

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
WAR BACKGROUND STUDIES
NUMBER NINETEEN

THE PEOPLES OF FRENCH
INDOCHINA

By
OLOV R. T. JANSE



(PUBLICATION 3768)

CITY OF WASHINGTON
PUBLISHED BY THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
JUNE 12, 1944

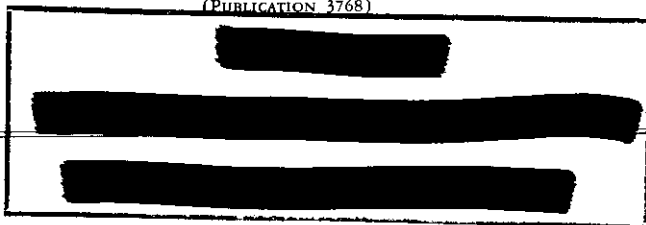
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
WAR BACKGROUND STUDIES
NUMBER NINETEEN

THE PEOPLES OF FRENCH
INDOCHINA

By
OLOV R. T. JANSE



(PUBLICATION 3768)



CITY OF WASHINGTON

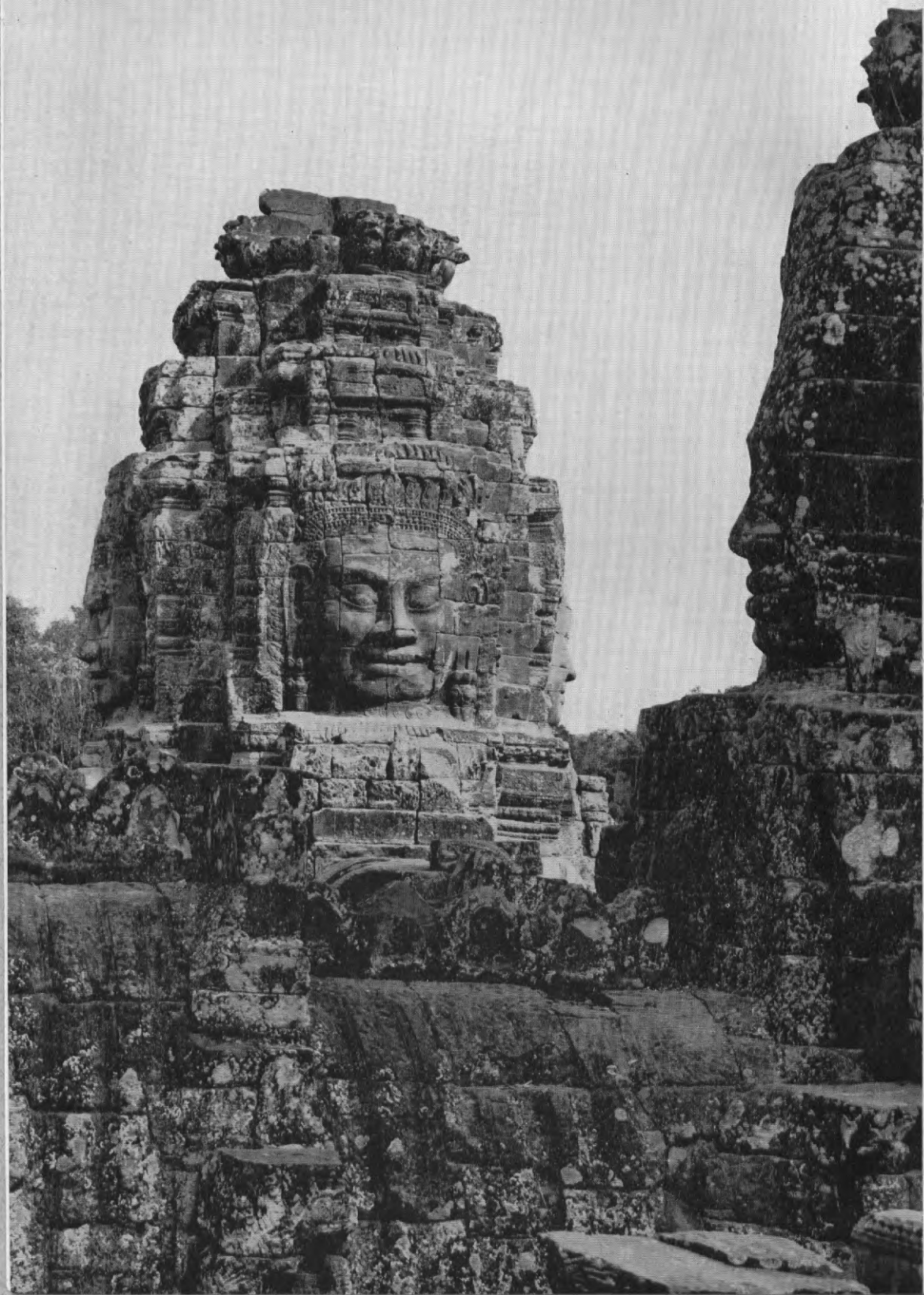
PUBLISHED BY THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

