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LOVE, HATRED, AND HEROISM: SOCIALIZING CHILDREN IN NORTH VIETNAM DURING WARTIME, 1965–1975

The task of young people is to ask not what their country has given to them but to ask themselves what they have done for their country. What must they do so that the country will benefit more? How should they strive to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the country?¹

Hồ Chí Minh, 1955

A picture of a small boy appeared in the 1969 New Year issue of the Hanoi children's magazine *Thiếu niên tiên phong* (*Pioneer*) with the following caption: "I am a year older, already several centimeters taller; soon I can join the army to fight the Americans until they run away."² This contrasts with a joke that appeared in a 1972 Saigon student magazine: a student assigned to write about the armed forces branch in which he preferred to enlist turns in a blank sheet of paper and explains to his teacher: "I hear that in a few years there will be peace, so I think by the age of eighteen I will not have to go into the army."³ These two attitudes toward serving in the military contrast the younger generations in North and South Vietnam and the two societies in which these young people lived.

While the war in Vietnam has been given much attention in historical scholarship, one group—children—is consistently overlooked. For the purpose of this study I use the term "children" to refer to the school-age group, called *thiếu niên nhi đồng*, a term that includes both "teens or adolescents" (*thiếu niên*) and "children" (*nhi đồng*), or *thiếu nhi*, a conflation of these two compounds, referring to the group of young people between the ages of six and sixteen in contrast to the term "youth" (*thanh niên*) applied to the older group from the age of seventeen to the age of thirty. As people in the South grappled with retaining



Image 1: "I am a year older, already several centimeters taller; soon I can join the army to fight the Americans until they run away." *Tết năm Gà. Quà xuân tặng các em nhỏ* [Tết of the Year of the Rooster: A Spring Gift for Little Children] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1969), 48

Vietnamese identities for their young people despite the pervasive influence of the American military and culture on their society, the Northern government produced a unified strategy to socialize a future generation able and willing to achieve the goal of eventual victory.⁴

The 1955 comment by Hồ Chí Minh at the beginning of this article reflects sentiments that were not specific to Vietnam. Any country or government wants

its citizens to be active contributors to its success. President John F. Kennedy expressed this sentiment in his 1961 inaugural speech. The French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser has argued that a government, in order to survive, must perpetuate itself by (re)producing subjects with the knowledge, skills, and submissiveness appropriate for the established order and ruling ideology, that is, raising new generations in the mold defined by the authority.⁵ For North Vietnam, the reproductive system was especially important because the state was built on Communist doctrines that required unquestionable subordination to the party, to the government, to the state, and to the causes promulgated by the state. Individuals had to conform to the basic political, cultural, and moral rules and truths as defined by the party, which departed from the traditional hierarchy of Vietnamese society centered on family values. This revolutionary agenda developed in North Vietnam during the war for independence from France that ended in 1954 and during the war of unification that began in 1960. It intensified with the beginning of American bombing in 1964 and the arrival of American troops in 1965. The bombing was destroying North Vietnam, killing thousands of people and destroying both cities and countryside. At the same time, the Communist government was determined to intensify the campaign for the unification of the country under Communist rule, fighting in the South the anti-Communist Vietnamese, whom the Communists labeled as “puppets” or “lackeys,” and the Americans. The party, the government, and the state needed all the human resources they could possibly get to be able to fight in the South and to protect the North. North Vietnamese citizens had no option but to contribute to the national cause as defined by the party.

Education plays a crucial role in this transformation, for it is designed as an apparatus to indoctrinate the dominant ideology of the state.⁶ Ernest Gellner, a social anthropologist and philosopher, writing about nationalism, considered education as *exo*-socialization. “The production and reproduction of men outside the local intimate unit,” required that, in the minds of individuals, “state and culture *must* now be linked, whereas in the past their connection was thin.”⁷ A researcher of childhood and education in India, Antje Linkenbach Fuchs, observed that education integrates individual children and adolescents into the structures and networks that build identities attached to civil society and the state.⁸ These observations aptly describe state policy toward children in North Vietnam, where the concept of moral education followed the pattern described by Albert Hughes, who described the Soviet educational system as a means of creating new moral individuals who subordinate their desires and interests to serve the state.⁹

In North Vietnam, education was usually supervised by the party and by governmental bodies to ensure that schooling would help them realize their

political goals. We find one of the earliest mentions of Hồ Chí Minh's hopes for children in his letters from 1926. At that time he lived in Guanzhou in China. A group of children was brought there. This group included children between twelve and fifteen years old. They were "adopted" by Hồ Chí Minh and bore the surname he was using at that time, Lý. For these children, Hồ Chí Minh envisioned a future closely connected not only to revolution but also to Socialism and Communism. In July 1926, Hồ Chí Minh wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the Soviet Pioneer Organization asking to accept them to live and study in the Soviet Union. He said: "Whenever we talk with them about the Russian Revolution, about Lenin, about pioneers—young Leninist fighters—they are very happy and request to visit [their Soviet counterparts], to live with them, to study with them, and become like them [their Soviet counterparts] genuine young Leninist fighters."

Simultaneously, Hồ Chí Minh wrote a letter to the representative of the French Communist Youth League in the Youth Communist Internationale to support his request to the Soviets so that his charges could get "a beautiful communist education" in the Soviet Union.¹⁰ Whether or not any children were eventually sent to the Soviet Union is unclear, but Hồ Chí Minh's intent, as expressed in the letters, was clearly to give some Vietnamese children a Communist upbringing.¹¹ This goal was reiterated throughout the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam after the August Revolution. After the country was divided into South and North Vietnam in 1954, the goal of unifying the country was added to the goal of raising young Communists. This agenda was strengthened in 1960 after North Vietnamese authorities decided to focus on unification.

On May 15, 1959, on the occasion of the eighteenth anniversary of the Young Pioneer Organization, the Central Party Committee provided adolescents with guidelines, which became the slogan embroidered on the banner of the organization:

"For the cause of socialism and unification of the Fatherland, be ready!"¹²

Their goals were very clearly expressed: unifying the country and building Socialism. The Ministry of Education asserted in 1965: "Education must be based on the Party line, education must serve the political tasks of the Party. The educational system must raise a new generation of youth and adolescents who will become revolutionary fighters, who will worthily continue the revolutionary cause of the Party and of our nation." Only with proper education could Socialism be assured.¹³ In addition to the party and governmental bodies, politico-social organizations such as the Labor Youth League (Đoàn Thanh niên

Lao động), the Pioneer Organization (Đội Thiếu niên Tiền phong Hồ Chí Minh), and the Organization of Augustists (Đội nhi đồng tháng 8) were mobilized for the task.¹⁴ All of these aspects of the state controlled exo-socialization by determining what was taught about politics: to whom, by whom, under what conditions, and with what consequences for present or future political behavior, cognition, attitude, opinion, and belief.¹⁵

The process of political socialization was accomplished through print media, which included textbooks used in schools; other books about literature, history, and culture; newspapers; and magazines. Most materials for children were published by the Kim Đồng publishing house: the magazine *Pioneer*, which was directed by the Pioneer Organization and the Labor Youth League, and textbooks produced by the Giáo dục (Education) press, which belonged to the Ministry of Education. In addition, a significant number of publications for children appeared from publishing houses not specifically specializing in children. These publications promoted the exo-socialization of children by establishing a firm connection of love between Hồ Chí Minh and children, elevating hatred for the state's enemies, and emulating national heroes. Children were taught love and hatred from an early age, confirming political scientist Howard Tolley's suggestion that "younger children favor or accept war more than older children. For, as the child matures intellectually, an increasingly complex sense of social morality evolves."¹⁶

To prevent the growth of complex sensibilities among children, authorities bombarded young readers with materials. Văn Hồng, the late editor in chief of Kim Đồng publishing house, started to work in this publishing house in the 1960s and later remembered that they primarily published books about Uncle Hồ, revolutionary leaders, martyrs, heroes, model fighters, members of the party, and members of the Youth Labor movement, all in response to the needs of the current situation. There were very few stories of fiction and few translations, which "made Kim Đồng books dry and heavy."¹⁷

However, publications were subsidized by the state, and the publishing house did not have to worry about profits. The volume and the unisonant voices of these publications was astounding, especially taking into consideration that North Vietnam was at war. Kim Đồng publishing houses alone published hundreds of titles each year, with the number of copies ranging from thirty thousand to three hundred thousand.

