

PART II.

A. CAODAISM.

CAODAISM is a pseudo-religious movement which originated in COCHIN CHINA. It has been in existence for about twenty years and possesses a doctrine which is a grotesque mixture of superstition, spiritualism and ideas borrowed from Buddhism, Confucianism and kindred Eastern creeds. In the most tolerant fashion Caodaists have even included some Christian principles in their teaching.

The chief aim of Caodaism has been to exploit public credulity and, especially in recent years, to take political action through the medium of 'Divine Messages', with a view to arousing its followers into freeing INDO-CHINA from the yoke of the white man.

With its main following in Cochinchina, CAODAISM claims about 500,000 converts who are controlled by a number of rival sub-sects. Some of these sub-sects originate in Southern ANNAM and also in some of the towns in TONKIN.

The French authorities had to intervene, on a number of occasions, in order to put a stop to their various disturbances. These disturbances increased noticeably after the occupation of F.I.C. by the Japanese Army. The latter placed a certain TRAN QUAN VINH under the protection of its police, and charged him with the tasks of unifying the CAODAIST movement, of discriminating pan-asiatic propaganda and of setting up efficient espionage networks. The political activities of the CAODAIST party increased during 1944 when TRAN QUAN VINH recognised the claims of one CUONG DE to the throne of ANNAM. This man, who had emigrated to Japan in 1906, was head of a party which called itself the "National League for the Restoration of Annam". As agents of this "League", the Caodaist leaders sent their men into the provinces to collect funds and arms. They spread a number of 'Heaven-inspired' messages, announcing to the faithful the imminent revolt and subsequent liberation of Indo China. They collected several thousand followers in SAIGON who were put to work in the Japanese Naval Shipyards where they received some military training. These men who on the 9th March, the day of the Japanese Coup d'Etat, acted as auxiliary troops aiding the Japanese by blocking all roads leading out of SAIGON and carrying out various other tasks.

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After the 9th March, the Caodaists collaborated with the Japanese in the administration of Cochin China. They have been the root of most of the trouble in SAIGON up till the end of March 1945.

At the beginning of August, a short time after the entry of USSR into the war against Japan, it became increasingly clear to the CAODAIST leaders that Japan had no hope of winning the war, and they joined forces with other indigenous pro-Japanese elements to form a "NATIONAL FRONT", with the view of taking over the civil administration from the Japanese.

Between the 10th and 20th August the leaders of the 'National Front' organised a number of demonstrations, and issued a number of violent tracts and notices and endeavoured to provoke incidents with the FRENCH. On the 25th August however, the 'National Front' was overthrown by the VIET MINH, and the CAODAIST leaders ordered a large number of their followers over to the side of the new ruling party. It is most probable that it was these men, armed and abetted by the Japanese, who led the demonstrations of 2nd September when a number of French and Allied PW's were killed and wounded and several European houses sacked.

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B. THE DAO-XEN SECT.

The DAO-XEN sect was founded in 1939 by a crazy monk called HUYNH-PHU-SO. It's main strength, estimated at 100,000 is grouped in the Western provinces of Cochin China.

HUYNH-PHU-SO, although known to be mad, has acquired quite a reputation as a warrior. In spite of being illiterate he has collected a great store of fables and superstitions around which to build his doctrine.

The disturbances which he caused (human sacrifices, clandestine meetings and numerous political intrigues) quickly led the French authorities to intervene. Following a stay of about a year in a mental home, HUYNH-PHU-SO was placed under police surveillance with a friend of his in BACLIEU province.

In October 1942, the Kempei Tai removed HUYNH-PHU-SO from his home in BACLIEU and installed him in a boarding house in SAIGON, close to their office. During this period HUYNH-PHU-SO intensified his production of 'Divine Anti-French messages' and sent propagandists into the country to collect funds from credulous disciples. In addition he organised a spy network for the Japanese.

At the time of the Coup d'état on 9th March 1945 the DAO-XENISTS collaborated with the Japanese in the administration of the country. They were also amongst those responsible for the disturbances in SAIGON at the end of March 1945. At the beginning of August they combined with the Caodaists and other pro-Japanese movements to form a 'National Front' to take over power from the defeated Japanese.

On the 25th August 1945, the National front having been overthrown by the VIET MINH, the DAO-XEN chiefs appeared to have switched a large number of their followers over to the support of the latest party to gain power. Like the CAODAISTS, these partisans, acting on the instructions of the Japanese who had armed them, took up an aggressive attitude, which degenerated into terrorism after the declaration of 2nd September.

A short time after these demonstrations the Leaders of the provisional Viet Minh Government, no doubt wishing to neutralize the opposition offered by HUYNH-PHU-SO, offered him a post in the government. The next day, however, he had to take flight, branded as a traitor, for his followers had attacked VIET MINH troops in CANTHO province.

The latest news from the Western provinces, CANTHO, CHAUDOC and LONGXUYEN, seems to indicate that the DAO-XENISTS are still opposed to the Viet Minh.

