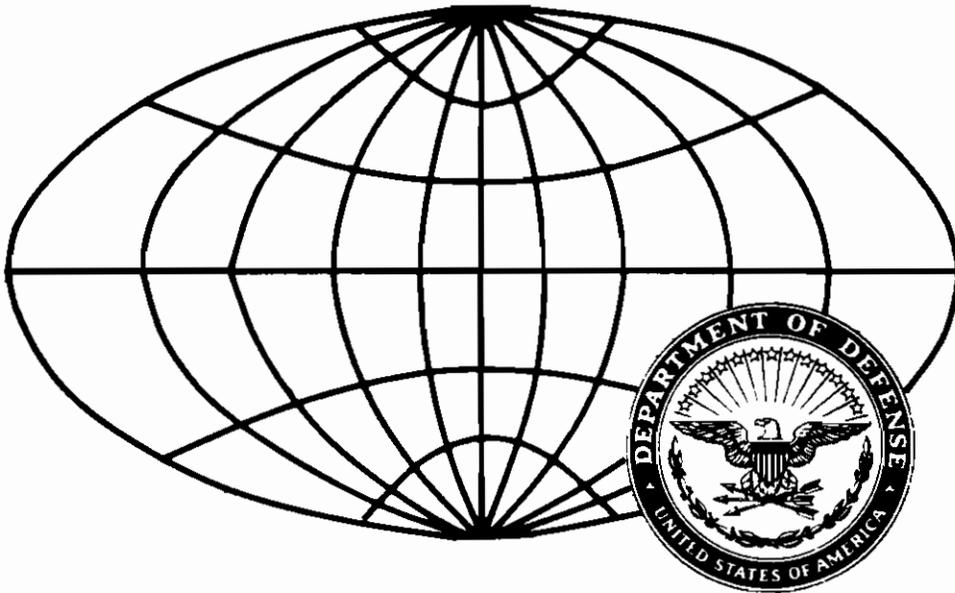


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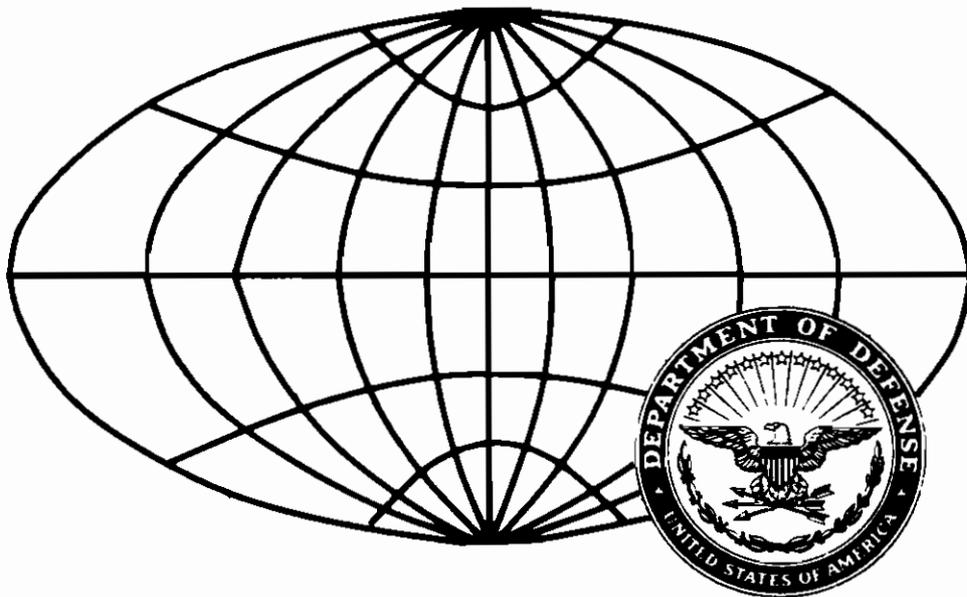
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TRANSLITERATION OF VIETNAMESE NAMES

Geographic names appearing in this volume are transliterations of the United States Board on Geographic Names. All other names appearing herein are based on the United States Department of State system of transliteration. Variations of these spellings may occur in documents which have used other systems of transliterations.

In the use of Vietnamese words and phrases all diacritical marks have been omitted in the text, but not in that portion of Chapter X which pertains to words and phrases of the Vietnamese language.

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Coat of Arms

Republic of Viet Nam

The coat of arms of the Republic of Vietnam has, as its central theme, the flexible bamboo, symbolizing consistency, faithfulness, and vitality. The bamboo is flanked by a writing brush, symbol of culture, and a sword, representing strength and determination.

Bamboo is typical of the Vietnamese countryside. Thick hedges of the woody grass, growing profusely, form a protective wall around almost every village in the northern delta and central coastal plains. Thus, for many Vietnamese, bamboo is associated closely with their rural life, a happy image of home and traditions rooted in a time-honored past.

The inner strength of the bamboo, coupled with its flexibility and modest appearance, are considered as representing the virtues of a gentleman. An ancient proverb says, "the taller the bamboo grows the lower it bends", meaning that a great man is humble, modest and tolerant. A fierce storm may uproot proud, stately, and seemingly indestructible trees, but after the storm subsides the flexible bamboo emerges as straight and as verdant as before. This may reflect an approach to life.

NATIONAL ANTHEM
of the
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Này anh em ơi, Quốc-Gia đến ngày giải phóng

Youth of Vietnam, this is the time we must liberate our country

Đồng lòng cũng đi, hy sinh tiếc gì thân sống.

Let's all march forward and if need be, repay our nation with our lives

Vì tương lai Quốc-Gia, cũng xông pha khói tên

For the future of our country, let us run onto the smokes of battles

lăm sao cho nước Nam từ nay luôn vững bền

so that our beloved Vietnam will forever remain free and secure.

Dù cho phải thấy trên gươm giáo

Even if we should perish on the battlefield

Thù nước lấy máu đào đem báo

We should shed our blood to defend the honor of our country

Nỗi giống lúc biến phải cần giải nguy

In the time of crisis we must defend our nation

Đoàn thanh niên ta vững lòng tâm trí

and We, the youth of the nation, must remain firm and determined

Hùng tráng quyết chiến đấu lăm cho khắp nơi

to fight for our country so that everywhere

vang tiếng người nước Nam cho đến muôn đời

the good name of Vietnam will live forever

Anh em ơi, mau hiến thân dưới cờ

My friends, let us close ranks under the banner

Anh em ơi, mau lăm cho cõi bờ thoát cơn tàn phá

My friends, let us rid our fatherland of all the destructive forces

về vang đời sống xứng danh ngàn năm, giống giống Lạc Hồng

and live up to the glorious heritage of our Lac Hong origin.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 20 January 1961

. . . We observe today not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom--symbolizing an end, as well as a beginning--signifying renewal, as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe--the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this Nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

This much we pledge--and more.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United, there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided, there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new States whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our words that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far greater iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those peoples in the huts and villages across the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge--to convert our good words into good deeds, in a new alliance for progress, to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house.

To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support--to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak--and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of laboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths, and encourage the arts and commerce.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free."

And if a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

All this will not be finished in the first 100 days. Nor will it be finished in the first 1,000 days, nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than in mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service are found around the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need; not as a call to battle, though embattled we are; but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in, and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you: Ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

PREFACE

Strange lands, customs and people confront our military personnel in the accomplishment of their world-wide mission. One of these little known countries, Vietnam, often described as the "gateway to Southeast Asia", has only recently emerged as an entity from what was once known as Indochina.

According to the legend, Vietnam had already existed in about 3,000 B. C. although it did not emerge as an independent state until approximately 400 B. C. Throughout its existence its people have fought to maintain their identity, and today, as before, they again are struggling against superior numbers and overwhelming odds. Among the many achievements to her credit, Vietnam and her people can count the thwarting of communist conquest and a successful fight against communist subversion as an outstanding contribution to the defense of the Free World.

The drive and determination demonstrated by the people of Vietnam since 1954 presages the successful development of a geographic, political, and economic haven for those who believe in the basic principles of the rights of man.

This study is intended to supply you only with basic information so as to arouse your curiosity and to inspire you to further reading and study since the successful accomplishment of your mission will depend to a great degree upon your knowledge of the historical background, the traditions and customs of Vietnam, and a thorough and sympathetic understanding of her people.

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CHRONOLOGY

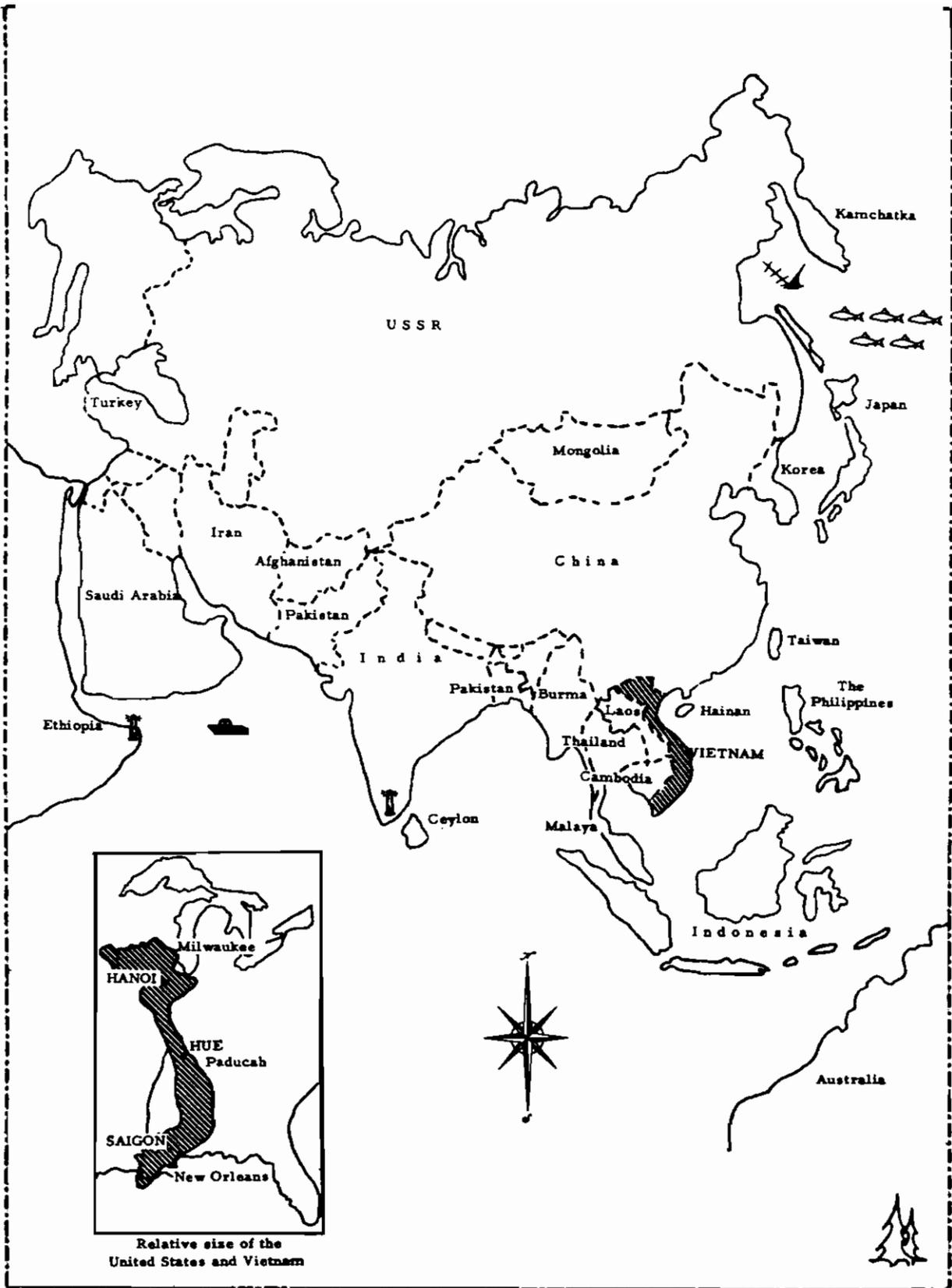
Circa

- 3000 B. C. Legendary founding of nation which eventually became Vietnam.
- 213 B. C. Chinese invasions of Tonkin area began.
- 163 A.D. Chinese complete their domination of the peoples of the Tonkin delta region; name the area Vietnam.
- 931 People of Vietnam achieve independence from Chinese, but continue to pay tribute for freedom.
- 1428 Emperor Le Loi drives Chinese from Vietnamese soil.
- 1802 Emperor Gia Long assumes office as ruler over Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin China. French influence begins.
- 1863 Cochin China annexed as French colony.
- 1883 Annam and Tonkin declared French protectorates.
- 1945 Vietnam declared itself independent under Emperor Bao Dai.
- 1946 French reoccupy Saigon and sign agreement with Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- 1948 French recognize State of Vietnam with Bao Dai as Chief of State.
- 1950 Democratic Republic of Vietnam, under Ho Chi Minh recognized by communist China. State of Vietnam, under Bao Dai, recognized by the United States and Great Britain.
- 1954 Apr. 26-
July 21 Geneva Conference for Indochina armistice partitions Vietnam, and "neutralizes" Laos and Cambodia.