JUNE 12, 1944

	Page
7. Upper, Harbor of small fishing village, Cua-tung, Annam.....	10
Lower, Annamite fishing craft, Bay of Along, Tonkin.....	10
8. Upper, Palace of the Governor General, Hanoi, Tonkin.....	10
Lower, Mountains surrounding Dong-van military post, Tonkin.....	10
9. Burial mounds, Thanh-hoa Province, Annam.....	10
10. Upper, Buddhist stupa, Pnom-Penh, Cambodia.....	14
Lower, Buddhist monastery, Luang Prabang, Laos.....	14
11. Left, Annamite shrine, Thanh-hoa, Annam.....	14
Right, Annamite Mot-cot, single-pillared shrine, Hanoi, Tonkin.....	14
12. Upper, Gate of Annamite shrine, Hanoi, Tonkin.....	14
Lower, Annamite fortune tellers, Thanh-hoa, Annam.....	14
13. Upper, Annamite shrine at Mat-son, Thanh-hoa Province, Annam.....	14
Lower, Guardians of the shrine at Mat-son.....	14
14. Upper, Annamite women weaving straw mats, near Phan-rang, Annam...	18
Lower, Annamite women on way to market, Thanh-hoa Province, Annam...	18
15. Upper, Annamite burial procession, Thanh-hoa, Annam.....	18
Lower, Cambodian Buddhist monks, Som-rong-sen Monastery, Cambodia...	18
16. Upper, Cambodian girls of the Royal Ballet, Angkor.....	18
Lower, Cham temple of Po Nagar, Nha-trang, Annam.....	18
17. Left, Headman of a Cham village, southern Annam.....	18
Right, Cham women from southern Annam.....	18
18. Left, Women of the "White Thai" group, upper Tonkin.....	22
Right, Partisans of the Thô group, upper Tonkin.....	22
19. Left, Sorcerers of the Man tien group, region of Nguyen-binh, upper Tonkin.....	22
Right, Women from Nguyen-binh, upper Tonkin.....	22
20. Left, Women of the Man coc tribe, region of Tinh-tuc, Tonkin.....	22
Right, Woman of the Man ta pan group, region of Ha-giang, Tonkin.....	22
21. Left, Women of the Man son dau group, region of Hoa-binh, Tonkin....	22
Right, Women of Man lan tien group, upper Tonkin.....	22
22. Left, Woman of "White Meo" tribe, region of Ha-giang, Tonkin.....	26
Right, "White Meo," region of Chapa, Tonkin.....	26
23. Beauties of the Lolo (Akha) tribe, upper Laos.....	26
24. Upper, Men and women of the Meo tribe, region of Cao-bang, Tonkin...	26
Lower, Indonesians of southern Annam loaded with ceramic jars.....	26
25. Upper, Indonesian stilt hut, Ban-méthuot, Annam.....	26
Lower, Indonesian family of Pi or Bih group, Ban Tur, Annam.....	26

TEXT FIGURE

	Page
1. Map of Indochina.....	2



THE PEOPLES OF FRENCH INDOCHINA

BY OLOV R. T. JANSE

Harvard University

(WITH 25 PLATES)

INTRODUCTION

Indochina is the significant name of the vast peninsula projecting from the Asiatic mainland which separates the Indian Ocean and the China Sea, forming a bridge to the East Indies. It is the homeland of numerous peoples and tribes, most of which are impregnated with either Chinese or Indian culture.

The peninsula comprises, besides French Indochina, Burma in the northwest, Siam (also called Thailand) in the west-central part, and the Malay States in the south. Up to the time of the Nipponese invasion, Burma and the Malay States belonged to the British sphere of influence. Siam, though tied with strong economic bonds to the British Empire, was the only independent country on the peninsula until it recently became subjected to Japanese domination. The eastern part of the peninsula, or French Indochina, also referred to since 1887 as L'Union Indochinoise, comprises four protectorates—Tonkin, Annam, Laos, and Cambodia; one colony, Cochin-China; and the leased territory of Kwangchowan on the Luichow Peninsula, Kwangtung Province, opposite Hainan Island.

Before the confederacy became mutilated by the treaty of March 11, 1941, imposed by the Japanese, the area of French Indochina was about 285,000 square miles, thus exceeding the size of the mother country.

GEOGRAPHY

The most striking feature of French Indochina from a geographical point of view is the extreme contrast between the wild, mostly forest-clad and sparsely inhabited mountains and the densely populated, extensively cultivated fertile lowlands.

PLATE 1

The temple ruins of the Bayon in Angkor Thom (the old capital of Cambodia), an impressive example of the ancient Khmer art. For eight centuries the gentle smile of the quadruple enigmatic faces, looking toward the four quarters, has welcomed pilgrims and tourists alike. The faces themselves are approximately 6 feet high. Courtesy École Française d'Extrême-Orient.

