



The Construction of National Identity from the Perspective of the Change of Chinese Status in Vietnamese Language Policy

Hanke Li

School of Chinese Language and Literature, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing 100089, China

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Abstract: Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country with many languages. The common language is a bond that builds national identity and maintains national feelings, which is conducive to building national spirit, national cohesion and overall sense of belonging among Vietnamese people. From Chinese language and Chinese characters Nan and then to the establishment of the status of national Chinese characters, during this period, the formation and upsurge of Vietnamese people's national identity and national consciousness was developed.

Keywords: Vietnam, language policy, Chinese, national identity

1. Introduction

For any country, the language is characterized by multilingualism and coexistence of multiple dialects. Sixty-six languages are spoken in Vietnam, including Sino-Tibetan, South Asian and Austronesian languages. In the diachronic transition, Vietnam has used Chinese characters, Nan characters in Chinese, mandarin characters and two languages, that is, Chinese and Yue. This is pertinent to the national conditions of each stage and the language policies of different historical periods. Language policy is an important part of multi-ethnic national policy, which plays an important role in adjusting ethnic relations, maintaining social stability and national unity. Language policy determines which language can be used as the national common language, and the national common language is the "link" of national identity, and a powerful tool to build and strengthen national identity. History has proved that no matter what language and characters are used, they have played a vital role in the stability and development of Vietnam.

2. Before the establishment of Vietnam, Chinese characters maintained centralized rule

There used to be only Vietnamese language in Vietnam, but there was no corresponding script. With the migration of ancient people, Chinese language and Chinese characters were introduced into Vietnam. Politically, for more than 1,000 years from the Qin and Han dynasties to the end of the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Vietnam existed as a feudal county in the Central Plains. After the Qin Dynasty, the policy of "Horse carriage on the same track", "Book on the same text" and "Unified thought", Chinese characters were introduced to the whole country and Vietnam began to officially use Chinese characters. At the beginning of the spread of Chinese characters in Vietnam is to spread Confucian culture for the purpose, so Chinese characters in Vietnam is also known as "Confucian characters". Chinese characters became the official language and characters, which played an important role in maintaining the centralized power at that time. Economically, frequent exchanges between Vietnam and the Central Plains also consolidated and strengthened the position of The Chinese language.

Culturally, with the development of the school, Buddhist scriptures were spread from China to Vietnam, and Chinese characters were also more widely spread. For Vietnam, the spread of Chinese language and and Chinese characters laid a foundation for the development of all aspects of Vietnam, and for the process of feudalism and the later unification of Vietnam. For the central government, the promotion and dissemination of Chinese language and Chinese characters as the universal language and characters played a crucial role in stabilizing the people's hearts, maintaining regional stability, promoting the unification of feudal dynasties and building a common national identity. Generally speaking, Chinese language and Chinese characters gradually gained popularity in Vietnam during the period before the establishment of Vietnam, as people migrated and multiplied, and economic and cultural exchanges took place.

3. After the establishment of Vietnam, national identity emerged

In 968 AD, Ding Buling put down the rebellion of the Twelve princes, unified Annam, and Vietnam became an independent feudal kingdom. Vietnam's affiliation with the central government came into the end. In 965, Ding Buling

requested the Song Dynasty to confer titles and establish Suzuan-vassal relations with China in order to strengthen his control over Vietnam and maintain peace. The rulers continued to learn and draw lessons from Chinese laws and regulations, speak Chinese and write Chinese characters, learn Confucian culture, and implement the policy of "Governing the mind with Buddha and governing the world with Confucianism".

After the Ding dynasty, Li, Chen and Li dynasties followed China's imperial examination system, selecting scholars, recruiting Confucian scholars and propagating Confucianism. During the Nguyen dynasty, when Vietnam was colonized, missionaries tried to Latinize Vietnamese, but Chinese and Chinese characters remained the official language and script. The Chinese language and Chinese characters allowed Vietnam to perfect the rules and regulations of the ruling class, forming and perfecting the Vietnamese literary tradition. Throughout the feudal dynasty, Chinese language and Chinese characters remained high position in the status of the country's official language and orthodox script, Yue language belongs to spoken language, there is no corresponding script. Languages interact with each other through contact. Yue language borrowed and absorbed a large number of Chinese morphemes, forming a unique Han Yue sound and Han Yue words. Therefore, the history of nearly 1000 years after the founding of Vietnam is the history of the political development of Vietnam, as well as the history of the development of Chinese characters in Vietnam.