- 1954 June 17 Pro-French Head of State and former Emperor Bao Dai appoints Ngo Dinh Diem premier. Diem spent the last four years in the United States and is known for his nationalism and anti-French sentiments.
- 1955 Mar. 4- May 8 Civil War started by Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Binh Xuyen. Ends with the government's complete victory.
- 1955 Oct. 23 Referendum deposes Bao Dai.
- 1955 Oct. 26 Republic is proclaimed by Premier Diem who becomes first President of South Vietnam.
- 1956 Mar. 4 General elections for South Vietnam's first national election results in the victory of the supporters of President Diem.
- 1956 Jul. 4 Constituent Assembly unanimously approves a draft constitution providing for a strong executive with safeguards for individual citizens.
- 1956 Aug. 21 President Ngo Dinh Diem issues decree regulating status of Chinese born in Vietnam.
- 1957 Oct. 25 UN General Assembly passes resolution declaring that South Vietnam is eligible for membership in the UN. --(The resolution"... noted 'with regret' the continued inability of the Security Council to recommend the admission of South Korea and South Vietnam... to the UN because of the negative vote of the Soviet Union. ")
- 1958 May 9 President Diem distributes land ownership certificates to 1,819 landless farmers. --Under the Vietnamese land reform program, all landlord holdings in excess of 245 acres must be surrendered to the government for disposal to tenants or landless cultivators.
- 1958 June 25 Cambodian royal proclamation, alleging that South Vietnamese troops have "invaded" and occupied several Cambodian border villages.
- 1958 Aug. 5-6 Ngo Dinh Nhu, brother of President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam, in Cambodia, "to try to settle the drawn-out border dispute. "

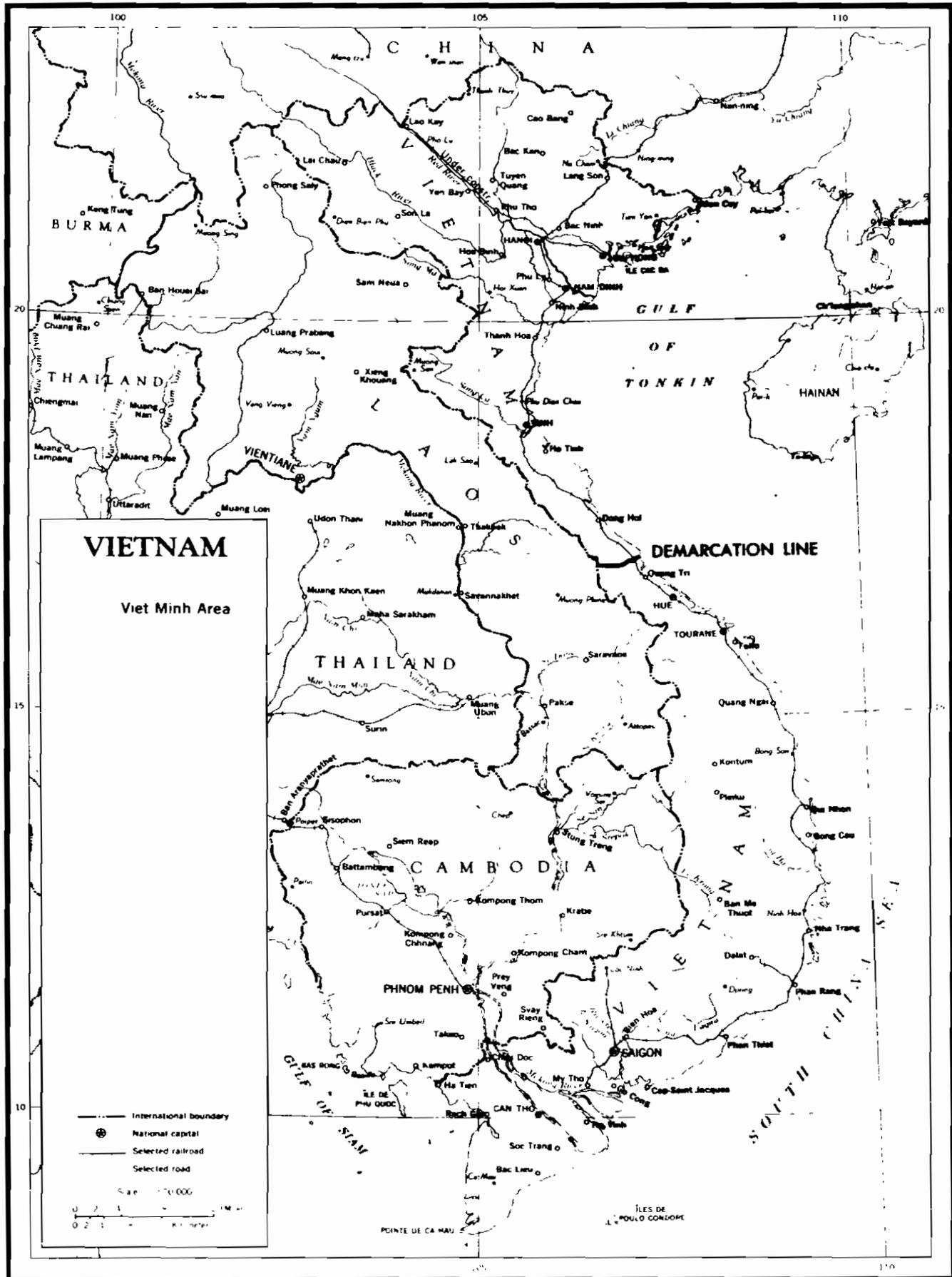
- 1959 Apr. 22 The United States and the Republic of Vietnam sign an Agreement for Cooperation for research in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.
- 1959 Aug. 30 General elections. Results for the 123 seats contested. --"About 120 of the 123 members elected are known to be supporters of the President."
- 1960 Apr. 30 An opposition group of 18, calling themselves Committee for Progress and Liberty, send letter to President Ngo Dinh Diem demanding drastic economic, administrative and military reforms.
- 1960 May 5 The United States announces that at the request of the Government of South Vietnam, the United States Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) will be increased by the end of the year from 327 to 685 members.
- 1960 Oct. 18 President Ngo Dinh Diem reshuffles his cabinet and replaces the Secretaries of State for Justice, Interior, and National Defense.
- 1960 Oct. 25 President Eisenhower assures President Ngo Dinh Diem that "for so long as our strength can be useful, the United States will continue to assist Vietnam in the difficult yet hopeful struggle ahead."
- 1960 Nov. 11 Military coup against President Ngo Dinh Diem's regime.
- 1960 Nov. 12 Loyalist troops enter the capital and subdue the rebels.
- 1960 Dec. 7 Pope John XXIII transforms all Vietnam (South Vietnam and North Vietnam) from a missionary territory to an ordinary ecclesiastical territory, with its own clergy and hierarchy.
- 1961 Feb. 6 President Ngo Dinh Diem announces his administrative reform program.
- 1961 Feb. 7 President Ngo Dinh Diem announces he will be a candidate for re-election in the presidential elections to be held on Apr. 9.

- 1961 Mar. 10 The communist-led newly formed National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam announces that a guerilla offensive against the government will be started to prevent holding the Apr. 9 elections.
- 1961 Mar. 24 Defense Department orders all enlisted reserves into active service starting April 16. --"Reserve officers and non-commissioned officers were called back in December."
- 1961 Apr. 3 United States and the Republic of Vietnam sign (in Saigon) a treaty of amity and economic relations.
- 1961 Apr. 9 President Ngo Dinh Diem is re-elected President by an overwhelming majority.
- 1961 May 5 President Kennedy declares at a press conference that consideration is being given to the use of United States forces, if necessary, to help South Vietnam resist Communist pressures.
- 1961 May 11 - 13 United States Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, in South Vietnam, declares to the National Assembly that the United States is ready to help the Republic of Vietnam increase the size of its army immediately.
- 1961 May 29 President Ngo Dinh Diem reorganizes his cabinet. Three new "superministries" are formed: Economy, Security (incorporating Defense), and Social Affairs.
- 1961 Aug. 2 President Kennedy declares that the United States will do all it can to save the Republic of Vietnam from communism. On the same day, South Vietnamese Government orders all men between the ages of 25 and 35 to report for military duty.
- 1961 Aug. 8 Government extends length of compulsory military service by an additional six months.
- 1961 Oct. 19 President Ngo Dinh Diem signs a decree proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the territory of the Republic of Vietnam, which gives the Chief of State special powers for one year to deal with the state of emergency.



LOCATION OF VIETNAM IN EASTERN HEMISPHERE

MILWAUKEE



PART I. A STUDY OF VIETNAM

CHAPTER 1

VIETNAM AND ITS PEOPLE

Section I. Geography

The Republic of Vietnam lies on the eastern edge of the Indochina Peninsula. It extends north-south in the form of an elongated letter "S" from the Se Ban Hai (river), 47 miles north of the ancient cultural center of Hue, southward 562 miles as the bird flies to Mui Ca Mau, the southernmost tip of the peninsula. It is in the same tropical climatic belt as Nicaragua and French Equatorial Africa. When it is seven o'clock in the morning in Saigon, the capital city, it is seven o'clock the previous evening in New York City.

Vietnam is narrowest at Hue in the north (about 40 miles) and is widest (about 210) along an east-west line between the port town of Phan Rang on the South China Sea and Phnom-Penh, the principal city of Cambodia. Its total area is approximately 66,000 square miles. This is slightly smaller than the state of Washington, U. S. A.

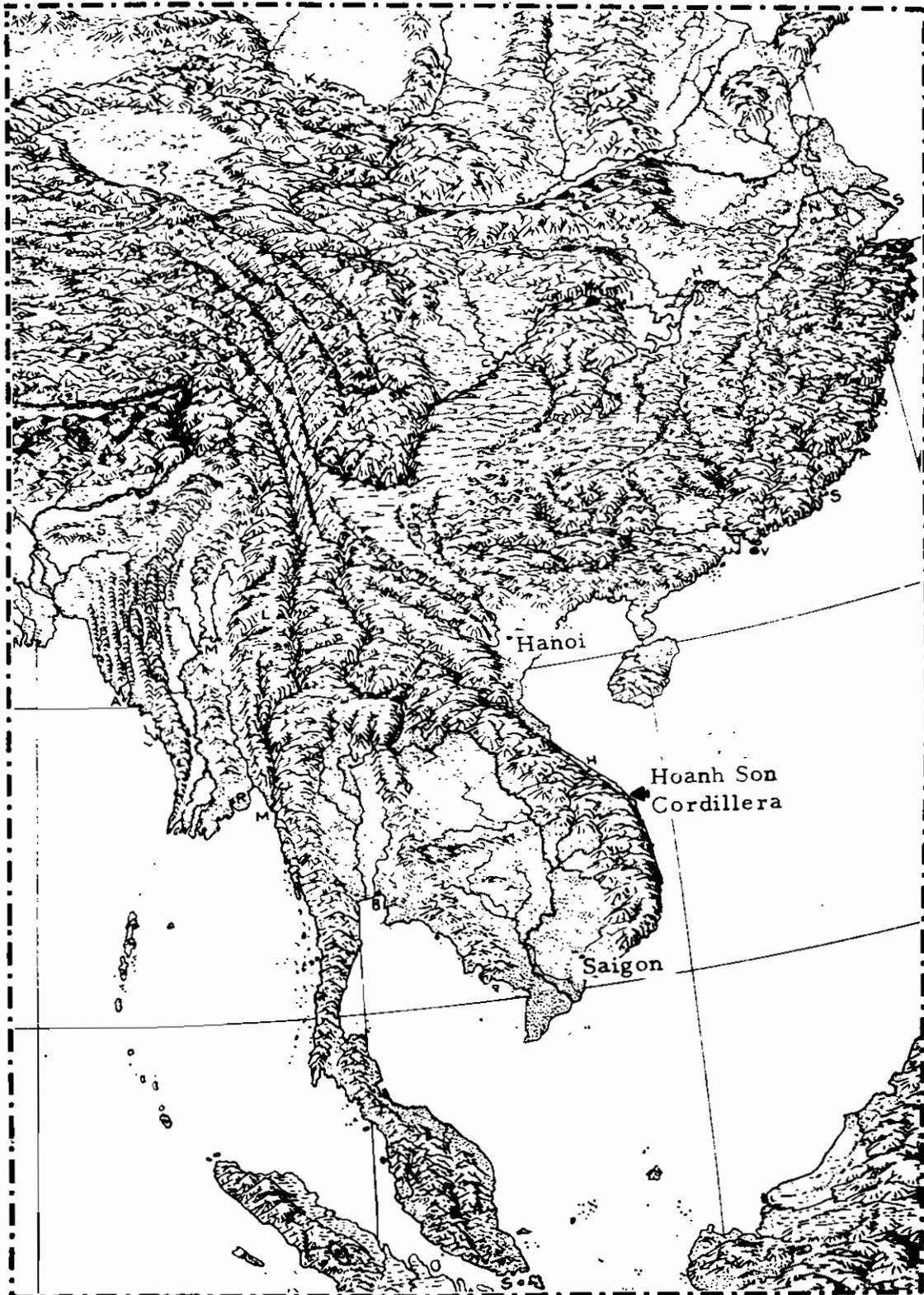
The country is bounded on the north by communist-occupied Vietnam, known as "the Democratic Republic of Vietnam". The line of demarcation between communist and free Vietnam is along the Se Ban Hai and usually is referred to as the "17th parallel cease-fire line".

On the east and south it is bounded by the South China Sea and on the west by the Gulf of Siam, Cambodia, and Laos.

The terrain may be divided into three main geographic features: the flat Mekong River Delta of the extreme south; the rugged Hoanh-Son Cordillera (Chaine Annamatique) range of mountains running northward and west of the coastal plain; and the narrow, elongated coastal plain stretching along almost the length of the country.

The Mekong River Delta is characterized by flat, poorly drained, highly dissected surface, crisscrossed by distributaries of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers and an intricate network of canals and smaller streams.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC DIAGRAM OF
SOUTHEAST ASIA



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Map prepared by Dr. A. K. Lobeck, Columbia University (1945)

The elevation of the delta rarely exceeds 20 feet above sea level. The northern sector of this area is dominated by stands of coniferous forests. The southernmost portion of the delta is inundated during the summer monsoon season.

The Hoanh-Son Cordillera generally is made up of forest covered granites and schists, with peaks rising 5,000 to 6,000 feet. The highest point on the range is 8,443 feet and is located west of Quang Ngan. On the eastern side of the range steep slopes overlook the heavily populated coastal plains and bays. The western slopes of the Cordillera descend in steps to the plateaus of Laos. The southern section of the range consists in the main of dissected hill lands, rolling to hilly plateaus rising from 300 to 600 feet higher than the surrounding broad valleys. The plateau areas are predominantly from 1,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level. Mountain spurs extending to the sea partition the coastal plain at three points. These are the Deo Ai Van (Col des Nuages or Pass of the Clouds) between Danang and Hue; Mui Dieu (Cap Varella) 47 miles north of Nha Trang; and Mui Dinh (Cap Padaran) immediately south of Phan Rang.