Northern and central Indochina comprises two broad belts of mountains originating in Tibet and Yunnan. One of these chains stretches in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction into the Tonkin delta region, where queerly shaped rocks rise abruptly from the rice fields. The famous archipelago of Fatsi-long in the Bay of Along, Gulf of Tonkin, is to be considered as a continuation of this mountain range. Some peaks, as for example Fan Si Pan south of Lao-kay, rise to almost 10,000 feet above sea level. Closer to the delta region, among rolling hills, rise lower peaks such as Tam Dao and Mount Bavi, both only a few hours' drive from Hanoi.

The other main range of the Indochinese mountain regions stretches, generally speaking, from north to south from Tonkin and upper Laos toward Cambodia and eastern Cochin-China. This belt, forming the backbone of the Indochinese Alps, is called the Grande Cordillère or the Cordillère Annamitique. The slope is steep on the east side but more gradual on the west. One of the highest peaks is La Mère et l'Enfant (Mother and Child), about 6,000 feet high, near Cape Varella on the coast of the China Sea, in southern Annam. In the central part are several important high plateaus such as the Tran-ninh or the Plaine des Jarres (about 3,000 feet high) in upper Laos. Farther south are the Dar Lac and the Lang Bian plateaus. On the latter (elevation about 4,500-6,000 feet), some hours' drive from Saigon, the capital of Cochin-China, the French have established an important health resort, Dalat, among rolling hills and magnificent pine forests.

From the main north-south mountain belt several smaller ranges at right angles reach the narrow coastal plains and the China Sea, thus dividing the country, especially Annam, into numerous very distinct regions. There are several peaks overlooking the sea, such as La Porte d'Annam (The Annamite Gate) 394 feet high, notorious as a barrier in ancient times between the Annamites in the north and the Chams in the south. Farther south, between Hué, the capital of Annam, and Tourane is the Col des Nuages (Peak of the Clouds), about 1,400 feet high, serving as a climatic barrier.

The Indochinese mountains confine within their winding valleys several important rivers, such as the Claire, the Red River (Song Koi), and the Black River (Song Bo) in Tonkin, flowing in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction. The most important of the rivers, however, is the Mekong, one of the longest rivers in Southeast Asia (1,900 miles in length), which crosses the country from north to south. All these and other smaller rivers are partly navigable and are used for floating timber.

These rivers are chiefly responsible for the creation of the two important delta regions in Indochina, one in the north in Tonkin (13,000 square miles), the other in the south stretching over large parts of Cochin-China and Cambodia (40,000 square miles). They are connected by a slightly in-curved band of lowland stretching along the China Sea. The configuration of all these plains has been likened to a bamboo pole (the Annamite coastal regions) supporting at each end a rice basket (the deltas).

These lowlands, where rice is extensively grown, are to be considered as the real granaries of Indochina, especially of the southern region. They are carefully drained and crossed by an extensive network of canals and waterways spreading in all directions.

There are few lakes in Indochina. Only one, Tonlé Sap or Great Lake, in central Cambodia, is of interest from an economic point of view, being one of the richest fishing grounds in the world. This lake serves as a reservoir for waters of the Mekong during the rainy season, when constant rainfall raises considerably the river level. Through the rivers connecting the Mekong and Tonlé Sap the surplus water flows into the lake. When the dry season comes and the level of the Mekong is considerably lowered, Tonlé Sap is emptied by the same rivers which previously served as tributaries. Thus the streams connecting the Mekong and Tonlé Sap flow one season in one direction and the other season in the opposite direction. For a short while during the in-between seasons the waters in these rivers become stagnant. This is an occasion of important festivals, comprising boat races, presided over by the King of Cambodia. The fisheries of Tonlé Sap are a source of large income for the government as well as for the local population.

In northern Tonkin is a group of lakes, Babé, located in one of the most beautiful spots of the region.

CLIMATE

In spite of local variations due to differences in latitude, altitude, and exposure, the climate is intertropical, characterized by two seasons, one dry and relatively cool, the other rainy and hot. The alternation of these two seasons is chiefly a result of the monsoons or trade winds. From April or May to October the winds blow from the southwest, bringing heavy rainfall sometimes accompanied by devastating floods. During the remainder of the year the winds are reversed and bring the dry season.

In northern Indochina the "winter" season is marked by a rather large difference in temperature between day and night, particularly in the mountain region. In the Hanoi region, the average temperature of February,