In North Vietnam, ideas about cognitive development were inextricably interwoven with the state agenda of directing children's emotions. Educational programs had to mobilize ideological and sentimental education (giáo dục tư tưởng, tình cảm) to serve the task of fighting Americans for the salvation of the country.¹⁸

The *Manual for Teaching History* in the fourth grade instructed teachers to use ideology and feelings or sentiments (tinh cảm) as pivotal points in the learning process. The teachers' task, according to the *Manual*, was to teach love for the country and vindictive hatred for invaders in both the past and the present. It urged that "[w]e must increase vigilance and resoluteness to kill the enemy."¹⁹

This article focuses on texts created for children by adults to propagate the ideology and policies of the state to shape children's attitudes through the emotions of love and hatred. I consider these texts as sites of education, socialization, and politicization. From them, children learned "how they ought to perceive the world."²⁰ I also consider writings by children to demonstrate how closely they echoed the narratives created by adults.

LOVE: HỒ CHÍ MINH AS EMBODIMENT OF THE PARTY AND ITS CAUSES

Love was an important part of bringing to adulthood a new generation of fighters. Young people were expected to love their country, the party, the government, the state, and the goals of unifying the country and building Socialism. However, it is easier for children to love a person than to love abstractions such as these, and Hồ Chí Minh became the person who embodied these abstractions. The expression of mutual love between Hồ Chí Minh and children, launched and propagated by adults, nurtured a relationship that became the cornerstone of the young generation's identity, which inevitably influenced its self-identity in adulthood. Children internalized this relationship in the process of growing up in a new society. For them, it was a genuine feeling of love maintained and transmitted from one generation to the next, and it generated a persevering loyalty to and compliance with the state and its causes.

During a time of revolution and war, Hồ Chí Minh became a leader of the national family. For children, he became the Uncle. This avuncular status was immortalized in the expression Uncle Hồ or Bác Hồ. In Vietnamese, the word Bác (Uncle) denotes an elder brother of one's father, who, by virtue of his position, is to be obeyed not only by his nephews and nieces, but also by their parents, who are Bác's younger siblings.²¹ The creation of this figure turned into an effective means to make children feel safe and at the same time to nurture their loyalty to and their appreciation of Hồ Chí Minh, and through him, loyalty to the party, to the government, and to their goals. Love for Hồ Chí Minh became one of the pillars of children's socialization. This love served to elevate the position of the leader, but ultimately it served to put a "human face" on the governing authorities and to make them more familiar, and, eventually, loved by the children in order that, as adults, they would obey them.

Because Hồ Chí Minh served as the patriarch of the family to which all children belonged, his words and directions became sacred for North Vietnamese children. Uncle Hồ's famous Five Precepts, which originally appeared in 1945 and took their final form in 1965, became the revered set of postulates on which generations of Vietnamese children were raised. They were taught at school, they were repeated in print time and again, and everyone had to memorize them:

1. Love the Motherland and fellow countrymen;
2. Study and work hard;
3. Achieve unity and maintain discipline;
4. Keep good hygiene;
5. Be modest, honest, and courageous.²²

These precepts emphasized a patriotic attachment to the state, an attitude of diligence, a cooperative spirit, habits of cleanliness, and a moral character. Those who fulfilled all these precepts could become "obedient nephews and nieces of Uncle Hồ" (*cháu ngoan*), an expression that encapsulated the ideal relationship between children and Hồ Chí Minh, which translated into children's obedience not only to Hồ Chí Minh but also to the party and to its cause.

The year 1966 marked two important occasions in the lives of children. On May 15, the Pioneer Organization celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, while May 19 was Hồ Chí Minh's seventy-fifth birthday. The Central Party Committee admonished children:

To comply with the words Uncle teaches,
 To carry out a thousand good deeds,
 Against Americans to save the country:
 Children are ready.²³

To celebrate both of these occasions and to further propagate the Five Precepts, Kim Đồng publishing house produced a book entitled *Following Uncle Hồ's Teachings*, which consisted of Hồ Chí Minh's writings for children from 1945 through 1966. Introducing this book to young readers, the *Pioneer* newspaper announced that around a half million children had already been awarded the title of *obedient nephews and nieces of Uncle Hồ* by following the Five Precepts.²⁴

An even greater honor than obtaining this title was to receive a special badge from the hands of Uncle Hồ himself. Such events were highly publicized in the media, particularly when children acted heroically amidst the American bombing campaign. For example, in 1968 a special badge of honor went to Nguyễn Thị Hòa, an eleven-year-old girl from Quảng Ninh province who, with two amputated legs, continued her studies and also helped her friend to study,

too. At the end of the school year, being very successful in their studies, they received special badges from Uncle Hồ himself. Another girl, a fifth grader named Trần Thị Hương, received her badge for saving the lives of three small children whom she carried to safety while being injured herself.²⁵

Young people of South Vietnam, especially child fighters who distinguished themselves in the armed struggle in South Vietnam against the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and the American military forces, could earn an opportunity to come to Hanoi and meet personally with Uncle Hồ. Such was the case for Hồ Thị Thu, a girl who was recognized as “a young valiant fighter killing Americans.”²⁶ For her, as for many others, to see Uncle Hồ was the highest award possible. These meetings were highly publicized in the press.

Children started to see their lives as closely interwoven with Hồ Chí Minh. Eleven-year-old Trần Đăng Khoa, a famous child-poet whose works were published in Vietnam and translated into foreign languages, visited Hanoi in summer 1969, shortly before Hồ Chí Minh’s death. “Every day we hope that Uncle is joyful,” he wrote, “that Uncle is happy, for then our hearts are joyful.”²⁷ These lines demonstrate to what extent adults succeeded in building the connection between Hồ Chí Minh and children, so much so that they were willing to subject their own sense of joy and happiness to that of the leader.

After the death of Hồ Chí Minh on September 2, 1969, an outpouring of grief filled all North Vietnamese publications with hundreds of poems, stories, and promises to continue to follow Hồ Chí Minh’s teachings. For children, an aspect of mourning Uncle Hồ was to publicly affirm their loyalty to his memory and his teachings. For example, on September 19, 1969, the Organization of Augustists and the Pioneer Organization took an oath to remain loyal to Uncle Hồ, to always follow his Five Precepts, and to obey his teachings. While grieving, they asserted that for them he was still and always would be alive.²⁸

Many young people expressed their feelings about Uncle Hồ’s death. Another child-poet, Nguyễn Hồng Kiên, wrote several poems after Hồ Chí Minh’s death. Kiên’s perception of Hồ Chí Minh combines an abstract view of the leader of the nation with a personal view of a homey uncle:

Has the Uncle passed away indeed?
 No, Uncle Ho did not die.
 Next to the pictures of Lenin and Marx,
 Uncle still smiles at me,
 Guiding me in every detail:
 “Child, study diligently from morning till evening;
 Love your homeland and your compatriots;
 Sweep the house and tend the grass in the vegetable garden;

Nice-looking hands, remember to wash them every day."²⁹

In addition to separate publications, a collection of children's poetry and prose was published, entitled *Eternally Grateful to Uncle*.³⁰

Định Hải, a famous poet who worked as an editor at Kim Đồng publishing house at that time, wrote a poem calling upon children to continue to comply with Uncle Hồ's precepts as though he were still alive. The poem appeared in a Kim Đồng magazine published on the occasion of the New Lunar Year in 1970.³¹ Furthermore, the Central Party Committee reiterated the appeal made to children in 1966 in a publication by the Council of Literature and Arts that supervised all publications in the country:

To comply with the words Uncle teaches,
To carry out a thousand good deeds,
Against Americans to save the country:
Children are ready.³²

The echo of this message would remain with children through the entire war and in its aftermath. Even after his death, Hồ Chí Minh remained a part of children's lives as their guide. In many ways, he remains such to this day.