The coastal plain generally is less than 25 miles wide, and is washed by the waters of the South China Sea. The surface is level, densely populated, and intensely cultivated. It is noted for its numerous beaches and bays, and excellent coves for small craft anchorages. Sand dunes from 10 to 60 feet are common.

Of the many small islands, which abound along the coast of Vietnam, the most important are the Paracels Archipelago, the Spratley Islands, and the Island of Phu-Quoc.

The Spratley or Tempest Islands are located about 297 miles off the coast directly east from Phan Thiet. Like the Paracel Islands they are of coral origin.

The Paracel Islands are a string of islets approximately 187 miles east of the port of Danang (Tourane). The two largest islands are Wooded Island of the Amphitrite Group and Pattle Island of the Crescent Group.

The island of Phu-Quoc is located in the Gulf of Siam approximately 22 miles from Ha Tien. It varies in width from 15 miles to 2 miles and is less than 30 miles in length. It has numerous small deep bays which make it readily accessible by boat and is crossed by many waterways, five of which are navigable. It has many natural lakes which abound in fish and crocodiles. The island, which has several villages, is noted for the production of two important food products: mam mem, a shrimp paste eaten as a seasoning and as a supplement to rice, and nouc mam, a fish sauce seasoning used in almost every Vietnamese dish.

The great river systems are the Mekong and Bassac which flow almost parallel from Cambodia southeastward into the South China Sea. They have formed a well defined spine on the southern side of the Bassac and developed a network of small streams which flow southwestward into the Gulf of Siam. East of these two rivers, the area is served by the Vaico Occidental and Vaico Oriental, with drainage basins originating in Cambodia to the north and flowing southeastward into the area between My Tho and Saigon. The Dong Nai, near Saigon, originates in the mountainous watershed of the highland area from Dalat on the east and extends northwestward to the Cambodian border.

There are few large streams in the highland areas between Dalat and Hue. Those which flow eastward into the South China Sea are few and fast. The most important of these is the Song Da Rang with its mouth at Hoi An. Those which flow westward into Cambodia have cut deep canyons with poorly drained valleys always endangered by flooding from torrential rains.

Saigon, with its twin city of Cho Lon, is a city of more than 2,000,000 inhabitants, including approximately 350,000 of Chinese origin, 20,000 European, 5,300 other Asian and about 2,000 American. It is situated in the "deep south" of the country and on the west bank of the Saigon River about 45 miles upstream from the sea. It has an average elevation of 25 feet above sea level and is approximately ten degrees north of the equator. The average temperature is 84° F. with accompanying humidity. The period from March through August is comparable to midsummer in Washington, D. C. The rainy season extends from about May to November. The period from November to early February is the most agreeable, for the air is fresher and the lower humidity less trying. March through June is the hottest period of the year.

Saigon is the political and economic capital of the country. Since it lies in the rich Mekong River Delta it is important as a market for rice, rubber and tea. Manufacturing is limited to light, industrial and consumer items such as rubber goods, soap, chemicals, textiles, tobacco, furniture, foodstuffs, and beverages. Its twin city, Cho Lon, largely Chinese populated, is the center for rice milling and marketing.

A major feature of Saigon traffic is the large number of motor-scooters and bicycles. Added to this, there are several thousand three-wheel vehicles, some bicycle driven, and some motor driven, which are used to carry both freight and passengers.

Geographically favored, Saigon enjoys a position at the crossroads of important air and sea routes. It is 934 miles from Hong Kong, 650 miles from Singapore, 906 miles from Manila, 2,449 miles from Tokyo, and 7,005 miles from San Francisco. The port of Saigon is a self-

governing body endowed with legal status, and solely under Vietnamese management. In peak years as many as 650-660 ships docked at its port facilities.

Dalat, a small mountain town with an elevation of 4,920 feet above sea level, is a favorite recreational spot of the Vietnamese and others visiting, working, or living in the country. It is situated about 175 miles northeast of Saigon.

Danang (Tourane), reputedly the equal of the Bay of Naples in beauty, is 60 miles south of the city of Hue.

Hue, located on the mountainous coast near the "cease-fire line" (17th parallel) is approximately 60 miles north of Danang. It had been the capital of the Annam Empire.

With 1260 miles of coastline, Vietnam abounds in sandy beaches, readily accessible by car, train, or excursion boat. Notable among these is Vung Tau (Cap St. Jacques) about two-and-a-half hours drive southeast from Saigon, and the nearby beaches of Long Hai and Nuoc Ngot for those who prefer the smaller, less public resorts. Farther north are the beaches of Nha Trang and Ca Na. The former is considered one of the outstanding in the world.

Other cities of special interest are Bien Hoa, 26 miles from Saigon, noted for its ceramics and bronze industry; Thu Dau Mot, 23 miles from Saigon, noted for its fruit and lacquer industry; Tay Ninh, the seat of the Holy See of the Cao Dai Sect, 62 miles from Saigon; and Ban Me Thuot, noted as a hunter's paradise where stag, roe-buck, peafowl, pheasant, wild boar, bear, wild oxen, panther, tiger, and elephant may be found.

Section II. Climate

Vietnam has a variety of climates. Weather is characterized by alternating dry and rainy seasons. The winter monsoons occur from November through March. The summer monsoons prevail from June through September.

During the winter monsoon season the area from Dalat north is subject to moist trade winds from the North Pacific Ocean, which cause the characteristic cloudy rainy season. Heaviest precipitation occurs during October and November when up to 50 inches of rain may fall. In the summer, variable conditions are experienced. Several typhoons may be expected along the coast each year, usually between July and November. Summer-like conditions prevail during the transitional periods.

In the southern area, separated from the cloudy domain to the east of the mountain range, the seasons are nearly the reverse of those in the northern sector. During the summer monsoon season heavy rainfall (50 inches in Saigon) prevails throughout the south.

In the northern sector mean daily temperatures are 90°F. in June and 72°F. in January. Minimum temperatures are 78°F. in June and 65°F. in January. At Saigon the mean maximum temperature is 95°F. in April, the minimum of 70°F. in January. The absolute minimum temperature ever recorded in Saigon was 57°F. In mountain areas temperatures are considerably lower, ranging from 68°F. to 60°F. in winter at Dalat.

Soils. A scientific survey of the soils has never been made of the entire country. Surveys have been made in rice growing areas and in some of the highland areas.

Delta soils (from Saigon southward) are alluvial and generally poor in phosphoric acids, potash, and calcium. Exceptions occur along the immediate coast line in what may be termed geologically "the younger areas". Highland soils are red basaltic and of volcanic origin.

Section III. Population

Ethnic Origin and Minorities. The origin of the Vietnamese people is shrouded in the mists of antiquity. As a consequence it is difficult to establish satisfactorily either their ethnic or geographic beginnings.

As nearly as can be determined from legend they are a meld of several civilizations. The first sprang into being nearly 5,000 years ago in Southern China around the Yangtze River Valley and thence slowly moved south into what today is Vietnam. Enroute these people, then very warlike, defeated and absorbed remnants of the great Cham and Khmer Empires.

Another of the great kingdoms arose in the extreme southern portion of the country, around the Mekong River Delta and was known as Funan. The people of Funan were Melanesians, Indonesians, and Polynesians. This empire lasted from about 100 A. D. until about 550 A. D. at which time it was succeeded by the Khmers. The Khmers, in their turn, were forced back into what is now Cambodia by the inexorable southward movement of the Vietnamese.

In 1774, after continuous expansion which lasted for over 4,500 years, the Vietnamese arrived in Ha Tien at the southeastern extremity of what today is their country.

In the latter part of the 18th century, the French began their infiltration, through missionaries and traders, and consolidated their hold with military force. They took Saigon and the southern area at about the time of our Civil War. In 1883, they established sovereignty over the entire area of Indochina. This continued until the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1954 which brought to an official close the colonial wars in Indochina and marked the end of French control of the area.

The estimated population (National Institute of Statistics) as of September 1960 was 14,616,646. Regionally, approximately 95 percent live in the delta area and the balance in the highlands. The most densely populated provinces are:

Quang-Nam in Central Vietnam. . . .	941,630
An-Giang (Long Xuyen) in the south	801,477
Binh-Dinh in Central Vietnam	801,743
Quang-Ngai in Central Vietnam. . . .	664,821

The four cities with autonomous status have the following population:

Saigon.	1.4 million
Danang (Tourane).	110,348
Hue	102,814
Dalat	49,518

The population for the entire country averages approximately 80 persons per square kilometer, with the southern area averaging 131 persons, the Mekong Delta area 77, and the highlands 12 persons. Saigon has a density of 26,937 persons per square kilometer. Birth rates in the southern area are the highest, 34.90 per thousand; in the highlands the rate is 30.95 and in the Mekong Delta area 22.23. Fifty-four percent of the births in 1959 were males.

Although most of the Vietnamese inhabit the delta region and the narrow, elongated coastal plain between the mountains and the sea, small concentrations are found throughout the highlands. Generally speaking, the Vietnamese dislike the highlands and show little desire to live away from their rich, rice-producing lowland villages.

The Vietnamese comprise 85 percent of the population while the other 15 percent consists in the main of Chinese, Indians, Pakistani, Cambodians (Khmer) and the highlander, or "Montagnard" a word commonly used to designate the aborigine.

The lowlanders (Vietnamese) are part of or dependent upon the cities of the delta and coastal plain. Although many do not inhabit the cities, they are tied to these centers of communication by language

idiosyncracies, politics, economics, religious practices, and social relationships. Physically the lowlanders are of delicate bone structure, slight of frame, with clean-cut features, and a well-balanced self-assured walk. Although of Asian descent they are readily distinguishable from the inhabitants of neighboring countries. The most notable physical difference between the Vietnamese and other Asians is their stature and poise. Other features, such as black hair, yellowish skin, broad face, high cheek bones and dark eyes are common characteristics, but are refined.

The highlanders confine themselves to the isolated areas of the plateaus. They are out of touch with the city dwellers of the lowlands and have no desire to take on any of the complexities of modern life. They are self-supporting, content, backward and for the most part are an amiable people who follow age-old customs and traditions in the purest form. They are more likely to be of "negrito" or "nesoit" characteristics than Mongoloid. They comprise the Rhades, Churus, Chils, Mas, Muongs and Chams. They are referred to commonly as the "mois" or "montagnards".

The Chams, the best known of the minorities, are remnants of the Champa Empire, a Malayan-Polynesian people who once divided the rule of what now is the Republic of Vietnam, Cambodia, and a part of Laos. Although they have been almost assimilated they have left their mark on music, sculpture, religion, legends, vocabulary, rice culture, irrigation, and salt marsh systems. Still visible from the highways are their stone pillars and piles called "Ong Dan" and "Ba Dan" (Mr. and Mrs. Sacred).

Communication between the lowlanders and highlanders has been slow, and movement to and from each area often is arduous, but communications are facilitated by the progress of the present government program for new access roads, airfields, and the resettlement of villagers from the overcultivated lowland villages to the virgin, arable highland.

Socioeconomic Factors

Economic Conditions. Despite a marked increase in an urban working class, the overwhelming majority of the population continues to be farmers, working their own small plots or as tenants. Superimposed on this traditional economic base of subsistence farmers, there is a nascent middle class, and a group of wage-earning industrial and commercial plantation workers, comprising a small percentage of the total population. The economic elite, most solidly represented in Saigon, is composed partly of wealthy business industrialists or landowners,

westernized intellectuals, and highly placed government and religious personages.

Economic and sociological conditions separating the economic class levels are more pronounced in urban areas than in rural. In rural areas the difference between members of the upper classes and the farmers is less apparent; lodging, food, and material comforts of the rural upper class are often only slightly better than those of the farmer; the values, attitudes, and social habits are closer to those of their poor neighbors than to their urban counterparts. Some difference between the upper-class rural school teachers or local civil functionaries and other villagers may be seen in dress and language--the shoes, western trousers and shirts, and bilingualism of the former setting them apart. Although urban upper-class men seldom wear the traditional Vietnamese turban and tunic, unless for special religious ceremonies or when the individual is aged and conservative, this costume is frequent among that class in the villages.

Members of the urban working class work as coolies on the docks, or construction jobs, and in factories doing the lifting, carrying, and hauling that are done mainly by machines in the West. Others operate bicycle or motorized cyclos, drive small taxis, work as plumbers, carpenters, and painters, and at other skilled and semi-skilled occupations. An increasing number of men now are working in small machine shops in order to meet the growing demand for miscellaneous consumer products. This economic class, although of approximately the same composition as during the period of French Colonialism, is expanding.

The decade of open war and the insecurity of the countryside due to communist guerrilla terrorism has caused many families to abandon their farms and seek the relative security of the city. Vacant lots, alleys, and canal banks became sites for their flimsy shelters. Large slum quarters quickly sprang up in addition to the thousands of houseboats in the canals. The government now is encouraging these former farmers to return to their land and restore the rich, rice-growing areas to production.

Vietnam's economic development has been hampered by a slow rate of capital accumulation and a tendency of local businessmen to invest their capital in short-term production investment. The government has instituted several programs intended to develop the economy of the country, and eventually to reduce its dependence on the importation of manufactured goods. To encourage local industry, an Industrial Development Center has been created, with revolving funds of both Vietnamese currency and United States aid funds, to provide medium- and long-term loans to private investors.

In agriculture, a Land Reform Program has been instituted, aimed at breaking up the large rice-land holdings. The government also is encouraging farmers from overpopulated areas of central Vietnam to settle the high plateau regions and cultivate industrial cash crops which will diversify agricultural production.

Government labor policies are formed by presidential advisors and are administered by a National Government Department of Labor. As a counter to possible communist influence on labor, the government appreciates the value of trade unions, and the Department of the Interior is authorized to legalize the status of local and national unions. The largest labor union is the Confederation Vietnamienne du Travail Chretien (CVTC) which has an estimated membership of more than 300,000. The government also has begun to encourage employers (especially planters) to enter into collective agreements with the workers.