At the beginning of the establishment of the new regime, the rulers still took Chinese language as the universal language, which was conducive to promoting the smooth development of the people of all ethnic groups, and also conducive to strengthening their recognition of the new regime and forming the identity of "ethnic diversity and integration pattern". In light of this, the development and enhancement of national cohesion in nearly a thousand years after the founding of Vietnam had a reliable premise and guarantee. Vietnam's adherence to the Chinese culture and choice of Chinese characters are the heritage of the subordination system and the independent choice of the Vietnamese nation. During this period, Vietnam's national identity was gradually forming.

4. Character Nan was born and national identity was strengthened

Due to the development of society, economy, education and culture, Vietnam's national consciousness is gradually strengthened, and the contradiction between spoken and written language, native language and foreign language appears and intensifies. People gradually found that Chinese characters could not fully express their meaning and could no longer fully take on the task of recording and writing, so they began to create local characters. Character Nan was born in the 11th century.

The character Nan was the embodiment of spoken and written language, which relieves the contradiction of communication between different levels to some extent. Chinese language and Chinese characters are deeply rooted in Vietnam, character Nan was not created without the influence of Chinese characters. Character Nan is a new character based on Chinese characters, which is composed of parts of Chinese characters or the whole Chinese characters, and borrows the form and sound of Chinese characters, the appearance of which is very similar to Chinese characters. Due to the heightened national consciousness and strengthened national identity, character Nan was widely promoted in the 13th century, which was mainly used in literary writing. There gradually formed a Nan based system and began to gain popularity among the public.

From the 15th century to the 19th century, the development of character Nan gradually reached its peak. Character Nan was highly regarded in the early 15th and late 18th centuries and was adopted as the country's official common script. Character Nan reached its peak at this time. It can be said that for a long time, Chinese and Vietnamese, Chinese characters and Nan coexisted. Chinese characters are used for formal occasions and Nan characters are used for dissemination of folk culture. However, because of the difficulty in writing and learning, character Nan fails to be fully popularized among the people, and was resisted by the bureaucrats who were familiar with Chinese and Chinese characters. Nan failed to replace Chinese characters as orthodox characters, and it was seldom used for oral expression. In the late feudal society, due to the constant internal turmoil, the language based problem was not paid attention to. The words eventually fade and fade.

The appearance of character Nan was the first step of exploring and creating culture in Vietnam, but also the beginning of national consciousness and national identity. However, character Nan was not recognized and promoted by the rulers. Chinese language and Chinese characters are still used as the official language and characters, which hinder the early formation of Vietnamese people's national identity.

5. The emergence of mandarin and the initial establishment of national identity

From the 15th to the 19th centuries, Vietnam experienced frequent political changes and internal strife. Europe, on the other hand, was in the period of the Industrial Revolution, with its economy, science and technology developing greatly and becoming the center of the world. Wealth and technology fuelled Europe's expansionary ambitions. In 1621, Italian missionary Critoforo Borri introduced Vietnam's geography, climate and people to the West. After France won the battle for

missionary rights, a large number of French missionaries entered Vietnam, and Vietnam gradually became a French colony. The missionaries recorded Vietnamese phonetics in Latin letters, and kept sorting and unifying, gradually forming and fixing Vietnamese Latin characters. The Vietnamese language, recorded in pinyin, was mainly used to compile missionary materials and unified teachings for distribution to local believers. In 1651, Alexandre de Rhodes, a missionary, compiled the Vietnamese-Portuguese-Latin dictionary and the Eight-day Course, marking the beginning of the Latinized Vietnamese phonetic alphabet. Among them, Vietnamese - Portuguese - Latin Dictionary is regarded as an important symbol of the emergence of Vietnamese national words.

At the same time, the Latinization of Vietnamese was underway, Vietnam was in a period of conflict between Zheng and Nguyen. The division and opposition of political power weakened the ruling power of the government, and the government was left no time to pay attention to the standardization and unification of language. Thus, until the middle of the 19th century, Mandarin characters were used only for missionary purposes. The 1862 Treaty of Saigon legalized the practice of French and Spanish missionaries in Vietnam. In fact, this is the ruler's tacit consent to the Latinization of Vietnamese. Later, the missionaries improved the Chinese characters and compiled the dictionaries of Vietnamese, Chinese and Latin, which were compared with each other and annotated, standardizing the spelling rules and standardizing the pronunciation and grammar of Vietnamese. Thus, the grammatical rules of mandarin characters were formed.