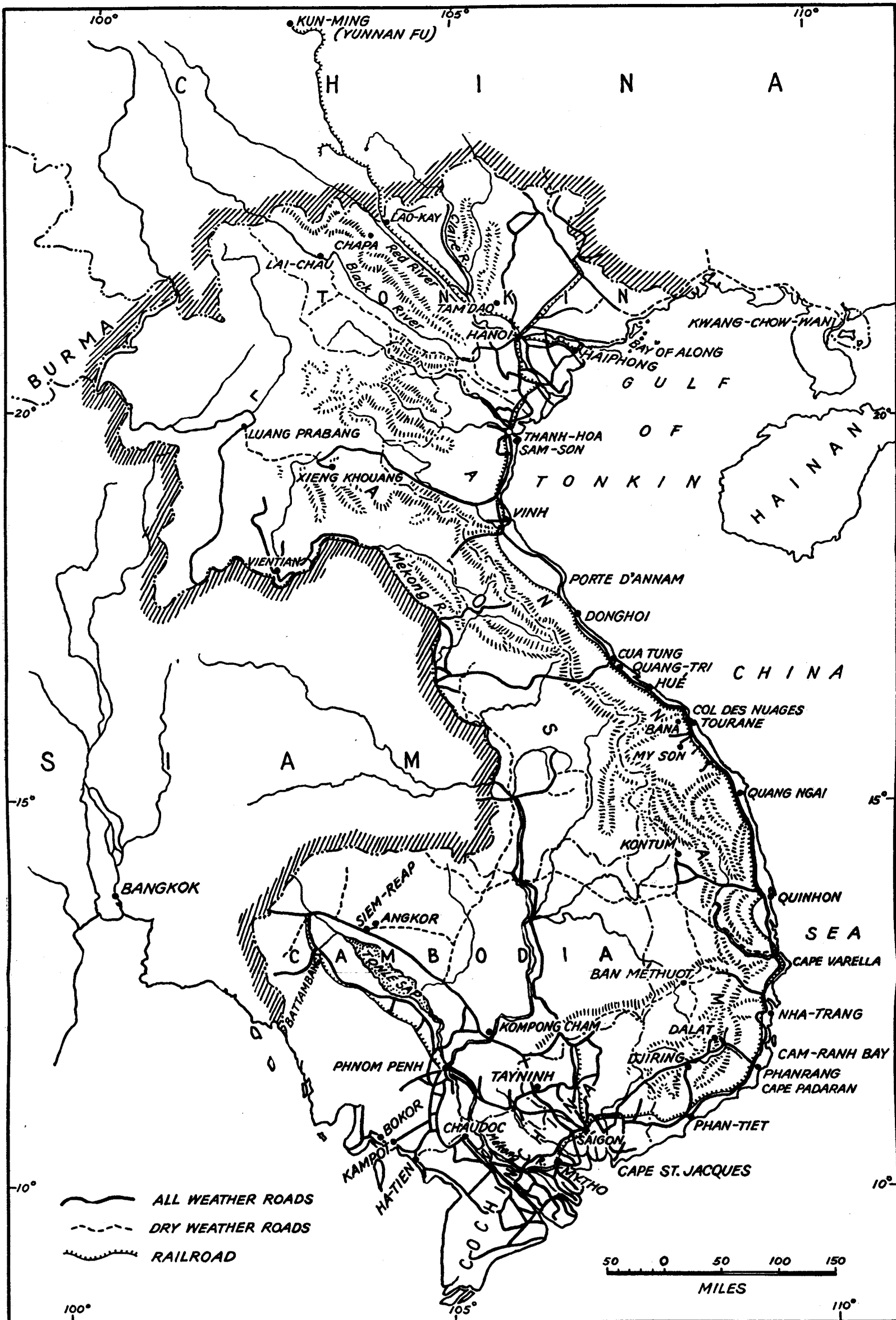


Fig. 1.—Map of Indochina.

the coolest month, is 62° F., but occasionally the mercury drops to about 40°. During June, the hottest month, the average temperature is about 85°, but much higher temperatures—up to about 110°—have been registered.

In southern Indochina the differences of temperature between seasons and between day and night are less marked than in the north. In central Cambodia the average temperature in April, the hottest month, is 85°. From November to March the average temperature varies within a narrow range—from 79° to 83°.

During the rainy season parts of the country, especially the coast of Annam, are periodically devastated by violent typhoons, generally originating east of the Philippines. The most critical months are August and September. The violence of the tempest sometimes produces an enormous tidal wave.

HYGIENE

During the initial stage of the French intervention health conditions in Indochina were poor owing largely to ignorance and lack of adequate housing and clothing. Since then public hygiene has improved considerably, thanks to the efforts made by the French authorities, especially since 1885. In 1904 the Government General set up an organization to provide medical care for the local population, in which at present 400 French and 80 auxiliary native physicians are employed. In 1937 6,000,000 natives were given medical examination in the hospitals or dispensaries, and 300,000 individuals received hospitalization free of charge. As a result the birth rate is steadily mounting. In northern Indochina there is an annual excess of births over deaths of approximately 100,000. There are several public and private welfare organizations which are concerned especially with the protection of orphans, with combating social diseases, and alleviating misery. In 1936 there were in the confederacy 29 general hospitals, 105 medical centers, and about 350 dispensaries or medical posts. Thus definite efforts have been and are still being made to provide better sanitation and to combat the common diseases of these intertropical areas such as malaria, dysentery, etc.