Although unemployment is high and underemployment is a continuing problem, the labor situation in general appears to be calm. Price levels and cost of living have remained relatively stable for the last few years, and pressure for wage increases has been light. As a means of holding down prices and averting strikes, the government has come out officially against wage increases. Minimum wage rates are established by the various provinces and vary from about 24 to about 52 piasters per day. Classes of workers who are affected by the minimum wage laws vary; in some provinces, farm workers and domestics are excluded. Many enterprises, including the government, pay a low base pay and supplement it with various allowances, including those for a family, for seniority, etc. . Plantation workers generally are furnished with housing and a rice allotment, plus some form of medical treatment, in addition to their base pay. Rice allotments generally are sufficient for the average families; other foodstuffs are purchased at company-owned stores. Labor Day and Independence Day are paid holidays, and, as a matter of custom, a bonus of one month's pay usually is paid at the TET holiday (New Year).

Social Strata. The structure of Vietnamese society has repeatedly been altered during a long history of foreign political and cultural domination; however, it still contains vestiges of traditional prestige factors. In ancient Vietnamese society, the majority of the people were commoners, vassals of hereditary nobles who ruled over one or more villages and who were, in turn, subject to lords dependent upon a grand seigneur only slightly more powerful than they. A long period of Chinese rule (111 B. C. to 968 A. D.), followed by centuries of vassalage, resulted in the adoption of Chinese political, administrative, and social systems, and the virtual obliteration of most of the ancient Vietnamese institutions. Chinese social structure was keyed to a centralized empire, presided over by a ruler who was at once civil and religious head, pontiff, judge,

and intermediary between heaven and his subjects. In principle, there were no true social classes, as all subjects (except the royal family) were ranked equally below the emperor. There were, however, preferred social categories because Confucian doctrine ranked the individual according to profession, with scholars ranking first, followed by farmers, artisans, merchants, and soldiers.

The trickle of European traders and missionaries into Vietnam during the 18th century, followed by French intervention and conquest (1802-1896) had a tremendous influence on Vietnamese culture. The traditional emphasis on education as the chief determinant of social position began to give way to class differences of an economic order, and race or nationality played a part in the composition of the new elite. In less than a century, Vietnam was transformed into a western-type class hierarchy, composed of a foreign economic and political elite, a native landed upper-class, and the emerging middle-class.

The upper-class, currently embracing only about 3 percent of the population, includes westernized intellectuals, professional people, and highly-placed government and religious persons, most of whom also are either landowners or descendants of the old landed aristocracy or old Mandarin families.

In the villages and rural areas considerable respect is still accorded teachers, Catholic priests, Buddhist bonzes, and all educated persons. All school teachers are accorded upper-class status in rural areas; in urban areas they are likely to be counted middle-class.

In the urban areas particularly, an expanding middle social class is developing, corresponding to our economic middle class. In this class are found most civil servants; commercial office workers such as secretaries, stenographers, and translators; school teachers; shop owners and shop managers; and noncommissioned officers and company grade officers of the armed forces. Although many Chinese and Indians rate middle class status from an economic viewpoint, they are considered socially among the lower class by many Vietnamese.

Many of the traditional social customs are common among all strata of society. Some of these have been modified by the acceptance of certain western social concepts, particularly among the wealthy, educated, upper classes in the urban areas, but even here such acceptance, in many cases, is conditioned by the values and attitudes instilled by deep-rooted Vietnamese culture.

The Vietnamese concept of the universe and man's place in it, and the great importance of the family and the village, are conditioned to a great extent by religion. To the Vietnamese, the physical world, the

social order, and man's place and condition in both-essentially are pre-ordained and unchanging. This destiny concept produces a high evaluation on stoicism, patience, adaptation, and courage in the face of adversity. Religious belief may affect social customs in ways which would not occur normally to even the most sympathetic and perceptive westerner. One example might be the belief, derived from religious and philosophical concepts, that parts of the human body possess their own hierarchy of value or worthiness, the head being almost sacred and the feet the reverse.

The Vietnamese are intensely proud of their civilization and of their national identity. Their basic social outlook, however, revolves around the family and the village. Within them there is total responsibility for the care of the less fortunate. The preeminence of the family extends throughout every level of their life. Not only are ancestor-worship and veneration of elders deep motivations of social behavior, but there is unspoken acceptance of the family as the most important unit in the culture. The individual has an absolute obligation, to be violated only at the risk of serious dishonor, to care for members of his family before other individuals, and to prevent any of them from being in want.

The role of women is determined by the Confucian order, in which they are totally subordinate to men. In practice, particularly among the urban middle class and in connection with the family financial affairs, the wife may exercise a great deal of responsibility. Except among the westernized upper classes, however, the wife does not participate as actively in social affairs with her husband.

An important social diversion for many Vietnamese is gambling, from childhood to old age and at every social level. Government-operated national lotteries constitute an important source of revenue for industrial development. Soccer, and bicycle and horse racing were, until recently, favorite spectator sports and another important form of legalized gambling; on a more private level, such games as cards, chess, and Chinese mahjong frequently were accompanied by heavy betting. However, at present, the government discourages gambling and is urging its citizens to refrain from all games of chance as being unproductive luxuries. A realization presently pervading Vietnam is that the economic rehabilitation of the country depends, for success, upon the concerted cooperation of all its citizenry.

Education. Through all the changes the Vietnamese have seen in the last 150 years--from the rule of their own emperors through that of French governors to the present Republic of Vietnam--one major constant has been a deep reverence for learning. Under the Confucian system the brilliant scholar stood at the head of the occupational hierarchy; his position brought economic, social, and political rewards.

Before the French came, Vietnam was run at all levels of administration by officials called Mandarins, who were chosen on the basis of education alone. The aristocracy of learning was the only aristocracy of importance in old Vietnam; learning, especially of Chinese philosophy and history, was not only prized for its own sake, but was the main road to wealth, power, and social standing.

Primary education was taught by the village school master, whose home generally served as the village school. Here almost all boys learned at least a few hundred Chinese characters, and many went on to the works of philosophy and history which formed the core of Confucian scholarship.

The civil service examination was the crucial part of the traditional Vietnamese educational system. Tens of thousands of students each year would attempt the first examination, the khao khoa; only a few thousand of these would go to the provincial capital for the tin hach examination given every three years. Even to gain the lowest of these degrees was a high honor and marked its recipient for life while bringing honor to his family as well. In ever-decreasing numbers, as they climbed the ladder, scholars could progress through the third examination, the huong thi (which could result in one of the coveted degrees of tu tai, "Budding Genius", or cu nhan, "Promoted Man" to the last and highest examination), conducted by the emperor himself. Those who survived this final test received the highest degree, the tan-si. Even those who received only a fourth-class tan-si were assured of lifelong distinction. Only three men could win a first-class tan-si in each triennial examination; this was the pinnacle of success. However poor and humble were their origins, they were now members of the top rank of the elite.

With the coming of the French, the formal educational system changed considerably. Both the Confucian and the French systems were pyramidal in that a series of successive winnowings sharply reduced the number of persons who went on to each higher level of study. The French system also retained the close connection between high standing in the civil service examinations and the award of responsible government positions. Nevertheless, the French system and two major policies in particular were responsible for the breakdown of the Confucian order and of Confucian scholarship. First, beginning in the 19th century, the French encouraged the Vietnamese to write their own language in the Latin alphabet, quoc ngu. Second, in the early years of the 20th century they "reformed" the civil service examinations, making European rather than Confucian learning the requisite for success. As a result, Confucian studies lost the prestige which had formerly led young men to give them the years of arduous study they demanded.

The present school system, administered by the Secretary of State for National Education in the national government, retains

substantially the form of the French school system. The government is attempting, in evening classes, to raise the literacy rate among older people. Primary schools, the first three years of which are compulsory for children of both sexes, have a five-year curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, natural science, principles of morality, composition, drawing, manual training, physical education, and domestic science. The Department of Education favors a "progressive" approach. It has established experimental village schools where an attempt is made to blend book learning with everyday living. Most teachers, however, were trained under and utilize the French system which stresses teacher authority, class discipline, and rote learning.

The four-year course of the First Division of the secondary school system is divided into classical and modern sections. Students of both sections study a number of basic subjects but those in the classical section study classical Vietnamese literature while those choosing the modern section study French or English. The three-year course of the Second Division continues the general pattern of the first, but gives students the option of continuing their language studies or of substituting programs of natural science or of mathematics and philosophy.

The goal of secondary education is the stiff baccalaureate examination, passed by about one of every 200 students entered in the elementary schools. The baccalaureate is required for admission to the five-year university program or to the advance technical schools; it confers upon its holder something of the status and respect formerly accorded the "Budding Genius" under the Mandarin system. The Vietnamese baccalaureate represents a standard at least as high as the completion of two years at the best American universities.

In addition to public schools at the primary and secondary levels, private schools (both religious and secular), educate many students. These schools follow the public school curriculum and are regulated and subsidized by the Department of Education. There also has been a special school system for Chinese. Under a recent agreement the French Government will continue to operate its own primary and secondary schools leading to the French baccalaureate. In addition, there are a number of normal schools, which provide high school teachers; an industrial technical school of applied arts, where the traditional fine arts of Vietnam are taught: goldsmithing, lacquer work, cabinet work, and tapestry making.

At the university level, the National University of Vietnam, in Saigon, is the most important, teaching subjects ranging from the sciences to the liberal arts. The university has a Faculty of Jurisprudence, a Faculty of Medicine, a Faculty of Letters teaching Vietnamese literature, philosophy, and history, and advanced Schools of Engineering and Education.

Its scholastic standards are high. There also are universities at Dalat and Hue as well as several technical schools of university rank, including an Institute of Public Administration operated in Saigon by Michigan State University.

Higher education in foreign countries is greatly sought by advanced students. The Vietnamese Government grants passports for study abroad to students taking courses not offered in Vietnam, and in any year at least 1,000 to 1,500 Vietnamese students will be studying abroad; perhaps half of this number in France, a smaller group in the United States, and substantial numbers in Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, India, and Indonesia.

Cultural expression*. The casual visitor to Vietnam is prone all too hastily to conclude that the people are not ethnically an individual people but are more or less Chinese and, therefore, all manifestations of culture, Chinese. Nothing could be more removed from the truth.

Olov T. Janse, in his "Vietnam-Crossroads of Peoples and Civilization" indicates cultural fusions of many native and foreign elements which can be traced to the Near East, to Southeast Europe, and to the Greco-Roman Orient dating back to the first centuries before and after the beginning of the Christian Era. History records the foundation of the Empire of Champa in 192 A. D., which also impressed its influence on the Vietnamese until 1471, when they were completely assimilated by the Vietnamese. The most recent influence, that of the French, although for a brief ninety years, may be seen in their own form of wit used by the Vietnamese to discomfit the Gaul. However, the most patent and oft-quoted influence is that of the Chinese with their impact of Confucianism and Taoism; the Indian with their Buddhist diffusion, and the West with the introduction of Christianity and western thought.

The Vietnamese are the first to accept the statement made by George Condominas as published in the Journal France-Asia to the effect that "the virile originality of Vietnam emerges in all spheres. There is no question of minimizing Chinese influence, which is preponderant, but which is not absolute. The main reason it appears to be absolute is that the majority of works intended for the general public seem to give the impression that the cultural personality of Vietnam has been suffocated by Chinese culture, of which it is alleged to be nothing more than an integral part".

*Introduction to Vietnamese Culture, Nguyen Khac Kham, Department of Education, Republic of Vietnam

The Vietnamese do not deny the Chinese cultural influence any more than they deny that of the Hindu and the influence of both on the language, customs, manners, social organizations, art and beliefs of modern Vietnam. The Vietnamese attitude toward all influences is that they "will absorb all the opposing currents of Occidental art just as they gratuitously absorbed or accepted by force the multiple elements of Chinese culture and made use of these to build their own culture and to maintain their own originality".

Many questions designing to resolve the colorful past of the Vietnamese remain unanswered, but there is one conclusion to which all who know them intimately will agree - The Vietnamese are definitely Vietnamese.

Architecture. The classic approach of the architect is an overriding respect for the hand of a divine providence as expressed in the natural universe surrounding him. He does not try to dominate, but rather to adapt his design to nature and instead of exulting over a triumph over nature, he exults in his attempt toward a harmony with it. Following the traditional Far Eastern pattern the architect multiplies and combines the varied aspects of the natural surroundings. It is this arrangement with nature that accounts for the indefinite repetition of Oriental themes without the eye becoming tired.

The finest specimens of architecture are found in the temples, pagodas, and tombs any of which feature pillared porches, peaked gables, gracefully sweeping eaves and corners. Vertical lines are rarely accentuated.

The modern section of such cities as Saigon, Hue, Dalat, Nha Trang, and Danang look like small towns in southern France. Saigon is beginning to lose its French flavor and has begun to take on a more or less cosmopolitan aspect. Most villages are nondescript and commonly are made up of single-storied buildings with thatched roofs and mat or sun-baked mud walls.

The true classical architecture may be best seen at the tombs of the emperors at Hue, the old Imperial capital of the nation, around which one finds a true union between the work of nature and the work of man.

Theater. There are three types of dramatic art: the "hat boi" or classical which is essentially tragic and steeped in the great dramas of Chinese history, the "cheor co", simplified version of the "hat boi" and the "cai luong" or modern theater.

"In the true classical theater there is no stage scenery, curtain, or lighting effects. Wooden panels usually form the background of the stage. There are two openings -- one for the entrance of the characters and the other for their exit. On the stage itself there is little or no furniture. At the most there will be a table and a few seats to indicate that an important meeting is about to take place, in which case, a gourd, a few small cups, a sword in its golden sheath, a square golden box symbolizing power, and five small flags in various colors are placed on the table. Everything is as simplified as possible. The very actors have to limit themselves to a certain number of exacting rules. The importance of convention is so great that the audience is certain to participate in the acting of the artists since it knows the gestures, movements, and rules by heart.

"The modern theater was born in South Vietnam in about 1920. It tackles romanticism from the beginning but also has a great deal of realism. Music is very important, for the ears must be pleased as are the eyes with sets and costumes. A certain number of tunes composed long ago by renowned artists govern the songs. A good modern play reminds the spectator of a movie because of the diversity of scenes which succeed one another in a single performance.

"Unlike the classical theater the modern theater does not give its characters the traditional virtues. The characters are much more human in the sense that they are flesh and blood people like common mortals. The superhuman element which even becomes inhuman with too much greatness is seldom found in the modern theater. Heroism remains within human limits and comprehensible to the public."