HATRED: PORTRAYAL OF THE ENEMY

Children were taught that love for Hồ Chí Minh also meant hatred for those who opposed him and, by extension, the party, the government, and their causes. During the war, this meant hatred of the anti-communist Vietnamese in the South who resisted Hồ Chí Minh, and of the Americans. Hatred of Hồ Chí Minh's enemies was an essential part of love for him.

As they were growing up, obedient nephews were to become steadfast soldiers fighting for the goals of the party as embodied in Hồ Chí Minh. It was very important as North Vietnam found itself in a protracted war. The North Vietnamese armed forces needed a constant supply of new recruits. According to historian William Duiker: "Between 1965 and the end of the decade, the North Vietnamese army grew from about 250,000 to over 400,000 soldiers. Eventually all males between the ages of sixteen and forty-five were subject to the draft."³³ But even those who did not go to the front, be they male or female, were expected to become fighters on the labor front and to raise up a new generation of obedient nieces and nephews.

In wartime North Vietnam, class and ideological boundaries superseded ethnic boundaries. The underlying assumption in the North was that all Vietnamese people in both the North and the South were one nation struggling against American aggressors. But in reality, the defining characteristic of the

people who would populate this one country depended not on their ethnicity but on their political allegiance. To this end, the issue of national or ethnic identity in the North was relegated to a secondary place. In the absence of an American invasion of North Vietnam and with tight government and party control, any American threat to “Vietnamese-ness” was slim, unlike in the South.³⁴ According to historian Lien-Hang Nguyen, the leaders of North Vietnamese “constructed a national security state that devoted all of its resources to war and labeled any resistance to its policies as treason.”³⁵ Thus, rather than preserving a national identity, persevering during wartime and achieving military victory were the primary goals of raising young Vietnamese in the North.

The North was fighting a nationalist war as well as a class war. But although their war aims emphasized building Socialism and eventually Communism, Communists focused on nationalist rhetoric with ardor and success. This was especially evident in the creation of the image of the enemy. The American presence in South Vietnam, the American bombing of North Vietnam, wartime hardships—death, evacuation, life in foxholes, separation from loved ones gone off to fight in the South—and public ignorance about Hanoi politics facilitated the image of an external enemy threatening the very existence of the Vietnamese, thus obscuring the contradiction between the national and the political agendas of the ruling party. The party had established control over North Vietnam in the 1950s by implementing a class-based ideological agenda that turned Vietnamese against one another in a violent process of social revolution. Now, the party was appealing to national unity and patriotism against



Image 2: Văn Thanh, “Bánh đầu xuân ‘tặng xâm lược Mỹ’” [Cakes for the Beginning of Spring: ‘Gifts to American Aggressors’], *Pioneer*, 555 (February 20, 1968)

what was portrayed as a foreign invader, despite the fact that it was also engaging in a civil war to extend its revolutionary policies into South Vietnam.

The North Vietnamese exo-socialization system did not leave anything to chance. It labored to strengthen feelings that would arise naturally from enduring great suffering. It actually started long before American troops landed in Vietnam. In 1951, in his letter on the occasion of International Children's Day, Hồ Chí Minh laid out his expectations for children. His first precept was about hatred. "You must *hate* [italics in the original], hate ardently, hate bitterly the French colonialists, the American interventionists, the traitors to the Vietnamese nation, and the puppets. Because of them we are suffering."³⁶ The famous satirical writer Tú Mỡ expressed his view on when and why children had to be taught hatred:

In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam,
A child from the day of turning three
Has been taught what heroism is,
How to hate the enemy, and how not to be afraid.

Tú Mỡ clarifies the final goal as not allowing "the army of American gorillas" to take over the country despite all their tricks.³⁷

Many ways were used to achieve this end. The most widespread was the use of cartoons, published in various books and the children's newspaper *Pioneer*. One set of cartoons, titled "Cakes for the Beginning of Spring: 'Gifts to American Aggressors,'" depicts the traditional Vietnamese treats customarily prepared for celebration of the Lunar New Year (image 2). Beginning with the upper row, from left to right, children see the caption "Bánh 'gai,'" meaning "glutinous rice cake dyed black." However, the word "gai" by itself means "thorn or prickle," and from this stems the depiction of an American pierced by spikes. The next caption, "Bánh 'nướng,'" refers to a pie filled with different kinds of stuffing. The stand-alone word "nướng" means "to grill or broil," which finds its way into the portrayal of a burning plane with the pilot presumably inside of it. "Bánh 'nướng'" is followed by "Bánh 'cuốn,'" a steamed rice cake filled with pork and other different ingredients all rolled together, which pictures two Americans tied to a tree, reflecting on the meaning of the word "cuốn": "rolled up." Next comes "bánh 'dẻo,'" a sticky rice cake filled with fruit and lard. The image of an American on all fours, begging to be spared from death, illuminates the meaning of "dẻo," "flexible or pliable." "Bánh 'khúc'" is a cake of glutinous rice mixed with different leaves; the meaning of the word "khúc," "a part or a section," leaves little doubt about why this word was chosen for the drawing of sawing a leg off an American. Finally, two Americans

stuffed into bags (“báo” in Vietnamese) identified as “bags for corpses” signify the last gift, “Bánh bao,” “dumplings.”³⁸ Cartoons such as these relied on their striking visual effect and invocation of traditional delicacies, and combined developing children’s vocabulary with demonstrating that killing Americans is part of the traditional New Year celebration.

While cartoons focused on instilling ideas, some of the games taught in publications for children required their active participation. For example, in 1966 the *Pioneer* newspaper instructed schools to introduce a game that was entitled “Exposing Johnson’s Crimes”; the rules were explained by a person whose pen name was Anh Vui, “Jolly Elder Brother.” The game was designated for children from the ages of ten to fifteen under the supervision of an older person. The game required uncomplicated equipment: an effigy of Johnson made of a tree stump or a block of wood and a stick around twenty inches long. Children had to line up at a distance of approximately sixteen feet from the effigy. The person in charge would enumerate several of Johnson’s crimes and then call on the players to confront the effigy with their own accusations.

According to the rules, participants took turns addressing Johnson’s effigy with a question, such as: “Why did you drop bombs on Hương Phúc School?” (an elementary school in Hà Tĩnh province). Addressing Johnson, the participant used the personal pronoun *mày*, which is used in addressing people in inferior positions or, sometimes, a young equal. Johnson’s effigy would give no response, of course, so the participant would pick up the stick and strike its face, exclaiming: “You are stubborn, aren’t you? I announce that you are sentenced to death.” After the first player was finished, the next participant took a turn. Each participant would get to question Johnson several times. The rules warned that participants were not supposed to repeat any crime mentioned by a previous participant because the atrocities committed by Americans “pile up as tall as a mountain” (i.e., are beyond measure) and so there should be no problem in coming up with new crimes. Children who succeeded in following the rules without fail, that is each time denounced a new crime of Johnson not previously exposed by other participants and who hit Johnson’s face with the stick, would receive the title “Valiant soldier who kills Americans,” a distinction normally conferred on soldiers who had carried out a feat of arms.³⁹

It might be imagined that perhaps this was a way to let children release their anger, frustration, and anxiety. But a requirement that young players had to hit Johnson’s effigy in the face; that they were not allowed to “plagiarize” Johnson’s crimes; and that, if they complied with these two conditions, they would get the coveted title of “Valiant soldier who kills Americans” suggests that the game was intended to increase hatred rather than to mitigate anxiety.

