/-giao-duc/Dai-hoc-Dong-Duong-Khai-quat-mot-lich-su-thang-tram-Phan-2-28408?fbclid=IwAR1FuKZHHdnazWxw4fkUJtzedmO-eSL-IVdOL7TYxZ6qleLG-FirnlmejC4>

- Phan, L. X. (2021a, Jul. 31). *University of Indochina - A generalization of the up-and-down history (Part 1)*. Retrieved Nov. 10, 2021, from Tia Sang Online Newspaper: <https://tiasang.com.vn/-giao-duc/Dai-hoc-Dong-Duong-Khai-quat-mot-lich-su-thang-tram-phan-1--28330>
- Phan, L. X. (2021b, Aug. 22). *Dai hoc Dong Duong - khai quat mot lich su thang tram (Episode 2)*. Retrieved Oct. 21, 2022, from Tia Sang Online Newspaper: <https://tiasang.com.vn/giao-duc/dai-hoc-dong-duong-khai-quat-mot-lich-su-thang-tram-phan-2-28408/>
- Sarraut, A. (1923). *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises*. Paris: Payot & Cie.
- Shiraishi, M. (1975). Phan Boi Chau and Japan. *Southeast Asian Studies*, 13(3), 427-440.
- Thanh, T. T. (2014). Confucianism and public education in Cochinchina during the period of 1867-1917. *HCMUE Journal of Science*(60), 19-33.
- Thao, D. T., & Thang, V. T. (2008). Truong thi Huong cuoi cung: Truong thi Huong Nam Dinh. *Vietnam Journal of Historical Research*(4), 11-19.
- Thao, T. V. (1993). L'idéologie de l'école en Indochine (1890-1938) [School ideology in Indochina (1890-1938)]. *Revue Tiers Monde*(133), 169-186.
- Thao, T. V. (2013). *Three generations of Vietnamese intelligentsia*. Hanoi: The Gioi Publishing House.
- Thau, C. (2005). *Full Works (Volume 2)*. Danang: Danang Publishing House.
- Thau, C. (2005). *Phan Chau Trinh: Full Works (Vol. 1)*. Danang: Danang Publishing House.
- Thau, C., & Vuong, T. N. (2001). *Phan Boi Chau - biography and works*. Hanoi: Education Publishing House.
- Thuan, T. (2018). *Thai do cua si phu Viet Nam thoi tiep xuc Dong - Tay (tu cuoi the ky XVI - dau the ky XX)*. Ho Chi Minh City: General Publishing House.

- Tuan, H. V. (2016). *L'enseignement supérieur en Indochine (1902 – 1945) [Higher education in Indochina (1902 - 1945)] - Dissertation*. Versailles: Université de Versailles Saint Quentin-En-Yvelines.
- Van, D. H. (2019). *Phong trao yeu nuoc chong thuc dan Phap xam luoc cua nhan dan Viet Nam tu cuoi the ky XIX - dau the ky XX*. Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnam National University Publishing House.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. In M. Cole, V. J. Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Soubberman, *Introduction* (pp. 1-16). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wongsupan, B. (2017). Early French colonial education in Hanoi, 1904-1930. *Journal of Liberal Arts Ubon Ratchathani University*, 13(1), 281-319.