Music, which is most popularly found in connection with the theater, is based on the pentatonic scale of five notes and two semi-notes which correspond to the 6-key C Major diatonic scale of western music minus the F and B notes thereof. It finds expression in an array of instruments which have such particular characteristics that their origin and antiquity are self-evident. Instruments may be classed into four categories such as string, wind, diaphragm, and percussion.

Repertories may be divided into the Allegro or "dieu bac" (northern tunes) and the Lento or "dieu nam" (southern tunes). A classical band includes the double-string "don kim", the three-string "don ty ba", the sixteen-string "don tranh", the single-string "don co". In the classical theater, bands consisting of drums, gongs, and the two-string "don co" do not aim at creating harmony but only stress the acting with lamentos for sad parts and noisy, barbarous tunes for tragedies.

Literature. Most of the poetry and prose of the first independent national dynasty was written by Buddhist bonzes who exchanged their

verse with the great poets of China. From the time of the Ly Dynasty Sino-Vietnamese literature was marked by distinguished writers, but literary works cited as representative are either completely Chinese in inspiration, or imitations thereof. However, as in all matters, the peoples' wish for independence of thought from the Chinese preserved their own national literary identity by committing to memory their own literary efforts in the vernacular and then handed down to successive generations of poets. There are a few examples of this popular literature which existed prior to the Ly Dynasty.

Themes are varied with three readily identifiable influences: first, that of India with the illusion of the world, the beauty of isolation, the vanity of honor and riches, the eternal decline of things:

Second, that of China exalting the social virtues, filial piety, loyalty to the king, the good man's ideal:

The third, that of the people with their ordinary feelings, especially love, their joys and sorrows.

In all Vietnamese poetry, it is not the poet who identifies himself with nature, but a nature of symbols which is identified with the poet. This lyricism reached its perfection in a poem entitled "Kim Van Kieut" which ends with:

"When we are still under the effects of Karma
We must not be too quick to murmur against Heaven
For the source of Happiness dwells in our heart."

With the Kim Van Kieut, classical poetry reached its peak and to the present day no other poem has usurped its place as the Vietnamese poem.

Modern poetry brought youth with its power, its direct language, its sense of observation and its overflow of exhilaration. With the introduction of Christianity came individual creative intelligence, liberty, and infinite love. The French Revolution, with its idea of right being complimentary to that of duty, struck a blow to feudal structures and with that the rigid framework of the old forms of poetry fell to pieces. The final coup de grace came with the introduction of the Roman alphabet. In 1930, a group of young poets founded a literary movement which appealed to the elite, and modern poetry, with its demands for freedom of expression, freedom of inspiration and a place for romanticism, was born. A young poet of the new school has proclaimed his joy of Life:

"I want to clasp the scudding clouds and the fluttering wind,
To absorb in one countless kiss
Mountains and rivers and trees,

And the grass of the fields, dew-pearled,
To intoxicate myself with perfumes,
Fill myself with light
O rose springtime
I want to bite into you!"

Handicraft. The greater portion of commodities for decorative purposes are produced by artisans endowed with patience, ingenuity, and resourcefulness in cultural self-expression in tin, pewter, copper, bronze, silver, gold lacquer, wood, marble, tiles, ceramics, cotton, jute, silk, ivory, tortoise shell, and leather.

Metal workers in tin, copper, pewter, silver, and gold, traditionally squat on the floor or sit on a low stool to do their work, using their hands and feet with incomparable dexterity. Tools are the simplest form of files, light hammers, scissors, soldering irons, charcoal burner, blow-pipe or hand bellows. Most fine jewelry and precious metal work is engraved with intricate designs of dragons, flowers, birds, bamboo trees and ideographs.

Coppersmiths inherited their trade from Khong Lo, a Vietnamese Buddhist bonze who invented the process during the reign of Emperor Tran Thai Ton (1225-1258). They produce bells, trays, boxes, vases, Buddha statues, bowls and containers of variable shapes and sizes.

Embroidery was introduced by Le Cong Hanh, a Mandarin at the court of Emperor Le Chieu Ton, who was sent to China to find new trades but instead became so interested in embroidery that he remained long enough to study it with a view of teaching it to his village. Today this art is widespread. Embroidered silks are often given to young men and young women on the occasion of their marriage, or to a man on his appointment to an important post or upon the successful achievement of a goal. Designs vary with the purpose of the donor. To an official on his appointment to a higher post, the picture might show a Mandarin working or reading at his desk. A sentence expressing respect, congratulations and success is included. In pagodas, temples, and at altars embroideries might show fabulous animals, dragons, unicorns, turtles, phoenix or the fierce sacred tigers. An old man is often presented, on the anniversary of his birthday, with the picture of five bats symbolizing the five sources of happiness: wealth, health, longevity, tranquility and a quiet death.

Mat weaving, as a craft, was introduced in 1005 A. D. by Pham Don Le, a Mandarin who served in China as Ambassador of Emperor Le Dai Hanh. Upon his return to Vietnam, he resigned from his position and established the art in the village of Hai Thien. A temple to his achievements was erected as a token of gratitude by the villagers.

Traditional decorations on mats depict the ideograph for longevity in the center of the mat, flanked by four bats (happiness) or butterflies in the corners.

Pottery is said by some to have been introduced at the beginning of the Christian Era. The best, however, is the Tho Ha (village) perfected by descendants of Truong Trung Ai who learned his trade from a Chinese in the reign of Emperor Trieu Vu De (207-137 B. C.). Potters pride themselves for their traditional and classical designs of landscapes, flowers, birds, grasses, insects and people on vases, pots, bowls, cups and plates. It is the custom of pottery designers to omit their names from designs created by them. However, ideographs may be placed on wares to indicate the manufacturer's trade (Hall) mark or firm name.

Silk weavers inherited their trade from Phung Khac Khoan, a man of letters and an Ambassador to China during the reign of Emperor Le Kinh Ton in 1600 who, on his return from China, established the industry in Phung Xa, his native village which still produces the finest silks. Silks are classed as Lua Van (brocaded with flowers), Voc (also brocaded but of better quality), Xuyen (light and soft without design), Nhieu (heavy quality) and satin.

Lacquer work was introduced during the reign of Emperor Le Nhan Ton (1443-1460) by Tran Trung Cong who learned of its intricacies in the Chinese Province of Ho Ham which was noted for its outstanding achievements in the art. Most items to be lacquered are made of wood, but leather, cloth and paper can be used as a base.

The art of inlay with pearl or mother of pearl in wood is indigenous to the country having been developed by Nguyen Kim during the reign of Emperor Le Hien Ton (1740-1787 A. D.). Objects decorated with inlay include altars for pagodas, temples and churches, tables, chairs, beds, chests of drawers, trays, betel cases, tobacco humidors, screens and panels. Decorations customarily depict birds, storks, herons, cranes, ducks, butterflies, trees, grasses, flowers, landscapes and details of every day life.

Votive paper making is perhaps the most unique of all handicrafts.

On commemorative days of heroes and heroines, mannequins are made to represent their soldiers and carriages as well as horses and elephants used at war.

Painting in general continues to bear the heavy influence of the traditional Chinese. Modern influences of the Renaissance and French modern techniques have brought fame to a few artists. Chinese style consists dominantly of scrolls on which are inscribed sentiments, mottoes and sayings of the artists.

Painting as it is viewed in the galleries of Western countries is still in its infancy. However, interest in painting in its western form is growing more and more as young people undertake its study at the universities or abroad.

Sculpture shows the same influences as are seen in painting, but with a third, that of the Cham, gives strength and a realism which is not found in the Chinese or French. Like paintings, sculptures are found in temples and pagodas, as objects for private and public worship.

Ancient carvings, made on a composition of sand, paper, molasses and lime from oyster shell, may still be seen in many of the pagodas and temples throughout the country. However, the finest work may be found in the marble, limestone and sandstone banisters, stele, and on the gravestones and pillars in the private burial grounds throughout the country, at the Imperial Tombs at Hue, and in temples erected as tokens of gratitude to the initiators of handicraft and to the great men.

The same may be said about wood carving as has been said about sculpture. The most striking pieces of carving are found in chairs, tables, beds, screens, columns, and pillars. Motifs are generally four bats (happiness), squirrels climbing toward bunches of grapes, fierce dragons, birds standing on tree branches, ducks flying above water, storks and cranes standing on the borders of streams, flowers, and the inevitable ideograph for long life. In temples and pagodas, as on items used for funerals, carvings are brilliantly decorated in gold leaf and red lacquer.

Religion. The religious atmosphere of the country is characterized by tolerance for the many beliefs and teachings which are observed by the people. With no distinct lines of demarcation between most of the various religions which are practiced, one person may hold as many related or unrelated beliefs or combinations thereof as he wishes without incurring censure. Places of worship are not necessarily consecrated for the sole use of a single faith. In the cities the Buddhist pagoda or temple may be used for the observance of a Taoist rite or any other, except those religions which require special consecrated edifices. It is not unusual to witness religious manifestations of one belief mingled with manifestations of one or more other teachings or beliefs. Thanks to the Constitution of 1956, there is absolute religious freedom, with no one religion or belief recognized as the national belief. In this atmosphere of freedom, the Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Catholic, Protestant and Spirit Worshipper lead a free life.

Buddhism. The very essence of Buddhism is the Law of Karma which states that man is reincarnated and rewarded in the next life for his good deeds in this life, and punished for his bad ones. Wisdom lies in the suppression of desires which are the root of human suffering. The

ultimate reward is the attainment of Nirvana, when the soul of man returns to the World-Soul and ceases to be reincarnated.

There are two major branches of Buddhism: the Mahayana or Greater Vehicle, and the Hinayana or Lesser Vehicle. While both branches are represented, Vietnamese Buddhists generally adhere to the Mahayana which allows certain variations from the original Hinayana doctrine. In contrast to the adherents of the Hinayana, the Mahayana Buddhists do not place special importance on the teachings of the original Buddha (Gautama Buddha) considering him only one of the many Buddhas (Enlightened Ones) who are regarded as manifestations of the fundamental divine power of the universe. Theoretically, any person may become a Buddha, but those who actually attain Buddhahood are rare. Saints who earnestly strive for such perfection are known as "bodhisattvas". The Buddhist doctrine states that (I) Everything is transient, miserable, and not self-contained. The whole universe is subject to change. This is the Doctrine of Anatta. (II) All beings are born according to their good and evil deeds, each merely consisting of what he has thought, spoken, and done before. Birth, death, and rebirth are but manifestations of one and the same individual life stream which will continue until the individual has destroyed the "Thirst for Existence and Ignorance". This is the Doctrine of Karma and Rebirth. (III) The Doctrine of the Four Noble Truths which constitutes the essence of Buddha's teachings, comprise the "Truth of Suffering", its origin, its cessation and the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the cessation of Suffering.

Buddhists hold that the origin of Suffering is the Threefold Craving of sexual desire, the desire to live, and the desire not to be what one dislikes, and that all can be conquered by following the Noble Eightfold Path of Enlightenment: Right Understanding, Right Speech, Right Living, Right Attentiveness, Right Mindedness, Right Action, Right Effort and Right Concentration.

Confucianism. The philosophy of the Chinese sage K'ung Fu-Tze or Confucius, is set forth in four classical books and in five canonical books. By a collection of rigid rules, it determines the attitude which every man in society should adopt to guide his relationships as an individual with his superiors, and equally with his wife, friends and inferiors.

The doctrine dictates a moral code which advocates the Middle-Way (Trung-Dung) for the worthy man's behavior. From this springs the command against exaggeration in one way or another, and every man's duty to maintain an even temper and to show himself just and fair at all times. According to the doctrine, disorders which arise in a social group spring from improper conduct on the part of individual members of that society. Achievement of harmony through adaptation is therefore the first duty of every Confucian. Early scholars concluded that the awe

and respect felt for the father of a family was the natural force upon which all society was built and that all society should be brought into proper order on the basis of filial piety (hieu).

In death the Confucian is revered as an ancestor who is joined to nature forever. It was through ancestor-worship that Confucius won the hearts of his people. One of the main precepts of his doctrine of hieu, in addition to filial piety, commanded children to worship the memory of their ancestors.

The principal manifestation of this culture is the maintenance of tombs and especially the worship which takes place in the family's temple before tablets recording the four preceding generations. The deceased of the family, as represented by these tablets, are worshipped at least five times a year: on the anniversary of death, Lunar New Year, the third day of the third month, the fifth day of the fifth month, Mid-Autumn Day and the ninth day of the ninth month. Through the family ritual at the altar in the home, the Vietnamese impress upon their children the unity and continuity of the family, and through the solemnity of the ritual dramatize and reinforce the basic value of filial obedience.

Taoism is derived from the doctrines of Dao or Tao, of Lao Tzu, and is based on man's participation in the universal order. This, admitted as reality, depends in essence on the equilibrium between the two elements of Ying and Yang, which are simply the eternal duality of nature, i. e., action and reaction, liquid and solid, concentration and expansion, substance and spirit, cold and heat.

The Taoist refrains from troubling the natural order of things; he conforms to it in every circumstance. He condemns all initiative which can be considered futile, from whence springs the disdain he shows for active life (yem-the); therein lies the basis of the doctrine of "non-action" (vo-vi) and freedom from concern (nhan). The supreme divinity is the Emperor of Jade (Ngoc-Hoang) who, together with his ministers of Birth and Death, rules the destiny of men.

Taoism today is not regarded by the Vietnamese as a religion although many, particularly the villagers, believe in its gods, goddesses, rites, and in its priests who are regarded by the people as skilled diviners and magicians and as outstanding adepts in controlling the spirit-world through intercession with Taoist gods.

Cao Daism sprang up in South Vietnam at the beginning of the 20th century. It was founded by Phy Ngo can Chieu, one-time administrative delegate of Phu-Quoc, a holy missionary passionately devoted to spiritualism. It can be best described as an attempt toward a synthesis of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Christianity.

It considers the principal founders of all religions to be simply the successive reincarnations at different times and in different countries of the one and only deity. It preaches "faith in one God" and recognizes the existence of the soul and its successive reincarnations, as it does the consequences after death of human actions controlled by the Law of Karma. It teaches respect for the dead, the culture of the family, love of good and of justice, the practice of virtue and relinquishment. It looks for the advent of a Messiah to rebuild on earth the vanished golden age.