Moreover, while President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara were frequent targets of personal attacks and expressions of hatred, anonymous American soldiers fared no better in the exo-socialization system. They were dehumanized and regularly identified with gorillas, not only in their physical appearance but also in their intellectual abilities.

Hatred toward Americans found its way into children's writings. A ten-year-old fifth grader, Hoàng Hiếu Nhân (from Quảng Bình province), wrote a poem entitled "Thug Nixon" that strongly resembled adult writings, including the description of the "Johnson game."

A boy wants to make a clay model of Nixon:

Here's his head like an acorn,
 Also a belly like a persimmon,
 Here are his legs like matches,
 He has not stood up yet, and they have already collapsed.
 His ears always hear insults,
 They perk up like elephant's ears.
 His nose is used to smelling poison
 And has become long like an elephant's.

Then Nhân continues:

I look for the red ink,
 Smack it from the chin up to the mouth;
 This thug is absolutely horrifying
 Having drunk the blood of children.

He calls his grandmother to see how identical his production is to the original and receives the following encouragement.

If you put it outside on the road,
 Everyone will demand to wring his neck.⁴⁰

By encouraging this kind of hatred, the exo-socialization of children nurtured a sense of embattled solidarity with the state. It also prepared children to join the armed forces. The development of hatred was supplemented with a pantheon of heroes fighting against foreign aggression. This eliminated or significantly reduced any possible uncertainty about children aspiring to join the army and to kill enemies, in contrast to the sentiments revealed in the joke about a South Vietnamese student hoping to avoid military service.

The previously mentioned child-poet Trần Đăng Khoa described in a 1968 poem an incident in which an American plane was shot down. The pilot jumped out from the burning machine and landed in a field. All the villagers rush to the place:

My father carries a plank,
 My mother carries a shoulder pole,
 My older sister carries a rifle,
 Toddler Giang carries a poker,
 Dog Vàng runs with his spike-sharp teeth.

Trần Đăng Khoa does not know what to carry, so he picks up a stone and sets out running—his legs are short and he does not want to be late. But when he arrives to the place where the pilot had fallen, the enemy is already dead.

His incisor teeth fell out,
 His chest is split open,
 Oh, he looks like a person,
 But why, for Heaven's sake,
 Is he so cruel?

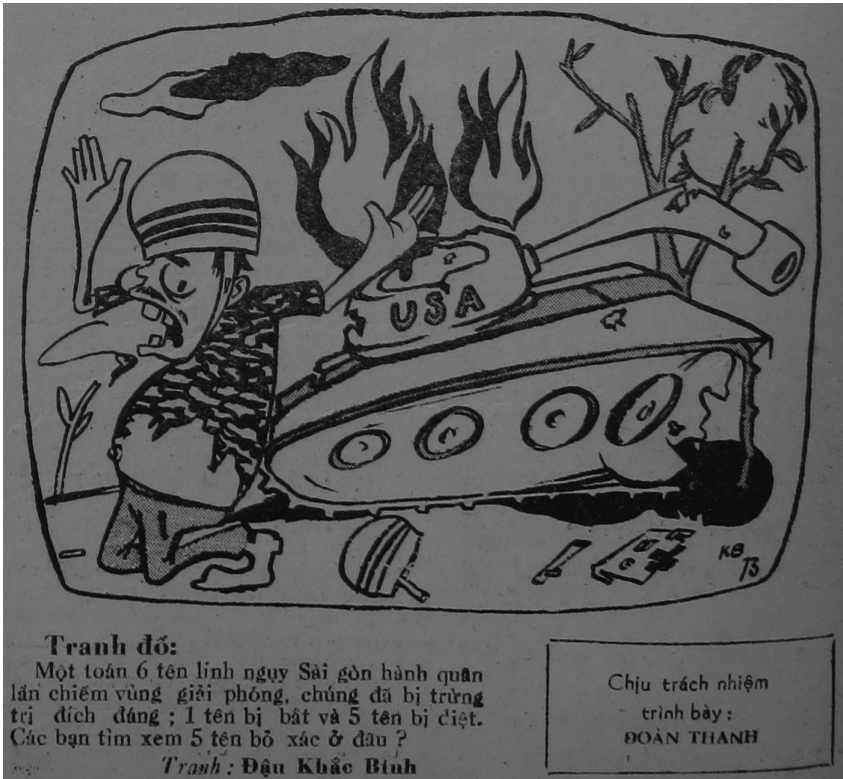


Image 3: Đạm Khắc Bình, "Picture-Puzzle," *Pioneer*, 851 (May 17, 1974)

Against this sad background, Trần Đăng Khoa depicts a lively canine:

Dog Vàng looks happy,
 Its barking resounds like laughter:
 Ah! The American enemy-thug came to Vietnam,
 He came, so here he is now!⁴¹

Not only are adults and children happy about the death of the American pilot, but even the dog laughs in joy, expressing its vengeful attitude. Apparently, in the North, not only children but even dogs were fully aware of the identity of the enemy and the cause of the war. Nurturing hatred and obliviousness to more complex feelings helped to turn children into future fighters who would not experience vacillation when on a real battlefield.

American soldiers were also reduced to subjects of mathematical problems and riddles.

An example from the *Pioneer* newspaper's section "Riddle for Fun" asks players to count how many American soldiers had died. In the riddle, Tam asks Bính: "Do you know the number of American soldiers who died in recent battles? Tell me so that I can write it in a bulletin." Bính immediately responds: "Write it down: the number of hundreds is equal to one-third of the number of units. The number of thousands is equal to one-third of the number of hundreds. The number of tens is smaller than the number of units by one."⁴² Tam thinks for a moment and writes down the correct number. The article urged readers of the *Pioneer* newspaper to also find the correct answer on their own.

Another problem is more graphic and more mathematically challenging. It began with ten Americans and thirty "puppets" going on a raid. When night fell, these soldiers formed a circle, with every fourth person being an American. Uncle-guerillas from South Vietnam surrounded them. The Communist uncle-guerillas decided to count the enemies and in the process to shoot each twelfth person in order to first kill ten Americans and then to take alive the thirty puppet-soldiers. One of the uncle-guerillas carried out the task. The readers were invited to figure out from which enemy the uncle-guerilla started to count.

Riddles such as these identified enemies not only as foreigners but also as Vietnamese who fought against the Communists, the "puppets" or "lackeys." These denigrating appellations for people of the same ethnicity reveal that the nature of the conflict was political rather than national. Those who did not support the Communist line were relegated to the enemy camp. This became even more apparent after the United States withdrew its troops in 1973. In Communist discourse, the anti-Communist Vietnamese still remained puppets,

as is seen, for example, from a riddle-picture that appeared in 1974 and was intended to develop children's observational skills (image 3). According to the caption: "A group of six Saigon puppet soldiers in the course of an operation penetrated into a liberated area. They were tried and justly punished: one was apprehended and five were killed. Readers, [on the picture] find the bodies of those five who were killed."⁴³ Both American and South Vietnamese soldiers were reduced to ugly, pathetic caricatures easy to hate.