The emergence and implementation of Mandarin characters are accompanied by the dual purpose of spreading religion and culture. At that time, Chinese language and Chinese characters were still used as the official language and universal characters, although the disadvantages of Chinese and Chinese characters were difficult to learn and write. After the standardization of Chinese characters, despite great resistance from Chinese, the colonists did not publish bilingual dictionaries, set up schools, and published newspapers with Chinese characters in order to promote Chinese characters. With the promotion of mandarin, Vietnam's national identity was initially established.

6. The promotion of mandarin AND national identity is finally fully established

After the Opium War, Chinese characters and Chinese culture were questioned due to the decline of China's national power, and there were voices in Vietnam to abandon Chinese language and Chinese characters. The loss of national sovereignty and the infringement of national culture caused by the colonial invasion stimulated the resistance of Vietnamese people, especially the patriotic intellectuals influenced by the Western Enlightenment thought, who were more sure of national identity and had a stronger sense of national identity. Because it was simpler, easier to learn, write and remember, they accepted and promoted it, and used it to spread the progressive idea of loving the country and the people, thus enhancing national cohesion. It also became a weapon for the Vietnamese people to fight against feudal and colonial rule. The widespread popularization and acceptance of Mandarin characters reflects the upsurge of Vietnamese people's national identity, and the strong national identity also accelerates Vietnamese people's acceptance of Mandarin characters.

In 1917, the victory of Russia's October Revolution gave Vietnamese people hope for national liberation and independence. In order to spread communist ideology to Vietnam, progressives in China increased the promotion and popularization of Chinese characters and introduced foreign words in social, political and economic aspects, which greatly enriched the vocabulary of Chinese words. After the establishment of the Vietnamese Communist Party in 1930, Vietnamese literature and the translation of Western literature were all written in Mandarin. Mandarin gradually became the language of the people, and gradually stabilized and improved. In 1938, Vietnamese patriotic intellectuals established the "Committee for the Dissemination of Chinese characters" to teach Chinese characters free of charge to out-of-school children and middle-aged illiterates.

In 1943, the Outline of Vietnamese Culture came into being, emphasizing that the reform of the Chinese characters is an urgent task at present, pointing out that the Chinese characters have always played a role in recording and building advanced Vietnamese culture. In 1945, after the victory of the August Revolution, Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence written by himself in Mandarin, announcing the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The subsequent nationwide campaign to educate the mandarin character and eradicate illiteracy led to an unprecedented development of the mandarin character and its establishment as the official language, along with Vietnamese. At present, mandarin characters have been recognized as a mature language and independent of the world's national languages. To this end, Chinese language and Chinese characters, after thousands of years of ups and downs in Vietnam, completely withdrew from the historical stage of Vietnam.

7. Conclusion

Modern Vietnam experienced the substitution of Chinese characters, characters Nan, Vietnamese and Mandarin

characters in terms of language. Chinese language and Chinese characters once became the most important communication tools in Vietnam and were used as the official language and script, which was far higher than the local language. This is not only out of respect and admiration for Chinese culture, but also out of the need to maintain peace and social stability in Vietnam. With the formation and strengthening of Vietnamese people's national identity, Vietnamese people and colonial rulers made innovations and attempts to establish a language that was easier to learn and more conducive to communication than Chinese and Chinese characters, the status of Chinese and Chinese characters gradually declined. It was not until Vietnamese and Mandarin characters were established as the official language and script that Chinese and Chinese characters completely withdrew from the stage of Vietnamese history.

The choice of different languages and scripts is a decision made by the Vietnamese government under different historical conditions. The process of language selection reflects the attitude in transformation of Vietnamese culture from acceptance to creation. Whatever the choice of Chinese and Chinese characters, and for the creation of character Nan, or will the language and mandarin word as a common language and words, all these indicate that language is the link to maintain national feelings and construct national identity, which is conducive to the construction of Vietnamese people's national spirit and the formation of Vietnamese national cohesion and sense of belonging.

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