The Hoa Hao is a Buddhist sect which advocates simplification of ritual and abolition of temples and intermediaries, thus opening the way for followers to enter into direct communication with Almighty God.

Christianity. Most Christians in Vietnam are Catholics. The first missionaries arrived at the beginning of the 14th century, but it was not until the 16th or 17th that permanent missionaries were established through the efforts of the Spanish and Portuguese Roman Catholic priests. As a result of the persistent efforts of the Jesuit order and the Society of Overseas Missions, frequently in the face of persecution by emperors who feared western political and economical control, approximately 10 percent of present day population are Catholics.

Protestant missions have operated in the country since World War I. Their activities were limited in the main to the mountain tribes of the high plateaus. With the gradual rise of American aid programs and influence there has been an increase in activity in the lowlands. Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist missions now exist in several cities.

Language. *

The Vietnamese language is spoken by about seven-eighths of the population. French is the second language of the educated and English slowly is becoming the third.

There is considerable disagreement as to the origin of the Vietnamese language. The situation is summed up best by Nguyen Dinh Hoa of the Faculty of Letters, Saigon University, when he says "For our purpose, at least two facts are certain. On the one hand, the Vietnamese lexicon has in common with the Cambodian (Khmer) several nouns denoting parts of the human body, members of the kinship system, species of local flora and fauna, farm tools as well as some pronouns and some numerals. On the other hand, Vietnamese has the same final consonants as Thai, and like Thai it makes use of pitch level and tone contours. Given these two undeniable facts, the

Source: The Vietnamese Language, Nguyen Dinh Hoa, Faculty of Letters, University of Saigon, Vietnamese Culture Series, No. 2, Department of National Education, Saigon.

question is whether we are dealing with a monotonal Mon-Khmer language which later borrowed tones from Thai, or with a Thai language which incorporated a considerable part of the Mon-Khmer vocabulary. In either case, one has a mixed language, and it is safe to stop all speculations about the genetic relationship of Vietnamese until comparative work is well done within each of the above families. "

Until the creation of its Romanized script, the Vietnamese used the Chinese Chur Nho or scholar's script in all governmental transactions as well as in education, correspondence and literature. It wasn't until the seventeenth century, when Spanish, Portugese, Italian, and French Catholic missionaries undertook the task, that a Romanized script evolved. It became known as "quoc ngu" or national language. It was not until 1920, that Vietnamese was recognized as the official language and it was through the medium of education in primary schools, that the new script took hold. Since then it has been truly national and in a large measure responsible for the spread of popular education and the intellectual development of the country.

Grammar in the western sense does not exist. When reproducing an English sentence all superfluous words are eliminated and the sentence is reduced to a "minimum-word" structure. There is no change of form to show distinction of case, gender, number, tense, person, mode or voice.

Health

Traditional Vietnamese attitudes toward disease and sickness are linked closely to conceptions of the spirit-world and its influence upon daily life. Modern medical practice has gained a ready acceptance among those exposed to western influence. Under French rule, the Vietnamese became accustomed to French health officers and doctors; they continue to respect foreign doctors in general, although they feel more at ease with western-trained doctors of their own nationality. Even before the arrival of the French, there were Vietnamese who dismissed with skepticism the spirit theory of medicine and its sorcerers and village priests. This minority furnished the so-called "Chinese doctor" (who might be either Chinese or Vietnamese), using methods of treatment, and herbs and drugs developed by the Chinese through thousands of years of experience and experimentation. The Chinese doctor is sometimes the village scholar who practices medicine as a sideline; more often he is a professional practitioner who maintains a shop in the market place. His remedies often are exotic but many contain ingredients found in the prescriptions of western-trained physicians. These men continue to play an important part in Vietnamese medical care.

The problem of malaria sometimes is exaggerated; many are inclined to classify different fever-producing ailments under this category. Actually, it is serious only in the upland regions, which takes in more than half of the area of Vietnam but less than one-tenth of the population. Large parts of the densely populated lowland areas, including the city of Saigon, are free of malaria-bearing mosquitoes.

Control of insects and rodents is another problem, as is public and individual sanitation. The average village has neither a safe water supply nor any regular system for disposing garbage and human excreta except through its collection and use as fertilizer; measures taken to protect food from insect contamination are few.

Since achieving independence, the Department of Public Health has been established in the national government which includes a Sanitary Police Service. The department is charged with the direction of hospitals, health protection, and public sanitation. The government has instituted intensive programs of public health treatment and education, and fully utilized the still scarce medical and hospital facilities through outpatient clinics, and mobile health units.

Government sponsored education in public health is enjoying good results. Much of the urban population now boil drinking water and great progress has been made in obtaining cooperation by the people in disposal of sewage and garbage.

The following information on health and medical conditions has been provided by Walter Reed Army Medical Center Institute of Research.

Animals of Medical Importance

Predatory. Tigers, leopards and bears constitute a hazard to man in South Vietnam although the number of persons attacked is not great. In addition, there is a species of crocodile living in the estuaries of the southern part of the country which attacks and kills a number of people each year.

Snakes. There are many species of poisonous snakes in South Vietnam. The most important of these are the cobras, the related kraits, and the vipers.

Rodents. Great numbers of rats, mice, voles, squirrels, and other rodents are found in South Vietnam. The most common rat is the black rat but the brown rat is prevalent in the port cities. At periodic intervals the bamboo rat appears in hordes and plays havoc with the crops.

VARIOUS POISONOUS SNAKES

<u>COBRAS</u>		
Asiatic	<i>Naja naja</i>	May reach 6 feet in length; yellowish to dark brown with black and white spot beneath hood on either side; nervous and excitable; venom neurotoxic.
Black	<i>Naja melanoleuca</i>	About 7 feet in length when full grown; black, glassy scales; readily excited; venom neurotoxic.
King	<i>Naja hannah</i>	Sometimes 12 feet in length; olive or yellowish brown with ring-like black cross bands; will attack without provocation; venom neurotoxic.
<u>KRAITS</u>		
Common	<i>Bungarus candidus</i>	Four to five feet long; dark brown or black; smooth, lustrous scales with pale cross bands; venom neurotoxic.
Banded	<i>Nungarus fasciatus</i>	Similar to common krait but has bright yellow rings.
<u>VIPERS</u>		
Pit	<i>Agkistrodon rhodostoma</i>	Two to five feet long; angular dark brown blotches with black edges on a reddish-brown background; head like a javelin tip, wide at rear with pointed snout; venom hemolytic.
Russell	<i>Vipera russellii</i>	Under 5 feet; pale brown with three rows of large black rings; venom hemolytic; bites more people and causes more deaths than any snake in Asia.
<u>WATER SNAKE</u>	Hydridae family	At least ten poisonous species found in coastal waters.

Fish. In the coastal waters there are several kinds of fish capable of injecting venom through their spines. These inflict painful stings and, in some instances, cause death. Sharks are also found along the coast.

Leeches. Perhaps the worst pest of the jungles and forests is the land leech. It is found clinging to the grass and underbrush along trails and around water holes waiting to attach to the passerby. Although the bite is painless and there is no transmission of disease, continuous bleeding results. If infection occurs, ulcers may develop at the site of attachment. Aquatic leeches are also known to be present but they are not so ubiquitous or annoying.

Mollusks. Snails are abundant, particularly along the inland waterways and in the paddy fields. Their medical importance is due to their role as intermediate hosts of schistosomiasis. In the southern coastal waters several species of marine mollusks are found, some of which can inflict a painful and even fatal sting.

Mosquitoes. Anopheles. There are at least six which have been shown definitely to be vectors of malaria and it is not certain that all of these transmit malaria. The six species are: Anopheles minimum, A. jeyporiensis candidiensis, A. maculatus maculatus, A. sinensis, A. aconitus, and A. sundaicus. Most of the malaria in areas below 1,500 feet of elevation is said to be transmitted by A. minimum. This species breeds in the moving water and streams and at the edges of paddy fields and borrow pits. A. jeyporiensis candidiensis is an important vector in the foothills and A. maculatus is noted for its tendency to become particularly abundant in newly cleared jungle areas. A. sinensis has been reported to occur in the southern part of the country. It is not an efficient vector and has an extremely low infection rate. This mosquito is also capable of acting as a vector of filariasis. A. aconitus breeds in rice fields and ponds and is suspected of being a malaria vector in southern Annam which is now the northern part of South Vietnam. A. sundaicus breeds only in brackish water and this limits its distribution to the southern coasts.

Aedes. Both the Aedes aegypti and A. albopictus are found in South Vietnam. They are capable of transmitting dengue, but their relative importance as vectors is undetermined.

Culex. The following species of Culex mosquitoes have been identified and are of medical importance: Culex quinquefasciatus (C. fatigans) is the most common and annoying. It is a vector of filariasis. C. gelidus occurs and is suspected of being a vector of Japanese encephalitis in this area. C. tritaeniorhynchus is present and it may also be a vector of Japanese encephalitis.

Insects. The ubiquitous house fly is quite prevalent. Horse flies and deer flies are quite troublesome from May to October. Blow flies are reported to transmit myiasis. A number of species of sandflies have been reported. These were found between the 15th and 25th parallels. Many of the people are infested with lice. The head louse, the body louse and the crab louse are all known to be present. The human flea (Pulex irritans) and the rat fleas (Xenopsylla cheopsis and X. astia) are found. X. cheopsis is known to be the chief vector of plague and murine typhus. P. irritans can also transmit plague under favorable circumstances and X. astia can transmit both plague and typhus. It is known that ticks are present but they have not been classified. Tick-borne diseases have not been reported, yet they are probably present. Trombiculid mites are known to be present but no information is available on their numbers or distribution. They are known to be vectors of scrub typhus. Of the many species of spiders found, only one, a large hairy spider (Felenocosmia), can be considered of medical importance. The bite of this spider is painful but not fatal. The scorpion (Palamnacus indicus) is capable of producing a painful swelling by its bite. Ants, termites, bedbugs, and cockroaches are all present. These are not known to have any medical importance.

Plants of Medical Importance

Medicinal Plants. The cinchona tree from whose bark quinine is produced grows in the high plateau areas. The hydrocorpus tree from which chaulmoogra oil is produced also is found. The areca palm bears the betel nut.

Toxic Plants. There is a large tree called the sack tree or "Bohun upas" (Antiarus Toxicaria) which has a poisonous sap used as an arrow poison. This tree grows to a height of 100 feet and has leaves similar to those of the elm.

Many kinds of taro root are found. These plants have large leaves resembling elephant ears. Certain varieties of this plant are poisonous unless properly cooked. The toxin is a poisonous glycoside which is present in greater quantity in the late summer before the end of the rainy season. The manioc or cassava also has a root containing both glycoside and an enzyme which interact to form prussic acid. This root can be eaten if properly cooked.

Several species of poisonous nettles grow in the southern part of the country. These plants, which reach a height of 10 to 15 feet, have pointed, heart-shaped leaves with toothed or serrated edges which contain poisonous hairs. Contact with these hairs produces a painful eruption.

Water

About one-third of the population are said to have access to a potable water supply. Public supply systems are found only in the larger cities and most communities obtain their water from ponds, streams, canals, and shallow wells. These are often contaminated. Most wells are unprotected and many are subject to inundation during the rainy season. In some sections, rain water is collected in cisterns and jars and used for drinking. Visitors are advised to boil or use disinfectant tablets in all water before drinking. It is Vietnamese custom to drink water in the form of tea. This custom ensures that the water will be boiled before drinking.

Sanitation and Waste Disposal

Sewage and waste disposal systems are found only in the larger cities and available details of these systems are fragmentary and oftentimes contradictory. Most raw sewage is discharged into the rivers. Human excreta have never been used extensively to fertilize the fields. However, it is possible this practice may have been introduced in recent years by Chinese refugees from North Vietnam.

Provision has been made for garbage collection in the larger cities but the standard of operation is not satisfactory. Garbage is placed in open containers, collected in open carts, and transported to dumps. These practices permit the growth of hugh fly and rat populations.

In rural areas, considerable effort has been made to construct pit privies, but progress is slow. It will be some years before excreta disposal facilities in these areas may be considered adequate.

There are sanitary regulations governing the operation of markets, restaurants and other eating places in the larger cities. These regulations are not strictly enforced and visitors should be careful to eat only recently cooked food while it is still hot.

Diseases of South Vietnam

Reports of the disease incidence are likely to be misleading. Western medicine is not the sole system of healing in this country and it is probable that the majority of the people receive their medical care from practitioners of so-called traditional medicine. This complicates attempts to obtain accurate data of disease incidence. In addition, facilities are not sufficient for the laboratory diagnosis of many diseases and reliance must be placed on clinical diagnoses. To make the task of evaluation even more difficult, partition of Vietnam did not take place until 1954. Until that time, health reports did not distinguish between North

and South Vietnam and the disease incidence in the two parts of Vietnam are by no means similar.

Estimates of infant mortality are in the neighborhood of 255 per 1,000 live births. If this statistic is applied to the number of births there would be expected over 100,000 deaths under 1 year of age. This is more than were reported at all ages. The life expectancy at birth is said to be 35 years.

There can be no doubt the important disease problems are enteric disease, malaria, tuberculosis, respiratory disease, parasitic infections and dietary deficiencies. Visitors should be aware that they are subject not only to the known diseases of the country but also to other conditions such as infectious hepatitis, which produce widespread inapparent infection in the local population. It may reasonably be assumed that much of the inapparent disease occurs in children and that the result is a relatively immune adult population. Thus, these diseases are more likely to appear among susceptible visitors than among native adults.

Deficiency Diseases. Because of the inadequacy in the diet of most of the people of Vietnam, deficiency diseases are quite common. The most prevalent forms are protein and vitamin A and B deficiency. Beriberi occurs but is not so common as might be expected because the rice in the rural areas is not so highly polished and still retains some of the husk containing vitamin B. Thus, beriberi is more prevalent in the cities where the highly polished rice is eaten. Nightblindness, keratomalacia, and xerophthalmia and kwashiorkor all occur. A survey disclosed that nearly 60 percent of the population examined in some areas showed an angular stomatitis. The exact cause of this condition is not known but it is probably dietary in origin, although it was not found in all members of affected families. Goiter, due to iodine deficiency, is found in the mountain regions.