HEROES: EXAMPLES FOR EMULATION

While demonizing the enemy, the texts also inducted into young minds the idea of heroism as demonstrated not only by adults but, more importantly, by children who were the same age as the readers themselves. During a session of the Third National Assembly in April 1965, while discussing strategies for fighting the Americans, Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng named various groups in the population who had to brave the enemy forces, and Hồ Chí Minh suggested that among those heroic groups young people should also be listed.⁴⁴

In "Poem for Little Nephews and Nieces," Hồ Chí Minh expressed his hope that the "nephews and nieces would preserve the country of Dragon Lạc."⁴⁵ In Vietnamese folklore and some historical annals, Dragon Lạc, along with his spouse, the fairy Âu Cơ, is the progenitor of the Vietnamese people, representing the highest standard of being Vietnamese for children to emulate.⁴⁶ However, this began to change soon thereafter. At the end of his poem "Mid-Autumn Festival Letter" in 1952, Hồ Chí Minh admonished children "to be worthy of being nephews and nieces of Uncle Ho," thus replacing the mythical Dragon Lạc from the distant past with his own image, human and contemporary.⁴⁷

While Hồ Chí Minh filled the male Dragon Lạc's shoes, the female shoes of his wife Âu Cơ remained vacant. The figure that emerged to fill Âu Cơ's empty shoes became *Tổ quốc*, translated into English as either Fatherland or Motherland, but literally meaning a country of ancestors. This non-gendered expression in Vietnamese would sometimes accept a gender-defined characteristic when it was combined with the word "mother" resulting in the expression *Mẹ Tổ quốc*—Motherland, or Mother of the Country, or Mother of the Motherland—as happened in a children's book entitled *Gathering of Children-Heroes* by Huy Cận, who was in charge of culture and information in the government.⁴⁸

In his work, the idea of Motherland became simultaneously the end and the means for exo-socialization of children: the Motherland was personified to lead the struggle for the existence of the people and the country. Other heroes would join her in this struggle, helping to pass the baton of heroism and patriotism from one

generation to the next. In this relay, they are not simply individuals, but they form a constantly widening team of the saviors of Vietnam. In Huy Cận's play, *Âu Cơ* is reified as the national mother: "Our Mother is four thousand years old but is still young," four thousand years being the age ascribed to the time of *Âu Cơ*'s appearance as a progenitor of the Vietnamese people. In this play the four-thousand-year-old Motherland leads young heroes in the struggle against the American enemy as she had led them against all the previous enemies and adversities.

The earliest example of a child-hero was *Thánh Gióng*, also known as the spirit of *Phù Đổng*, who figured prominently in Huy Cận's play. *Thánh Gióng* was a miraculous boy from the time of the Hùng kings (before the third century BCE). He volunteered to fight against the invaders and requested from the Hùng king an iron horse, an iron sword, an iron rod, and an iron hat. Alone, he destroyed the enemy and, victorious, flew up into heaven riding his horse. *Thánh Gióng* first appeared as an earth spirit guarding a Buddhist temple in citations from a non-extant work from the eleventh century, and since then it appeared in historical annals, in folklore, and in the realm of spirit worship. The story of *Thánh Gióng* as an ancient national hero enjoyed a surge of popularity in the North in the late 1960s and the 1970s, when stories glorifying his strength and his loyalty to the ruler were republished on an almost annual basis.⁴⁹

Stories about *Thánh Gióng*, stressing his youth, his determination, and his courage to fight the enemy, were included into pantheons with many other children-heroes. Among them was *Lý Tự Trọng*, who also appeared in Huy Cận's story. *Lý Tự Trọng* was born in Thailand in 1914 to Vietnamese parents who resided there. Sent to China at the age of ten to join a group of children to be educated under the aegis of *Hồ Chí Minh*, he later came to Vietnam and was one of the founders of the Revolutionary Youth League in 1929, which preceded the formation of the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930. In 1931, at the age of seventeen, he was executed for killing a high-ranking French officer. He was subsequently recognized as a revolutionary martyr. *Nghiêm Đa Văn*'s play "Following Elder Brother's Footsteps" praises *Lý Tự Trọng*'s martyrdom and refers to him as one who had "reached to *Thánh Gióng* to take the baton of saving the nation." According to the play, *Lý Tự Trọng* is closely connected not only to the Motherland and to *Thánh Gióng*, but also to the "Father" of the people, *Hồ Chí Minh*:

Uncle *Hồ* taught him from his childhood,
Fighting under Uncle *Hồ*'s banner, he became immortal.

Nghiêm Đa Văn affirmed that *Lý Tự Trọng* would continue to be an example for generations of children, teaching children how to be worthy nieces and nephews of Uncle *Hồ*.⁵⁰

Other young martyrs from the period of the War of Resistance against the French appear in Huy Cận's play and in other similar works, the most famous being Lê Văn Tám, who set himself on fire to destroy an oil depository in 1946, and Kim Đồng, a boy from the Nung ethnic minority who at the age of ten served as a message carrier for revolutionary soldiers. Caught by the French in 1943, Kim Đồng swallowed a message to avoid having it fall into the hands of the enemy. The French executed him.⁵¹ The publishing house Kim Đồng took his name to recognize his heroism. The most evident example of a young female fighter became that of Võ Thị Sáu, who at the age of fourteen killed a French captain and wounded twelve French soldiers in 1947 during the war against the French.⁵²

Children-heroes in the war against Americans were included in the team of heroes celebrated in Huy Cận's story. Among them we find Kpa Kơ-Long, a Giarai teenager from Kon Tum province, who was born in 1948 into a poor family. His father died when he was still small. The enemy ruthlessly beat Kpa Kơ-Long and his two brothers (the story does not specify who the enemy was—French, Vietnamese, or American). With his hatred for the enemy, Kpa Kơ-Long sympathized with the revolution and the Communist forces from a young age. When he was fifteen, he asked to join the guerillas, but because of his youth he was turned down. However, he did not abandon his idea: he sharpened a spike, dug a hole, made a trap, and killed three enemy commandos. Then, using an arbalest, he killed three more. In his application to become a full-fledged member of the Liberation army he wrote, "I've been a guerilla since the age of fourteen. I killed one hundred twenty-four Americans and their puppets, and I destroyed eight armored vehicles."⁵³

Another account focuses on Hồ Văn Mên who, like Kpa Kơ-Long, was an orphan. He had lost his mother as an infant and his father succumbed to illness after being arrested by Americans and their puppets. Since then he had wanted to avenge the death of his father. He went to look for guerillas but they did not want to accept him because he was too small. He finally joined the guerillas and was assigned to spy on the enemy. On May 8, 1966, a GMC car entered Mên's village. In the car, there were two Americans and one puppet. Mên was very happy: for a long time he wanted to kill enemies with his own hands. He took a grenade and threw it into the car. The car blew up, and all three people in the car were killed.⁵⁴ Several months later, Mên distinguished himself by killing dozens of the enemy. The story continues by describing numerous episodes of Mên killing enemies along with the rising headcount of his victims: "Finishing the killing of an [enemy] gang, Mên ran whizzing and rollicking. Uncles hugged and clasped Mên. One of them joked, saying, 'This small guy has already killed my share of enemies!'"⁵⁵

Hồ Văn Mên received as a mark of distinction the red tie that had been awarded to the martyr-hero Ngô Mây, a young Hero of the Armed Forces who sacrificed his life in 1947 during the War of Resistance against the French.⁵⁶ His acclaim reached far and wide, with a book about him published almost simultaneously with the book about Ngô Mây; the total press run of the several editions published of these two books reached over a hundred thousand copies.⁵⁷