C. VOLONTAIRES DE LA MORT.

An Annamite, named LE VAN VAN, was arrested in THU DUC, wearing a Japanese type uniform. Upon interrogation he admitted to being a member of the terrorist organisation "Can Tu Du Kich" (Volontaires de la Mort). His history is illustrative of the irresponsible and inconsequent nature of this organisation.

About the beginning of October LE VAN VAN was seized by LE HONG LAC, an Annamite leader who was searching THU DUC for hidden arms and ammunition. He became secretary to a band of Volontaires about 20 strong and his first task was to write a proclamation "communising" the property of a rich Annamite merchant. He did this also in the case of a second Annamite - a pro-French ex-official who was condemned to death for "treason" and hacked to death by the leader. The band profited largely in both cases.

On 18 Oct he, with nine others laid an ambush for Japanese trucks reported to be carrying a rich cargo from BIEN HOA. Luckily for them (they were armed with bamboo spears) the trucks did not turn up.

Shortly afterwards LE HONG LAC heard that the Viet Minh authorities in TONKIN were making enquiries about him, so he fled NORTH with ten of his most trusted followers, and the band came to a voluntary end.

Theoretically the tasks of the "Volontaires de la Mort" are two :

- (1) To carry out assassinations and sabotage in Allied territory.
- (2) To capture and bring back for trial and execution Annamites suspected of being traitors.

Lack of firearms and lack of inclination had caused this particular band to stick to plain dacoity and "protection".

NOTES ON SOME LEADING ANNAMITE PERSONALITIES.

HO-CHI-MINH is President and Minister for Foreign Affairs in the 'Democratic Government of VIET NAM', set up by the VIET MINH. As founder of the Communist party in FIC and leader of the Central Committee of that organisation, he is also known as NGUYEN-AI-QUOC.

From 1920 to 1925 he lived in MOSCOW, where he studied in the University for Far Eastern peoples. Coming to SOUTH CHINA in 1925 he quickly contacted all the ANNAMITE emigrants around whom he built up the first external affairs office of the Indo Chinese Communist party. During this period he directed the activities of all communists in Indo China, to whom he passed on orders received from the KUOMINTANG.

In 1941, under the pretext of modifying a communist policy which was too strong for many people, HO-CAI-MINH, who was in KWANGSI at the time, founded the VIET MINH movement which, owing to the approval that it had received from Generalissimo CHIANG KAI SHEK, found considerable popularity in TONKIN during 1944, spreading to COCHIN-CHINA during the following months.

TRAN VAN GIAU was a journalist on the staff of the paper 'Retour de France'. He spent three years in MOSCOW where, like HO-CHI-MINH, attended the University for Far Eastern peoples. Returning secretly to INDO CHINA in 1935 on the pretext of reorganising the Communist Party of FIC, he was arrested shortly afterwards and received a prison sentence of 5 years. On his release in 1940 he was enrolled in a 'Special Workers Labour Corps', from which he succeeded in escaping in 1941.

Two years later he was in contact with Japanese organisations, when he was able to gain information which he used later in 1944 in the form of various clandestine publications.

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An ardent follower of the VIET MINH, by June 1945 he had become one of its leading figures, and is now reported to be in charge of Anti-French operations in Southern FIC.

Dr PHAM NGOC THACH is a doctor of medicine. Although he is married to a French woman, his anti-French sentiments have been recognised for a long time. He collaborated closely with the Japanese between 1941 and 1943 and had even formed a 'Pro-Nippon' party. In October 1944 he was denounced by a member of the VIET MINH and then arrested at the office of his clandestine newspaper on a charge of financing this organisation.

PHAM CONG BINH a former captain in the French Army and a member of an ancient Annamite family. He was sentenced in 1933 for criminal bankruptcy and again in 1937 on a charge of operating a gaming house. He was employed by the VIET MINH as an instructor. Latest reports indicate that he at present is in charge of all training in Southern FIC - being probably responsible to TRAN VAN GIAU.

PART 5 TO APPX 'A'.

Note on Common Meanings and Alternative Spellings.

SOME COMMON PROVINCIAL WORDS FOUND IN PLACE NAMES.

Bac	means	North	Muang	means	province
Ban	"	village	Muong	"	province
Bien	"	sea	Mui	"	cape
Cao	"	round hill	Nam	"	South
Chua	"	pagoda	Nam	"	water
Cua	"	mouth, estuary	Pha	"	house
Den	"	black	Mui	"	mountain
Dieu	"	red	Nuoc	"	water
Dinh	"	chief town	Pha	"	forest
Don	"	island	Phu	"	prefecture
Dong	"	east, copper	Pulau	"	island
Duong	"	North	Rang	"	forest
Ho	"	lake, marsh	Song	"	river
Hon	"	island	Tay	"	west
Khe	"	stream	Thanh	"	Chief-town
Khone	"	canal	Tong	"	canton
Lack	"	canal	Tuong	"	East
lang	"	village	Trai	"	village
Lua	"	fire	Vang	"	yellow
Luang	"	yellow	Vien-Zieng	"	chief town
Luong	"	yellow	Zieng	"	chief town

ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS

K, C, KW or QU at the beginning of a word.

CUA or KWA.

I or Y at the end of a word.

PH or F.

XI or SI.

Vowels in the middle of a word also vary.