Several excellent hill stations and seaside resorts have been established in recent years, where the invigorating air makes it possible for visitors to avoid the conditions of anemia and general fatigue which often result from a prolonged sojourn in the hot and humid delta regions. The best known of the hill stations are Chapa (4,500 feet) in upper Tonkin, near the Yunnan border; Tam Dao (3,000 feet) and Mount Bavi, both in the vicinity of Hanoi; Bana (4,500 feet) about 18 miles southeast of Tourane

in central Annam; Dalat (4,500 feet) in southern Annam; and Bokor (4,500 feet) in southern Cambodia. Among the seaside resorts, where the breezes from the sea bring a certain relief from the heat, are Vat-chai in the Bay of Along, and Do-son, 13 miles from Hai-phong. Sam-son, 10 miles from the town of Thanh-hoa; Cua-tung, 28 miles from Quang-tri; Thuan-an, near Hué; Cua-lo, 12 miles from Vinh; Ky-xuyên near Quang-ngai; and Nha-trang, all located along the Annamite coast. Other seaside resorts have been established at Cape St. Jacques, 58 miles from Bien-hoa in Cochin-China, at the mouth of the Saigon River; and finally Kep, 17 miles from Kampot in southern Cambodia.

In the principal urban centers such as Saigon, Dalat, and Hanoi, the drinking water is filtered and regularly analyzed by the medical authorities, but it is nevertheless recommended that all water used for drinking be boiled.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources of Indochina are very considerable but so far have not been extensively exploited. The soil is particularly fertile, and from remote times agriculture has been the chief concern of the natives, who are primarily dependent upon rice growing. The greatest areas of agricultural land are located in the vast delta regions of the Red River in Tonkin and of the Mekong in Cochin-China and Cambodia. The French have encouraged the natives to develop the growing of numerous other crops such as maize, various starchy plants, vegetables, tea, and tobacco, as well as several textile-producing crops such as jute, ramie, and cotton. The establishment of extensive coffee and rubber plantations has proved to be very successful. In recent years orange trees have been introduced into Indochina.

In spite of extensive deforestation carried out by some of the nomadic tribes (cf. p. 25), nearly two-fifths of the whole area of Indochina is covered by forests. Before the arrival of the French, the local administration paid little or no attention to the preservation or methodical exploitation of the forests. A Forestry Service organized by the Government General in recent years has made it possible to utilize and protect effectively this source of wealth. A great variety of trees, such as the teak, lim yao, cam-lai, cam-xe, and bamboo furnish lumber for construction, boat building, furniture making, etc. Various byproducts of the forests, such as turpentine, lacquer, camphor, indigo, ginger, and cinnamon, play an important part in the domestic economy.

The mineral resources of the country are equally important and have long been exploited by the Chinese, though in a primitive way. In recent

years, especially since 1920, a large-scale mining industry has been developed by French firms. In 1929 the value of mined products totaled 18,610,000 piastres.¹ Next to rice, the mining industry is the most important source of income from exports. The principal products are coal, 77 percent; tin, 10 percent; and zinc, 9.5 percent. Of particular importance are the coal mines in the Đông-triêu and Hongay areas in north-eastern Tonkin. Secondary though valuable products are lead, tungsten, copper, iron, gold, phosphates, graphite, and cement.

The waters along the Indochina coasts, the flooded rice fields, most of the streams, and the Great Lake (Tonlé Sap) in Cambodia abound with fish of many species, as well as shrimps and other crustaceans. They are caught in great quantity and used partly for domestic consumption, partly for export, especially to Singapore and Hong Kong. The fish are either consumed fresh or are salted and dried. In the countries inhabited by the Annamites a considerable part of the catch is converted into a vitamin-rich "fish sauce" called *ngoc-mam*, used as a seasoning. The fishing industry and trade have been to a great extent in the hands of the Chinese settlers in Indochina. The collecting of marine salt and water plants (*nénuphars*) is also of great importance in the domestic economy.

Cattle breeding is of lesser importance. The most common and most valuable domestic animal is the strong but lazy water buffalo, indispensable to the farmer. The buffalo is used chiefly to prepare the rice fields, but the meat is widely used as food by the natives. Other domestic animals are hogs, ponies, and fowl. The French have introduced sheep and goats, but their number is restricted. Milk and milk products play no part whatever in the native nutrition.

TRANSPORTATION AND HARBORS

Before the arrival of the French, most of the traffic in Indochina was borne on the numerous waterways (rivers and canals) and on trails chiefly fit only for foot or equestrian travel. These means of travel have since been considerably improved, with many of the trails transformed into excellent highways. At the outbreak of the war there had been built more than 18,000 miles of highways, penetrating even into the most isolated regions, which were used by some 20,000 automobiles. In addition the French constructed 2,090 miles of railways. Many of the canals have been enlarged and lengthened. Coastal navigation has been made safer by the establishment of several radio stations and meteorological observa-

¹ In 1929 the rate of exchange was about 45 cents to the piastre.



PLATE 2

Upper: Aerial view of the Do-son beach in the Kien-an district, eastern Tonkin, a famous summer resort. The picture is taken at low tide. At the left (the dark area above the center) is Do-hai village, one of the most important fishing centers in Tonkin.

Lower: Cape Varella, Khanh-hoa Province, on the Annamite "Riviera." The Mandarin Route—the macadamized highway connecting Saigon and Hanoi—passes here along the scenic coast.