These stories taught children that heroism is not a prerogative of adults and prepared children to fight against the enemy when their turn came. The agenda of the government was to make youngsters aspire to become another Kpa Kơ-Long or Hồ Văn Mên and to inherit the tradition established by Thánh Gióng, Lý Tự Trọng, Kim Đồng, and Lê Văn Tám as signified by the passing of Ngô Mây's tie to Hồ Văn Mên. These heroic deeds were also connected to Hồ Chí Minh, because in aspiring to become good soldiers these young heroes also strove to be worthy nephews of Uncle Hồ.⁵⁸ In addition, textbooks also allocated a significant portion of study to these examples. For example, the curriculum in readings for the first and second grades consisted of three parts: stories about Hồ Chí Minh's life and activities and about his superior revolutionary morals, examples of adult-heroes, and stories about child-heroes.⁵⁹

In addition, children could aspire to receive honorific titles granted to peers who had proven their heroism in fighting the enemy. Those titles were bestowed at the Congresses of Model Fighters. The first All-Country Congress of Model Fighters (Đại hội toàn quốc các chiến sĩ thi đua) took place in May 1952 and included those who were fighters both on the battlefield and on the labor front. The general secretary of the Communist Party at the time, Trường Chinh, elaborated on the idea of a new heroism as the ideological essence of the patriotic emulation movement. He said that the patriotic emulation movement is the basis for development of the new heroism. Trường Chinh stressed that "if new heroism becomes the goal for the model fighters, then the patriotic movement will be elevated."⁶⁰ These congresses became a tradition and were conducted at the local and all-country levels to drum up enthusiasm for heroism and emulation. Kpa Kơ-Long was recognized as a model fighter while Hồ Văn Mên received two more titles: a courageous and resolute fighter of the highest class and a courageous fighter killing Americans of the third class.⁶¹

Heroes gave children exciting models to inspire their aspirations. They provided narratives that opened paths to heroism for children to imagine for themselves, paths taken by people identified as being at the very center of national glory, paths for children to take when their time came to be heroes. The horizon of expectation for children was peopled with a great assembly of heroic figures from the past and the present who stood as silent admonitions against

faintheartedness that would distract children from their duty to be heroes, to show love for Hồ Chí Minh, and to express hatred for his enemies.

MUNDANITY: ALTERNATIVES FOR HEROISM

The pairing of hatred for the enemy and admiration for heroes was nevertheless a problem. Before future fighters could join the army, they had to live a less exciting life, being raised as junior citizens who contributed to the functionality of their society through maintaining hygiene, helping in agriculture, and studying.

Everyday tasks were extremely important, but they were also extremely mundane, if not downright boring, especially when compared with tasks carried out by heroes whose examples children were encouraged to emulate. It might be hard for a child to concentrate on his or her studies, feed cows, raise chickens, or maintain proper hygiene when he or she also knew that people their own age were actively participating in eliminating enemies who made their lives so miserable. To help children internalize the idea of heroism demonstrated by others, to raise their level of hatred, and to jump-start or develop their usefulness for the country, North Vietnam organized numerous competitions and movements, the names of which would usually contain expressions comparing everyday chores to "killing Americans."⁶² One of the games was called "Killing Pests is Like Killing Americans." When rice-eating pests in a hamlet in Hà Bắc province threatened the crop, sixty pioneers from this hamlet appeared in the field with bottles, bamboo tubes, and sticks. Within a week of competing to kill insects, the pioneers had eliminated all those "American pests!"⁶³ Reports about such competitions in newspapers stimulated imitations, thus widening the movement. Students of a detachment named after the Communist hero Lý Tự Trọng in an elementary school in Nam Hà province organized a competition to kill flies that they called "Killing Flies is Killing Americans." Two hundred sixty-four children were equipped with thirty-seven flycatchers provided for the competition. They were allowed to use any other means to kill the flies, including but not limited to making fly traps, sweeping, sprinkling lime, or pouring boiling water on fly eggs.⁶⁴ Enthusiasm for the competition spread—only a couple of months later another school, in Hưng Yên province, reported undertaking a similar campaign that exceeded the scale of its predecessor. The newspaper reported that children made 1,200 flycatchers and hundreds of flytraps. From the record of ten thousand flies a day the number rose to thirteen thousand flies a day. One of the children established a record of killing 1,360 flies and received the title "Valiant fighter who kills flies," echoing the honorific title "Valiant fighter who kills Americans."⁶⁵

Killing flies and counting the dead flies would not necessarily appeal to children. But grounding these tasks in anti-American enthusiasm had a two-fold effect: it further ascertained the necessity to hate and kill Americans, but it also mobilized children for the necessary activities that had to be carried out but that otherwise might be boring and surely would have paled in comparison to the heroic deeds of those who directly participated in the war. It allowed them from a very young age to be included in the circle of anti-American fighters.

The phrase “Against Americans” was also applied to daily routine. For example, in one story a young daughter named *Thào* was admonished by her father to eat breakfast before going to work in the fields: “If you neglect to eat, you won’t pay attention to the rice seedlings and your ability to be in control of your work will be diminished. That would be a grave mistake! If you eat first, it will be very advantageous. The winter-spring [campaign of working in the fields] against Americans—you cannot act half-awake, half-asleep.”⁶⁶ A song urged children to plant rows of vegetables “against Americans.”⁶⁷ Ten-year-old *Đỗ Quang Vũ* from Hanoi wrote:

Tiny grains,
Grains enter the food storage.
Then tomorrow
The grains will go to the front,
The grains will go to fight Americans
And will contribute their part to the home front.

While Americans played a strong negative mobilizing role, children were also encouraged to perform their everyday duties as tokens of appreciation for and obedience to those who fought on the battlefield: their fathers, elder brothers, uncles, or soldiers unknown to them. *Hoàng Hiếu Nhân* from *Quần Bình* province vowed to his father, who was far away fighting the enemy, that he would study:

Oh Dad, be at peace, Dad,
I also know how to fight Americans.

The Communist revolutionary government required a new kind of people to perpetuate its agenda, and the people were compelled to follow the examples propagated by the leaders. Michel Foucault, an influential twentieth-century French philosopher and historian of ideas, argued that a society seeks to create “docile bodies”: subjects who submit to and internalize the beliefs and value systems that govern their societies in ways that maximize their usefulness.⁶⁸ The North Vietnamese regime particularly targeted children because they represented the means for achieving the long-term goal of unifying the North and the

South under Communist leadership. The system concentrated on promoting love of Uncle Hồ and hatred of enemies. Learning to love and to hate in publicly acceptable and appropriate ways was the means of gaining a place of safety in the Communist society of North Vietnam. Loving and hating correctly enabled children to negotiate the fearful path from the safety of family and religion to the safety provided by Uncle Hồ. This was a process of exo-socialization that redefined and simplified the individual as an agent of proper love and hate, able to sublimate these sentiments in mundane tasks that were given an aura of heroism.