Communicable Diseases

Enteric Diseases. Acute enteric diseases are very common and reflect the sanitary conditions and hygienic habits of the population. Both bacillary and amebic dysentery occur and there are many cases of the so-called common diarrheas. Lack of adequate refrigeration favors the development of food poisoning and salmonella infections are commonplace. Typhoid fever undoubtedly occurs but accurate statistics are not available. It is probable that enteric diseases constitute the greatest health hazard.

Malaria. Malaria remains among the greatest causes of morbidity. As a result of antimalarial campaigns, the incidence is now low around Saigon and in the delta of the Mekong River. However, malaria remains hyperendemic in the mountains and there are a large number of cases

reported between June and November.

Intestinal Parasites (Helminthiasis). Hookworm disease is almost universal among the rural population and the proportion of people infected with round worms (Ascaris lumbricoides and Stringyloides stercoralis) is extremely high. The pork tapeworm (Taenia solium) is common. The beef tapeworm (Taenia saginata) and the whipworm (Trichuris trichiura) are found less frequently.

Common Respiratory Diseases occur quite commonly. Influenza appears from time to time in epidemic form. Bronchitis and pneumonia are not rare.

Tuberculosis. Tuberculosis rivals malaria and the enteric diseases as a cause of incapacitation and death. The high prevalence of tuberculosis is a result of the low economic level of the general population. Pulmonary tuberculosis is the most frequent form and tuberculous meningitis accounts for many cases, particularly in children.

Venereal Diseases. As would be expected, gonorrhea is most frequently reported with syphilis next. Chancroid and granuloma inguinale are also present.

Yaws. If yaws occurs in South Vietnam, it is rare.

Eye Infections are common. Trachoma is widespread in the northern part of the country but is believed to be less prevalent in the south.

Leprosy. There are approximately 15,000 registered lepers with clinically recognizable leprosy. Treatment of ambulatory registered lepers is provided. However, the present program is inadequate and patients under treatment are poorly supervised.

Smallpox is prevalent and is said to appear in epidemic form every 3 or 4 years. Smallpox control is integrated into the national health program.

Infectious Hepatitis is one of the major disease hazards experienced. An intensive outbreak occurred among Americans stationed there in 1957. It is believed that most Vietnamese acquire immunity to this disease by virtue of experiencing an inapparent or modified attack of infectious hepatitis during childhood. This disease is seldom seen in native adults.

Fluke Infections. The liver flukes Opisthorchis viverrine and Clonorchis sinensis are present.

Tetanus (Lockjaw). This disease is common in both adults and children.

Rabies. Human cases of rabies occur frequently. The main reservoir is the dog population.

Plague. Sporadic cases of plague occur each year. These are mostly in the delta and northern part of the country.

Relapsing Fever. Louse-borne relapsing fever has been reported.

Skin diseases. The prevalence of scabies, fungus infections and tropical ulcers is high.

Acute Communicable Diseases. Most Vietnamese have measles, chickenpox and mumps during childhood. Diphtheria, meningococcal meningitis and scarlet fever are recognized less frequently.

Diseases of Domestic Animals. The following diseases of animals are reported as being widespread in South Vietnam:

Cattle Filariasis, piroplasmiasis, foot and mouth disease, hemorrhagic septicemia, rinderpest. Foot and mouth disease and rinderpest are greatly reduced in incidence but still exist.

Poultry Coccidiosis, Newcastle disease, fowlpox, salmonellosis.

Swine Hog cholera, cysticercosis, pasteurellosis.

Horses Stringles

Dogs Rabies

Public Health Administration. There is a Ministry of Health in the National Government. Responsibility for the administration of health programs, medical care and hospitals, rests with the Directorate General of Public Health under this ministry. There are three Regional Directors of Public Health and each province has a provincial medical officer. Subordinate echelons operate autonomously but receive technical advice and guidance from the Directorate General. At present, there are not enough qualified personnel to staff the health departments; however, this deficiency is being rapidly corrected.

Hospitals. An incomplete listing of the government hospitals tabulates approximately 11,000 hospital beds and these are insufficient to meet the need. Hospital service is largely confined to the cities and

provincial towns. About one-half of the 6,000 villages have first aid stations and the number of these is being rapidly expanded with USOM assistance. In most of the hospitals there are beds for medical, surgical, and maternity patients. Laboratory services are available for routine chemistry and bacteriology. There is usually an X-ray unit available. However, capable technicians are in short supply.

Medical Laboratories. There are three Pasteur Institutes located at Saigon, Dalat, and Nha Trang. These Institutes produce vaccines and sera and provide laboratories in microbiology, pathology, parasitology, malariology and hematology. A regional public health laboratory is located at Ban Me Thuot and the microbiological laboratory at Hue is again operating as the Clifford Henry Jope Memorial Laboratory.

Medical Manpower. In 1958, the Association of Physicians listed 398 members of whom approximately two-thirds were located in Saigon. Ninety percent of these were in government service either in the military or civil branches. Many of the latter are in government hospitals. In the same year, there were listed 58 dentists, 213 pharmacists, 900 to 1,000 nurses, and approximately 200 midwives.

In addition to the above, there were a large number of practitioners of ancient Chinese medicine as well as Vietnamese herb doctors. Because of the shortage of trained medical personnel, the only medical service available to the majority of the Vietnamese population is through these practitioners.

Food. The average Vietnamese daily consumes less than two-thirds the calories consumed by the average American, but problems of actual starvation seldom exist. The Vietnamese is basically a vegetarian, meat being a secondary item in the meal. The diet usually is deficient in proteins, vitamins, and minerals, a situation which lowers general resistance to infectious diseases and is responsible for the occurrence of rickets and beriberi.

Rice is the staple food. The Vietnamese generally prefer polished white rice, a variety in which the outer husk (containing most of the vitamins and protein) has been removed, leaving only the starchy interior. The second most important food is corn, which sometimes serves as the staple food in the absence of rice. This basic diet is supplemented with a variety of local fruits and vegetables when available; the chief sources of protein are soy beans and fish, and a pungent sauce (nuoc mam) made from salt-pickled fish.

The market place in the village and the city, usually is the most conspicuous place of the community. It may be a great covered square as in Saigon, a bus terminal, a local railhead, or a convenient crossroad.

It usually comprises innumerable shops, stalls, and side-walk stalls all crowded side by side where merchants jostle each other, vying for the attention of customers. Along the countryside, a roadside market takes the place of the village or city central market. Usually these consist of a few dilapidated stalls every five or six miles. Unlike the central village market, roadside markets are opened only on certain days during the lunar month--usually the first, the eleventh, and the twenty-first days.

Price tags may be conspicuously displayed in accordance with the law, but they pose no problem for prices seldom are fixed and bargaining is taken for granted, except in the more exclusive shops in the larger cities.

Everything needed by the human being may be found in the market place--always available are stocks of dried and preserved fruits, pots and pans, clothing, hats, shoes, bedding, furniture, medicines, and ad infinitum. Poultry and fish usually are bought alive and killed and dressed on purchase.

The Vietnamese meal. Anyone who has had the experience of partaking of a truly Vietnamese repast is astonished by its culinary excellence whether it is northern, central, or southern style.

Culinary skill is so much a part of a woman's education that during the Moon Festival (8th month of the Lunar Year) in honor of the Moon Goddess, young ladies are afforded the opportunity of preparing their finest edibles ostensibly to be offered to the Moon Goddess but in truth to give the eligible bachelors an opportunity for judging the skill of the young women who have found favor in their eyes. It is the "debut" of the village belles, and the "piece de resistance" is the Banh Trung Thu (Moon Festival Cakes) shaped like the round full moon.

A middle-class meal whether breakfast, lunch, dinner or supper, consist of four basic types of food--one salted, one fried or roasted, a vegetable soup, and rice.

Rice is basic for every meal. Its preparation is the most important responsibility of all women. When a young bride comes to live with her husband's family her rice pot will determine her skill at cooking. It is a bad omen if her rice is overboiled or half-burned. This is interpreted as bad luck for her husband and his family. If there is too much rice left in the pot after the meal has been served and all have eaten, she is said to be a spendthrift. If she has not boiled enough to satiate the family she is miserly. Her failure at cooking rice can also have bad influence on the reputation of her mother who will be accused by her in-laws of having neglected her daughter's education.

Meats. Although Buddhism condemns killing of any living thing, animals, fowl, etc., are killed for food. In towns and cities the butchering is done commercially, but in the villages this must be done by the women in the case of small creatures, and by the men when larger animals are concerned.

Pork is consumed far more than beef and poultry. Many dishes are prepared using the tongue, liver, kidney, heart, stomach, and bowels. The latter being used for making chao tong, special sausage with pork blood (chao tong). A much appreciated dish is fresh coagulated pork blood, eaten with specially prepared chopped meat, liver, heart, entrails, etc. It is considered by experienced gourmets (of Vietnam) as nourishing, refreshing, and slightly laxative, especially when consumed in the summer months.

Less beef is consumed than pork. People in towns and cities can buy this meat in the markets, but in villages and on the farms an ox or cow is slaughtered only in exceptional cases--a festival, wedding, etc. The ox, like the cow and water buffalo, is an indispensable work animal used principally for field work.

When beef is consumed it usually is eaten quite rare, sauteed with suet or boiled in water. For daily consumption it is cut into thin slices before cooking and placed on a dish. Boiling water is poured over the slices which then are ready for eating with soybean sauce and ginger.

Wild game is not an important source of food though it is abundant. The Vietnamese hunt either for trophies or to get rid of troublesome animals.

Birds and fowl. Roasted hen: a hen or preferably a capon is dressed and stuffed with aromatic vegetables, seasoned with salt, garlic, and pepper and placed in the oven to be basted from time to time with coconut milk. Sometimes the fowl is immersed completely in coconut milk, and roasted until the milk thickens to the consistency of molasses. Slices of onions and garlic may be placed on top of the fowl for extra flavoring.

Boned hens, filled with meat, chestnuts, mushrooms, and onions is a favorite banquet dish, and is particularly appetizing when basted with pure honey. Some cooks fill the fowl with bamboo shoots.

Wild fowl such as teal, snipe, ducks, pigeons, and sparrows may be ordered in some Chinese restaurants.

Seafoods. More than 300 species of edible fish are caught, of which the most common salt water varieties are the sole, mullet, mackerel, anchovy, sorat, tuna, ray, shark, squid, sardine, cuttlefish, crab, lobster, and shrimp, and of the fresh water varieties the carp, burbot, silurus,

plaices, eel, crab, etc. Turtles also are caught on the beaches and in coastal waters.

Many varied dishes are prepared by Vietnamese women, but for the daily meal the burbot and lote are eaten much more than any other species. They usually are sauteed with onions, mushrooms, and vermicelli, or with tomatoes, salted bamboo shoots, carrots, leeks, etc.

The Silurid often is boiled after being cut into small thin pieces, slightly salted, then pressed between thin bamboo blades and cooked over a charcoal fire. Carp are fried with celery; sole are much appreciated but served generally only at banquets. They are sauteed with a sour sauce made of sugar, vinegar, rice flour and sour-and-sweet soybean sauce. Eel are broiled over a hot fire after being cut into small slices, soaked in a mixture of liquid fat, saffron, galingale, ginger, and salt, then pressed with pieces of raw suet between bamboo blades. They are sometimes wrapped in aromatic leaves and grilled over charcoal. They may be fried with vermicelli or boiled with green bananas, vegetables, saffron, and onions, and consumed with rice paste. Frogs usually are fried after being covered with rice flour.

Vegetables usually grown in Vietnam are the turnip, potato, carrot, sweet potato, manioc, pumpkin, water melon, gourd, aubergine, peanut, sesame, bean, soybean, French and bush bean, water bindweed, onion, leek, garlic, cauliflower, cabbage, mustard, lettuce, celery, persicary, parsley, shallot, fennel, mint, peppermint, saffron, ginger, artichoke, chicory, endive, watercress, beet, pea, chevril, and tarragon. The typically exotic vegetables, much less used by the people but found in the markets, are spinach, asparagus, chicory, endive, strawberry, radish, artichoke, and sorrel.

Vegetables are consumed directly, either boiled or sauteed with meat and fish or with soup (pho). Various soups are prepared mainly with vegetables, to which are added fish (canh ca) crabs (canh cua) (canh rieu), chicken, pork, beef, etc. They also are used, dehydrated and preserved, as paste, or raw and salted as pickles (dira).

Since the people rarely drink tea, coffee or water with their meals the soup (pho) is an indispensable part of every meal. It is one of the most popular soups in the home and sold by the roaming food dispensers patronized by all Vietnamese. It is a most useful dish since it replaces for the Vietnamese, the snack and sandwich of the West. It is peddled everywhere in the country and eaten at any time of the day or night.

Fruit is consumed the year around. Domestic fruits are the banana, apple, pear, grape, pomegranate, plum, pineapple, orange, tangerine, lemon, jujube, grapefruit, mango, durian, papaya, guava,

watermelon, jack fruit, sapodilla plum, coconut, custard apple, rose apple, date, and rambutan. There also are the peach, citron, lichi, iongane, persimmon, and green fig.

Pastry is not developed to such an extent that it constitutes an important part of the diet. French pastry may be found in the homes of city dwellers.

Cakes, the name used by the people to denote their form of bread in pancake or rolled form, commonly are made of glutinous rice. Two kinds usually are made: one, used as a wrapper, is grilled over a fire and eaten with other edibles inserted therein; the other, in flat form, garnished with tasty seeds such as sesame, is eaten as a sweetmeat.

Cakes, when rolled, are filled with boiled meat (nem nuong) fried meat (nem ran) sour meat (nem chua), ham, duck eggs, jam, sweet beans, sesame seed, watermelon seed, lotus seed, chicken, dried beef, fish fins, edible swallow nests or any ingredient which the people accept as suitable for human consumption.

Confections are candied preparations. Almost any fruits, tubers, roots and seeds are candied. Commonly preserved for confections are the orange, lemon, tomato, coconut meat, potato, papaya, pineapple, gourd, carrot, lotus seed, peanut, sesame seed, ginger, pear, apple, peach, citron, tangerine, lichi nut, mango, etc.