Courtesy National Geographic Society.





PLATE 3

Upper: A typical street, lined with small, balconied houses, in Nam-dinh, southern Tonkin. The Annamite towns are reminiscent of those in southern China.

Lower: Aerial view of Annamite settlements, circular in shape and bordering low limestone hills projecting out of the rice fields. Dong-mai in the Đông-triều district, eastern Tonkin.

Courtesy National Geographic Society.



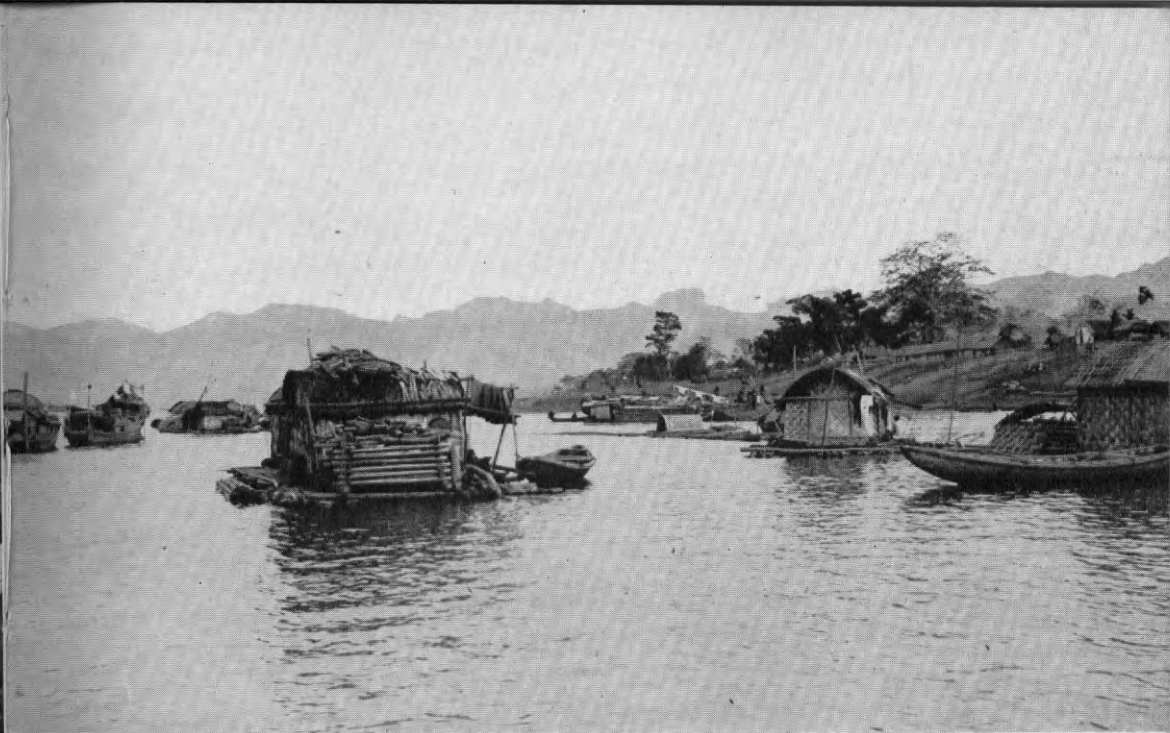


PLATE 4

Upper: Floating houses on the Black River at Hoa-binh, upper Tonkin, a center of the Muong tribes. The rowboat (at the right) is made in basketwork. A coating of tar makes this light craft watertight. Photograph by the author.

Lower: The calm waters of the Babé Lakes in the picturesque surroundings of steep green mountains. Bac-kan Province, upper Tonkin. Courtesy National Geographic Society.