NOTES

1. Hồ Chí Minh, “Bài nói tại buổi lễ khai mạc trường đại học nhân dân Việt Nam” [Speech at the opening ceremony for the People’s University of Vietnam] (January 19, 1955) in Hồ Chí Minh, *Bàn về công tác giáo dục* [Discussion about educational work] (Hanoi: Nxb Sự thật, 1972), 43.
2. *Tết năm Gà. Quà xuân tặng các em nhỏ* [Tết of the Year of the Rooster: A Spring Gift for Little Children] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1969), 48.
3. “Hòa bình” [Peace], *Thăng Bờm* 88 (1972): 21.
4. There are very few works on children and war: Olga Dror, “Raising Vietnamese: War and Youth in the South in the Early 1970s,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44 (February 1, 2013): 74–99. The topic of this article is a case study in which, due to the word limit, I don’t deal with comparative analysis. I incorporate comparative analysis into my current book project. For youth mobilization during the War of Resistance against the French, see Anne Raffin, “Mental Maps of Modernity in Colonial Indochina during World War II: Mobilizing Sport to Combat Threats to French Rule,” in *The French Colonial Mind, Volume I: Mental Maps of Empire and Colonial Encounters*, ed. Martin Thomas (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 96–118; and Anne Raffin, *Youth Mobilization in Vichy Indochina and Its Legacies, 1940 to 1970* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005). The latter only very briefly touches on the postcolonial period and, despite its title, does not go up to 1965 in the section on Vietnam. François Guillemot provides some discussion about Thanh Niên Xung Phong [Youth Shock Forces] in his book *Des Vietnamiennes dans la guerre civile: L’autre moitié de la guerre (1945–1975)* [Vietnamese Women in the Civil War: The Other Half of the War (1945–1975)] (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2014). Part of these Youth Shock Forces, if not very significant, constituted young people who for the purposes of this article are defined as “children.” There are a number of books on the topic of the Youth Shock Forces; see for example Nguyễn Hồng Thanh, ed., *Thanh niên xung phong: Những trang oanh liệt* [Youth Shock Forces: Glorious Pages] (Hanoi: Nxb Thanh niên, 1996).
5. Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation),” in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1971), 128, 132–33.
6. Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” 154.
7. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983), 38.

8. Antje Linkenbach Fuchs, "Education and the Process of Nation Building in Pre-Independence India: Some Theoretical Reflections," in *Education and Social Change in South Asia*, eds. Krishna Kuma and Joachim Oesterheld (New Delhi, India: Orient Longman, 2007), 129.
9. Albert Hughes, *Political Socialization of Soviet Youth* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 5.
10. Nguyễn Ái Quốc, "Gửi Ủy ban trung ương thiếu nhi" [To the Children's Central Committee], "Gửi đại diện Đoàn thanh niên cộng sản Pháp tại Quốc tế thanh niên cộng sản" [To the Representative of the French Communist Youth League in the Communist Youth Internationale], *Hồ Chí Minh. Toàn tập (1925–1930)* [Ho Chi Minh: Complete Set of Works] (Hanoi: Nxb Sự thật, 1981), vol. 2, 169–70, and 171.
11. History of the Communist Youth League says that it never happened due to the complexity of the situation in China. Nguyễn Đắc Vinh, Phan Văn Mãi, and Nguyễn Mạnh Dũng, *Lịch sử Đoàn thanh niên cộng sản Hồ Chí Minh và phong trào thanh niên Việt Nam (1925–2012)* [History of the Hồ Chí Minh Communist Youth League and the Vietnamese Youth Movement (1925–2012)] (Hanoi: Nxb Thanh niên, 2012), 46. There is no evidence that it did.
12. Sổ tay Đội viên thiếu niên tiên phong Việt Nam [Notebook of a Member of the Pioneer Organization] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1968), 12.
13. "Báo cáo về phương hướng công tác giáo dục trước tình hình và nhiệm vụ mới" [Report on the Guidelines for the Educational Work in the New Situation and with the New Tasks], National Archive no. 3, Hanoi, Bộ Giáo dục [Ministry of Education], 1965, folder 683, p. 13.
14. These three organizations were the analogues of the respective Communist organizations in the Soviet Union: the Labor Youth League, which bore this name between 1955 and 1977 before changing it into the Communist Youth League, corresponded to the Soviet Komsomol; the Pioneer Organization to the organization with the same name in the Soviet Union; and the last one, for the youngest group of children, literally must be translated as the Organization of the Children of August. It corresponds to the Soviet children organization called the Octobrists, meaning the Children of the October Revolution. Per the analogue, I suggest to translate the North Vietnamese children organization as Augustists.
15. R. Farnen, "Reconceptualizing Politics, Socialization, and Education," in *Reconceptualizing Politics, Socialization, and Education*, ed. R. Farnen (Oldenburg, FRG: University of Oldenburg BIS, 1993), 379.
16. Howard Tolley Jr., *Children and War: Political Socialization to International Conflict* (New York and London: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1973), 9.
17. Văn Hồng, "Từ mục đồng đến Kim Đồng" [From Shepherds to Kim Đồng] *Những tháng năm yêu dấu. Kim Đồng hồi kí* [Beloved Months and Years. Diary of Kim Đồng] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 2009), 87–88.
18. *Tài liệu hướng dẫn giảng dạy văn học. Lớp năm. Tập I* [Directional Materials to Teaching Literature. 5th Grade. Part I] (Hanoi: Nxb Giáo dục, 1974), 5.
19. *Hướng dẫn giảng dạy lịch sử. Lớp bốn phổ thông (tài liệu cho giáo viên)* [Guide to Teaching History. 4th Grade of Secondary Education] (Hanoi: Nxb Giáo dục, 1966), 36, 38.
20. Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890–1991* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 13.

21. For additional information on Hồ Chí Minh's cult, see Olga Dror, "Establishing Hồ Chí Minh's Cult: Vietnamese Traditions and Their Transformations," *Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 2 (May 2016): 433–466.
22. Bác Hồ, "Thư gửi thiếu niên, nhi đồng toàn quốc nhân dịp kỷ niệm 20 năm ngày thành lập Đội thiếu niên tiền phong" [Letter to young people of the entire country on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Pioneer Organization], *Nhân Dân*, no. 2610, May 14, 1961; *Làm theo lời Bác Hồ dạy* [Following Uncle Hồ's Teachings] (Hanoi: Nhà xuất bản Kim Đồng, 1966), 56.
23. *Thiếu niên tiền phong* (hereafter *TNTP*) 470 (May 20, 1966).
24. *Làm theo lời Bác Hồ dạy* [Following Uncle Hồ's Teachings] (Hanoi: Nhà xuất bản Kim Đồng, 1966); A. S., "Làm theo lời Bác Hồ dạy," *TNTP* 468 (May 6, 1966). The book was later republished in 1970 after Hồ Chí Minh's death.
25. "Bác Hồ thưởng huy hiệu" [Uncle Hồ Awards Badges], *TNTP* 575 (December 20, 1968).
26. Hồ Thị Thu, Văn Biễn narrates, *Ba lần gặp Bác* [I Met Uncle Three Times] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, May 1975).
27. Trần Đăng Khoa, "Đất trời sáng lắm hôm nay" [Today Earth and Heaven Are Very Bright], in *Đời đời ơn Bác: Tập thơ văn của thiếu nhi viết về Bác Hồ* [Eternally Grateful to Uncle] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1970), 31.
28. "Lời thề của Đội viên thiếu niên tiền phong và nhi đồng tháng 8" [Oath of the Members of the Organizations of Pioneers and Augustists], *TNTP* 608 (September 19, 1969).
29. Nguyễn Hồng Kiên, "Bác vẫn cười nhìn em" [Uncle still smiles looking at me], in Nguyễn Hồng Kiên, Cẩm Thổ, and Trần Đăng Khoa, *Em kể chuyện này* [Children tell these stories] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1971), 17–18.
30. *Đời đời ơn Bác*
31. Định Hải, "Bác dạy" [Uncle Teaches], *Chào xuân mới* [Welcome New Spring] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1970), 5.
32. *Mùa xuân* [Spring], 1970 (Hanoi: Hội Văn nghệ, 1970), 14.
33. William Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh* (New York, NY: Hyperion, 2000), 553.
34. See Dror, "Raising Vietnamese."
35. Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, *Hanoi's War. International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 309.
36. *Làm theo lời Bác Hồ dạy* [Carrying out Uncle Hồ's teaching] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1966), 36.
37. Tú Mỡ, "Cháu ghét thằng Giôn-xơn" [Children hate that guy Johnson], in *Ông và cháu* [Grandfather and grandchildren] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1970), 35–37.
38. Văn Thanh, "Bánh đầu xuân 'tặng xâm lược Mỹ'" [Cakes for the Beginning of Spring: Gifts to American Aggressors], *TNTP* 555 (February 20, 1968).
39. Anh Vui, "Kể tội Giôn-xơn" [Expose Johnson's Crimes], *TNTP* 484 (August 26, 1966).
40. Hoàng Hiếu Nhân, "Thằng Nich-xơn" [Thug Nixon], in *Nói dây cho diều* [Connecting String for a Kite] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1971), 17 (50,200 copies).