Special foods. There are several Chinese dishes which are enjoyed by the Vietnamese. They are the "Long Tu" (Beards of Dragon) being the intestines of select species of fish; the "Vay"(fish fins) and "bao ngu" or abalone (haliotis). However, by far the most prized is the Sea Swallow Nest Soup.

The nests of the Sea Swallow (*collocalia francica germanini*) found in sea-side grottoes, are semioval, about the size of a golf ball, white, pale green, or greyish in color, and made of a series of entangled fibers of a hardened gelatinous substance similar to agar-agar.

The high prices and the choice names given in grading nests may be indicative of the reasons why people take so much risk hunting the nests in the crags and crannies of the seacoast cliffs. They are "Yen Quam"(superquality for Mandarins); second, but not less expensive is "Celestial" quality, and third, the cheapest called "Yen Dia" (earthly quality) is still beyond the reach of the average income earner's table.

Food preservation. With more than a substantial supply of salt and fresh water fish, large amounts are preserved in the form of sauces and pastes. They are either liquid and made of fish (nuoc mam), of

soybean (luong), of crabs (mam cua), or pastes made of shrimp (mam tom, mam tep), or solid in the form of dried fish, dried shrimp, salted duck eggs, etc.

By far the most consumed and basic of all is the "nuoc mam" which is so rich in food value that it is regarded an essential with every meal and with most all food. It is the Vietnamese staple condiment. Due to the high protein content nuoc man supplies consumers with as much protein as can be secured from the consumption of large quantities of meat.

Beverages. Tea is the principal drink in the morning, afternoon, during the day and night, and at any time a visitor arrives. Chinese teas are most appreciated and usually are flavored with lotus (uop sen) or jasmine (uop hnai) flowers. Since Chinese teas are expensive, low income people consume Vietnamese tea (che tuoi) which may be purchased as dried tea (che kho), roasted tea (che man) and dried flower-buds (che nu). Fine tea is universally accepted as a gift under most any circumstance or any occasion.

The use of coffee is limited to those who have spent time abroad or have adopted the European custom of drinking it as "cafe au lait" in the morning or "cafe-noir" (demitasse) at dinner.

Alcohol. Alcoholic liquors are not included in home beverages. European wines are consumed in homes of those who serve a European cuisine, but wines do not lend themselves to use with Vietnamese food.

The Vietnamese alcoholic beverage is principally beer and "ruou rep" which is made from fermented glutinous rice. If it is flavored with lotus flowers, it is called "ruou sen", or with chrysanthemums "ruou cuc".

In towns and cities European liquors such as cognac, whiskey (Scotch), French wines, and Chinese sorghum (mai que lo) may be had in most restaurants. Champagne often is used by the Vietnamese at banquets and ceremonies for toast purposes.

Vietnamese names. Vietnamese names may be confusing to foreigners because not only does the spelling and pronunciation appear complicated, but usages seem complex. Most names consist of a family name, a middle name and a personal or given name. The personal or given name is the one which always is used, NOT the family name.

Take as an example a man whose full name is Nguyen Van Hung. "Nguyen" is the family name which is carried from father to son. It is always placed first; "Van" is the middle name, and "Hung" is the

given name, which is always placed last. Nguyen Van Hung is not called Mr. Nguyen (family name) but Mr. Hung (given name). When you are introduced to Nguyen Van Hung, you address him as Mr. Hung. Very informally, Mr. Hung is called "Hung". This is the name by which he is known by his parents, uncles, elder brothers, or very close friends. The most common manner of referring to him by friends and colleagues would be "Ahn Hung" (brother Hung or he may simply be called "Ahn" (brother). Since the given name also is the official last name, its use, not preceded by "Ong" (Mr.) or "Ahn" (brother) implies much more informality than the use of the American first name.

There is only one outstanding exception to the above rule: President Ngo Dinh Diem is formally addressed as President NGO. This dates back to the traditional custom of the old days when high officials were addressed formally, by their family names.

Hyphens are often placed between names, whether they are names of persons or places. They are optional, and are used simply to indicate that the different words belong to the same group; since the Vietnamese language is monosyllabic, the hyphen frequently is used to unite the several parts of compound words. Thus in the case of Nguyen Van Hung, it may be written Nguyen-Van-Hung. This in no way changes the general rule concerning the use of the name.

The names for women follow the same rules for men. When one reads the name of Miss Dang Thi Mai, the family name is Dang, but the person should be addressed as Miss Mai ("Co Mai" in Vietnamese). When a woman marries, she takes the name of her husband as in the United States. Thus, if Dang Thi Mai marries Nguyen Van Hung, she becomes Mrs. Nguyen Van Hung or Mrs. Hung (Ba Hung). Among friends, however, she is still called "Chi Mai", or just "Mai". However, if she runs a business, and one which is independent of a business operated by her husband, she often adopts her maiden names and then will be addressed as Mrs. Dang Thi Mai.

Section IV. Customs, Traditions, Festivals, Holidays

Most feast days, holidays and commemorative days are observed in accordance with the dates of the lunar calendar. Therefore, each year the special days for the Vietnamese fall on a different Gregorian calendar day, but always on the same lunar calendar day. Feast days and religious holidays are marked with an (F) while commemorative days, those held in honor of a titular genius and victories of national heroes are marked with a (C). Catholic church holidays are celebrated but are not listed herein.

- (C) 1st day 1st month LE VAN DUYET Day (See description hereinafter)
- (C) 5th day The battle of Dong Da or the victory of Emperor Quang Trung in 1789 in which Chinese invaders were expelled from Tonkin.
- (F) Day of the new moon sometime between the winter solstice and spring equinox TET Tan Sun (New Year's) usually, but not always, falls in February. (See description hereinafter)
- (C) 6th day 2nd month HAI BA TRUNG Day celebrating both the anniversary of the death of the TRUNG SISTERS and Vietnamese WOMENS' DAY. In 41 A.D. the Trung Sisters lead a revolt against the ruling Chinese and won freedom for Vietnam. They established Me Ling in North Vietnam as the capital of a free country. This rule lasted only three years after which time the Chinese recaptured Vietnam and the Trung Sisters drowned themselves in the Hat Ciang River. This day has been adopted as the official Womens' Day by the government of the Republic of Vietnam.
- (F) 15th day 2nd month (Buddhist) Birthday of LAOTSU
- (F) 19th day 2nd month (Buddhist) Birthday of QUAN AM
- (F) 5th day 3rd month THANH MINH--Holiday of the Dead. Families prepare offerings consisting of food, rice, flowers, incense sticks, votive papers, etc., and pay a solemn visit to the dead. Days before the visit the graves are cleared of weeds and grass, the tombs are painted and everything arranged for the visit. (It is similar to Memorial Day of the United States.)
- (F) 8th day 4th month (Buddhist) Birth, enlightenment, and death of BUDDHA.

- (C) 17th day
4th month
- HUNG VUONG Day. Emperor Hung Vuong was Vietnam's first, and founder of her first dynasty. A great number of customs such as the wedding ceremony, the chewing of betel, the offering of special rice cakes (banh trung and banh day) representing the earth and the sun as a sign of eternity and the ancient custom of enameling the teeth, all date back to the Hung Vuong era.
- (F) 5th day
5th month
(Buddhist)
- DOAN NGO is primarily a ceremony opening the summer solstice. In a tropical country like Vietnam summer is a season having the worst effect upon human beings in matters of health. Epidemics of cholera, flu, dysentery, etc., often break out during this season. People believe that these epidemics are caused not only by the influence of climate but also by maleficent spirits. It is believed that the God of Death is especially severe during the summer because he needs souls for his army in hell. He therefore provokes epidemics to kill masses of human beings and recruit soldiers from among their souls. The Doan Ngo is often called Le Cau Mat or prayers for coolness. In villages, towns, and cities, altars are erected in pagodas, temples, or at a public place for the celebration and the making of offerings to spirits, ghosts, and especially the God of Death. Votive papers and effigies of human beings are burned to offer the God of Death the number of soldiers he needs. The ceremony usually is performed by Buddhist monks who pray for mild weather and beg for Heavenly clemency. Many families place an amulet on the door of their home as protection against epidemics.
- (F) 15th day
6th month
- The WHALE FESTIVAL (See explanation hereinafter)
- (C) 7 July
- The DOUBLE SEVEN is in celebration of 7 July 1954 when President Ngo formed his first government with the firm resolution of doing everything possible to save Vietnam from imminent disaster.
- (F) 15th day
7th month
(Buddhist)
- TRUNG NGUYEN (Wandering Souls) Day. (See explanation hereinafter)

- (F) 15th day 8th month TRUNG THU or Mid-Autumn Festival is a special children's holiday. (See explanation hereinafter)
- (C) 20th day 8th month TRAN HUNG DAO Day celebrating the victory by Emperor Tran Hung Dao over the Mongols in 1284.
- (C) 22nd day 8th month LE LOI Day. A century after the death of Marshal Tran Hung Dao, the Minh dynasty took advantage of internal conflict to deal a coup de grace. The man who rallied the people to take arms against the "Northern" Aggressors was Le Loi, son of a rich cultivator in Thanh Hoa, (now under the Communists) who launched a ten-year struggle for the recovery of national freedom and independence.
- (F) 28th day 9th month (Confucian) Birth of Confucius. The year 1961 was the 2512 year of the Confucian era.
- (C) 26 October Vietnam NATIONAL DAY-- anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Vietnam.
- (F) 5th day 12th month (Buddhist) Canonization of Gautama Buddha.

In addition there are a number of local or regional holidays such as the holiday of the Village Spirit (Ong Than Lang) or the holiday in honor of the Spirit of the Fields which marks the turning point in the yearly round of work of the farmer. There also are special rites at spring planting time, at transplanting of rice shoots, at the time of the rice-plant flowers, and at harvest time. Other occupations, like those of the fisherman and coppersmith, have their special holidays for their patron spirits.

LE VAN DUYET was the Iron Man of South Vietnam during the early part of the 19th century. He was born in 1763 in South Vietnam and died in 1832. Largely as a result of his courage and military skill he was able to unify Vietnam, survive the Tay Son uprising and have himself proclaimed emperor in Hue in 1802, under the name Gia Long. It was he who executed the classic military maneuver known as "sacrificing the chariot to capture the commander". He made important contributions to the social and cultural life in Vietnam, founded schools, built roads and canals, and consistently refused to mobilize his army against his people. Vietnam's Iron Man (Le Van Duyet) fell into disrepute immediately

after his death in 1832. Because of a rebellion (1833-1835) against the government, led by his adopted son, Marshall Le Van Duyet was condemned posthumously and his tomb lashed one hundred times and then razed as a punishment inflicted on a traitor. Many years later, Emperor Thieu Tri ordered the tomb rebuilt, and a temple to Le Van Duyet established with public funds.

"TET" is the Vietnamese New Year which occurs late in January or early in February. The date of the beginning of TET corresponds to the appearance of the new moon and takes place between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. According to tradition it should last one month for it is said that January (lunar month) is a month for rest and amusement. Nowadays, Vietnamese stop working and doing business for only three days. The first day is dedicated to ancestor worship; the second is reserved for visiting parents, elders, relatives, and friends to pay them homage; and the third is kept for the dead. After TET, businessmen often choose an ostensible lucky day to resume business. They call it "Khai Truong" or Opening of Business Day.

During TET, servants have a holiday and no work is accomplished. Cleaning during this period is considered to be bad luck. The householder is advised to have his home in order at the beginning of the holiday. A TET bonus, in the form of money, is given to each servant.

The WHALE FESTIVAL is celebrated every year in the village of Vam Lang (south of Saigon) for a period of three days. The highlight of the festival takes place at midnight of the first day. A motorboat illuminated with multicolored lamps, and carrying an altar symbolic of the whale, heads for the open sea while a band on board plays traditional Vietnamese music. After a short voyage, the boat returns and its altar is carried to the temple to the accompaniment of the noise of cymbals and tomtoms. Inside the incense-filled temple the symbolic altar is placed on a large "altar of the whale". Behind it, are small coffins which contain the remains of whales which died at sea and which were collected by fishermen. From this moment on the whale, benefactor of all fishermen, is considered as being present among those who are celebrating.

TRUNG NGUYEN. According to Vietnamese beliefs, every human has two souls; one is spiritual (Hon) and the other is material (Via). When a human dies his soul is taken to a tribunal in hell and judged by 10 justices. When judgment is rendered the soul is sent to heaven or hell, as a reward or punishment for the conduct of life on earth.

Sinful souls can be absolved from their punishment or delivered from hell through prayers for them said by the living on the 1st or 15th of each month, but the 15th day of the seventh lunar month is believed

to be the best opportunity for priests and relatives to secure general amnesty for all the souls. On this day the gates of hell are opened at sunset and the "damned" souls fly out, naked and hungry. Those which have faithful descendants living on earth come back to the homes and villages and find plenty of offerings placed on altar by their families.

Those which have no relatives on earth, or are forsaken by the living, wander, hungry and helpless, through the air on black clouds, on the rivers, from tree to tree, or in the villages, begging charity. They are the pitiful "wandering souls" in need of food and prayers. These are the ones for which the living pray on the 15th day of the 7th lunar month and place offerings of food on altars in the pagodas, the markets, in public gardens, and other suitable places in the villages, towns, and cities.

TRUNG THU or Mid-Autumn Festival which takes place on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month keenly is awaited by Vietnamese boys and girls. The origin of the festival is believed to have been during the reign of Emperor Minh Hoang of the Duong Dynasty. It is related that the Emperor went each year with Empress Duong quy Phi on the night of the 15th day of the 8th lunar month to a lake called Thai Dich to admire the moon. When the moon rose bright and full the Emperor composed a poem and commented on its meaning with his wife and poets. His great delight was to read his verses in the moonlight.

Today, the Mid-Autumn Festival is mainly celebrated by children. Many weeks before the 15th day of the 8th lunar month, cakes, sweets, fruits, lanterns in the form of hare, toads, lobsters, unicorns, dragons, carp, etc., are sold along the streets of the cities and villages. Cakes are usually of "gluey" (glutinous) rice, shaped in the form of the moon (banh may trang) and filled with peanuts, sugar, watermelon seeds, etc. Every family prepares for the festival and on the night of its beginning children light their lanterns and gather to form processions through the streets, performing the dances of the unicorn to the accompaniment of drums and cymbals.