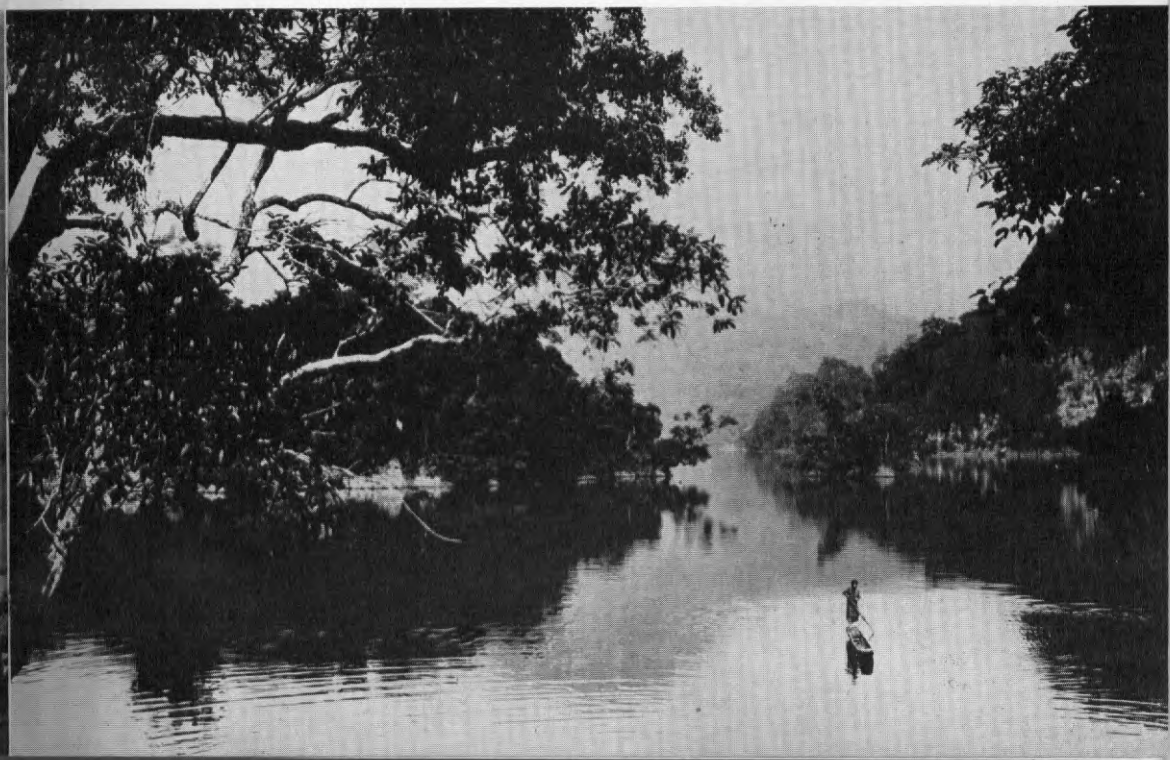




PLATE 5

Upper: The sugar palm (*Borassus*) characterizes the monotonous Cambodian plain. It plays a most important part in the domestic economy. The trunk provides lattices and beams used for house construction, the leaves are used as roofing material, and the stalks for making fibers and ropes. Finally, the abundant sap produces an excellent sugar called "skar." Region of Pnom-penh.

Lower: The Pong-gour waterfall (measuring about 100 feet in height) near Dalat, southern Annam, the Niagara of Indochina.

Photographs by the author.



tories, which send out storm and typhoon warnings. Some of the more important urban centers are connected with airlines, and the more populous districts are provided with tramways and bus lines.

Along the extensive coast line of Indochina there are numerous small, sheltered harbors suitable for junks and coastwise traders, but only a few first-class ports. The most important is Saigon, in Cochin-China, which in rank is comparable with Bordeaux in France. The main port of northern Indochina is Hai-phong, about 50 miles east of Hanoi. Other harbors are Hongay Bay (or Port Courbet), especially used for the shipping of coal from the mines of the nearby Đông-triêu district in Tonkin; Binh-thuy, near Vinh in northern Annam; Tourane, near Hué in central Annam; and Quinhon in southern Annam. The large Cam-ranh Bay between Cape Varella and Cape Padaran, which once sheltered the entire Russian Baltic fleet, has great possibilities if adequately equipped.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE DAWN

Around the beginning of the Christian Era Chinese and Indian cultures were introduced into the Indochinese peninsula. The impact of the Chinese civilization affected strongly the peoples in eastern Tonkin and in northern Annam, especially the province of Thanh-hoa. The Indian civilization spread rapidly over the southern portions of the country, above all affecting southern Annam, where the Cham civilization originated (cf. p. 15), and over Cambodia, the birthplace of the Khmer civilization (cf. p. 14).

The Chinese extended their political domination over the peoples of northern Indochina—chiefly Annamites—up to about A.D. 1000, when national dynasties began to rule the country. Most important of these dynasties were the Lê, Lý, and Tr'ãn. Subsequently, for a short period, the Chinese managed to take over political control, but during the last millennium their influence has been chiefly of a cultural character, up to the establishment of the French protectorate in 1883-84. The civilization of the Celestial Empire, before it became stagnant, was most beneficial to the local population, which rapidly adopted Chinese customs and administrative systems.

Once the Annamites had gained their independence and been able to organize themselves on a Chinese pattern, they started gradually their own move southward, overrunning first the once mighty kingdom of Champa in southern Annam, which was defeated in 1471. This victory permitted

the Annamites to invade and occupy the coast of the present southern Annam and portions of Cochin-China. Here they came in contact with the ancestors of the Cambodians, the Khmers, who now suffered from the repeated aggressions of their enterprising northern neighbors. The history of the Annamites is made up chiefly of dynastic rivalries and wars with their neighbors. The present King of Annam, Bao Dai, belongs to the Nguyễn family.

The Chams (cf. p. 15), who played an important part in the ancient history of Indochina, once ruled over a country stretching along the coast of Annam from the region of the Gate of Annam (La Porte d'Annam) in the north to Cape Ba-kê (province of Binh Thuan) in the south.