41. Nguyễn Hồng Kiên, Cẩm Thơ, and Trần Đăng Khoa, *Em kể chuyện này*, 130–31.
42. The number consists of thousands, hundreds, tens, and units. The number of tens cannot be more than 9, because otherwise it will turn into a hundred. The number of units cannot be more than 9, because otherwise it will turn into ten. Moreover, this number must be divisible by 9, first by 3 to find out the number of hundreds, and then again by 3 to find out the number of thousands. Thus, the only possible number for the units is 9, and consequently the number of tens is 8. If the number of units is 9, then the number of hundreds is 3 (1/3 of 9), and the number of thousands is 1 (1/3 of 3), thus producing one thousand, three hundreds, eight tens, and nine units, or 1,389.
43. Đậu Khắc Bình (artist), “Picture-Puzzle,” *TNTP* 851 (May 17, 1974).
44. *TNTP* 411 (April 16, 1965).
45. “Thơ tặng các cháu nhi đồng” [A Poem for Children], in *Thơ Hồ Chủ tịch* [President’s Hồ Chí Minh’s Poems] (Hanoi: Nxb Văn học, 1967), 48.
46. Ngô Sĩ Liên, *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* [Complete Historical Annals of Great Việt] (Hanoi: Nxb Khoa học xã hội, 1998), vol 1.
47. Hồ Chí Minh, “Thư Trung Thu năm 1952” [Letter for the Mid-Autumn Festival in 1952], in *Thơ Bác Hồ gửi các cháu thiếu nhi* [Uncle Ho’s poems sent to children] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1970), 10; also in Hồ Chí Minh, *Bàn về công tác giáo dục*, 39, and in dozens of other publications.
48. Huy Cận, *Hợp mặt thiếu niên anh hùng* [Gathering of Young Heroes] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, January 1973), 6 (50,300 copies).
49. See, for example, *Cậu bé làng Gióng* [Young fellow from Gióng Village] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1960); Huy Cận, *Phù Đổng Thiên Vương* [The Heavenly King of Phù Đổng] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1968, 1970 [50,250 copies], 1971 [4th edition, 50,000 copies]); Cao Huy Đình and Nguyễn Đức Long, *Chú Bé Làng Gióng* [The Little Boy of Gióng Village] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1971, 1973); Tô Hoài, *Chuyện Ông Gióng* [The Story of Mr. Gióng] (Hanoi: Kim Đồng, 1974); Đức Lân, *Đời dũng cảm của Kim Đồng* [Kim Đồng’s valiant time] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1958 [15,010 copies], 1960 [30,085 copies]); Thép Mới, *Chuyện Anh Lý Tự Trọng* [Stories of elder brother Lý Tự Trọng] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1960 [20,085 copies]); Tô Hoài, *Vì A Dình* [a book] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1963 [25,080 copies], 1967 [25,120 copies], 1970 [30,200 copies], 1972 [100,300 copies]); Tô Hoài, *Kim Đồng* (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1974 [50,300 copies]); Tô Hoài, *Vì A Dình* [a play] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1963 [20,080 copies], reprinted in Tô Hoài, *Vì A Dình*, 1970; Nguyễn Anh and Nguyễn Thành, *Kim Đồng* [a play] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1966 [10,100 copies]); Lâm Phương, *Hồ Văn Mên* [a play] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1969 [40,200 copies], 1972 [30,300 copies]).
50. Nghiêmi Đa Văn, “Tiếp bước anh” [Following the steps of elder brother], in *Nắng mới* [New Heat] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1971), 16.
51. Lê Văn, “Ngọn đuốc sống Lê Văn Tám” [Lê Văn Tám’s life torch], in *Tuổi nhỏ anh hùng* [Heroic Young People] 1965, 56–75. The historicity of Lê Văn Tám has been disputed; I consider this issue elsewhere. Nguyễn Hồng, *Dưới chân Cầu Mây* [At the Foot of Cầu Mây] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1952); Nguyễn Thu and Lê Công Thành, *Kim Đồng* (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1960); Tô Hoài, *Kim Đồng*; Tô Hoài, *Vì A Dình*; Nguyễn Anh and Nguyễn Thành, *Kim Đồng*; Lâm Phương, *Hồ Văn Mên*.

52. For example, *Tuổi nhỏ anh hùng* [Heroic Young People] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1965); republished in 1968 (50,200 copies).
53. Nguyễn Trung Thành, “Người dũng sĩ dưới chân núi Chư-pông” [Valiant fighter at the foot of Chư-pông Mountain], in *Dũng sĩ núi Chu-Pông* [Valiant Fighters of Chư-pông Mountain], eds. Phương Lam, Nguyễn Thi, and Chân Phương (Hanoi: Nxb Thanh Niên, 1969), 15.
54. Xuân Phương, *Chiếc khăn quàng Ngõ Mây* [Ngõ Mây’s Red Tie] (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1969), 12 (35,200 copies).
55. Phương, *Chiếc khăn*, 28.
56. Phương, *Chiếc khăn*, 2.
57. Lâm Phương, *Hồ Văn Mên* (Hanoi: Nxb Kim Đồng, 1969 [40,200 copies], 1972 [30,300 copies]).
58. Nghiêm Đa Văn, “Tiếp bước anh,” 20.
59. *Tài liệu hướng dẫn giảng dạy tập đọc (phần sử-địa-khoa). Lớp một và hai phổ thông* [Guide Materials for teaching How to Practice Reading (History-Geography-Science) in Grades 1 and 2 of General Education] (Hanoi: Nxb Giáo dục, 1971), 3–4.
60. Trường Chinh, *Thi đua ái quốc và chủ nghĩa anh hùng mới* [Patriotic Competition and New Heroism] (Hanoi: Nxb Sự Thật, 1955), 9.
61. *Đại hội quyết chiến quyết thắng giặc Mỹ. Đại hội anh hùng, chiến sĩ thi đua, dũng sĩ các lực lượng vũ trang nhân dân giải phóng miền Nam lần thứ hai—năm 1967* [Congress—Resolutely Fighting, Resolutely Winning Against Americans. The Second Congress of Heroes, Model Fighters, Valiant Fighters of the People’s Liberation Armed Forces of the South—1967] (Hanoi: Nxb quân đội nhân dân, 1967), 141–42.
62. For an analysis of Socialist competitions in North Vietnam, see Benoît de Tréglodé, *Héros et Révolution au Việt Nam, 1948–1964* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2001).
63. “Diệt sâu như diệt Mỹ” [Kill Pests Like Killing Americans], *TNTP* 540 (September 22, 1967).
64. “Diệt ruồi là diệt Mỹ” [Killing Flies Is Killing Americans], *TNTP* 467 (April 30, 1966).
65. “Diệt ruồi như diệt Mỹ” [Kill Flies Like Killing Americans], *TNTP* 473 (June 10, 1966).
66. Nguyễn Thế Kiêm, “Nó đã thành tật rồi” [He is already very weak], *Lời ca chống Mỹ*, 16.
67. Văn Ninh, “Hàng rau chống Mỹ” [Rows of vegetables against Americans], *Lời ca chống Mỹ* [Songs against Americans] (Ninh Bình: Ty Văn hoá Thông tin Ninh Bình, 1965), 6.
68. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).