By the second century A.D. they had established a state in the region of Nha-trang. The first report of Champa and its fabulous wealth reached Europe through Marco Polo, the Venetian traveler who possibly visited the country at the end of the thirteenth century. Shortly afterward, under the repeated blows of the Annamites, the Cham civilization collapsed and sank into oblivion until a group of French scholars brought to light and studied a great many ancient Cham monuments, eloquent witnesses of a glorious past. The political history of Champa is largely a succession of wars against the Chinese, the Annamites, and the Khmers. For some time the Indonesian Jarai and Radhé tribes in Annam were subjected to the domination of the Chams (cf. p. 26).

The origins and earliest history of the gifted Khmers are little known. Their kingdom, which once extended not only over the present Cambodia, but also over other neighboring areas, was preceded by a state called Founan, the existence of which is chiefly known to us through some old Chinese documents. In the first centuries of the Christian Era this state dominated the area around the lower Mekong. It still existed in the middle of the sixth century but some time later was succeeded by the Khmer kingdom.

The civilization of Founan developed under strong Indian influence, and the cultural monuments of the country were highly praised for their artistic value. Unfortunately, only a few documents pertaining to Founan or its civilization have been preserved up to modern times. We are much better informed about the Khmers, whose rulers were Hinduized, if not of Indian blood. Sanskrit was the court language, and the ceremonials recalled those of ancient India. Brahmanism was the prevalent religion, but Buddhism had also its devotees. The impressive ruins of Angkor and other localities in Cambodia are silent testimonials to the high development of the local art, inspired by Indian sources. This famous art

flourished from the ninth to the thirteenth century, when the Siamese started their conquest of the country and brought death and destruction to the Khmer civilization.

EARLIEST EUROPEAN CONTACTS AND THE MODERN PERIOD

As previously mentioned, the first knowledge of Indochina to reach the western world came from Marco Polo, who returned to Europe about 1295, after a long sojourn in East Asia. Later, in the middle of the sixteenth century, several missionaries and traders—Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and English—arrived in Indochina. One of the best known of these pioneers was a French Jesuit, Alexandre de Rhodes, who completed and improved the *quốc ngữ*, the transcription of the Annamite language in the romanized characters commonly used today. He also initiated negotiations in Rome resulting in the creation of the "Société des Missions étrangères," which has played an important part in the conversion of the natives to Christianity; Christianized natives at present number between a million and a million and a half. Another famous pioneer was Pierre Poivre, who traveled extensively over Indochina and other countries in Southeast Asia in the eighteenth century as a representative of La Compagnie des Indes.

It is not easy to describe briefly the events which led to the establishment of French rule over the Indochinese Union, created in 1887, but the principal developments may be summarized as follows:

Until about 1800, Annam, Tonkin, and Cochinchina, mainly inhabited by Annamites, and to a lesser extent Laos, inhabited chiefly by Laotians, were ruled by the court of Hué (Annam). Bloody struggles between rival dynasties filled the history of the countries until Nguyễn-An, under the name of Gia-Long, mounted the Annamite throne, supported by the French under the leadership of Pigneau de Béhaine, Bishop of Adran. As a result of this support, Gia-Long (1802-1820) granted France certain trading facilities in the country and the right to conduct missionary work among the local populations. Gia-Long kept faithfully the agreement he had reached with the French, but his successors failed to live up to its terms, instigating an antiforeign policy and encouraging cruel persecutions of the Christians, actions which resulted in repeated warnings from the French and the Spanish. Finally these two countries decided to send an expeditionary force under Admiral Rigault de Genouilly to Indochina in 1858 to bring pressure upon the court of Hué. Tourane, in central Annam, the port of Hué, was shelled and Saigon occupied. As a consequence of this intervention, a treaty was signed in Saigon in 1862

by which the King of Annam ceded to France a part of Cochin-China. Tourane and a few other ports were opened to French trade.

In 1867 the French occupied the whole of Cochin-China, and by several treaties concluded in 1883-84, between the French, the King of Annam, and the Chinese Government, the French protectorates of Tonkin and Annam were officially recognized. Thus all the countries inhabited chiefly by the Annamites were placed under French suzerainty.

Meanwhile, King Norodom of Cambodia (1860-1904) had accepted a French protectorate in 1863, thus escaping both Siamese overlordship and Annamite threats of domination. In 1907 Siam ceded to Cambodia the three western provinces of Battambang, Sisophon, and Siem-reap, where the famous temple ruins of Angkor are located.

In 1887 Cambodia, together with Cochin-China, Annam, and Tonkin, were politically grouped into a confederacy, l'Union Indochinoise, ruled by a French Governor General, responsible to the Ministry of Colonies (later Ministry of Overseas France).

In 1893 Laos—divided into several principalities, the kingdom of Luang Prabang being the most important—joined the confederacy. Previously Laos, like Cambodia, had been disputed between the Annamites and the Siamese.

Finally in 1899 the Chinese Kwangchowan territory on the Luichow Peninsula, opposite Hainan Island, was leased to France for a period of 99 years and placed under the jurisdiction of the Governor General of Indochina.

During the initial stage of French intervention, Indochina was ruled by the Ministry of the Marine. All governors were admirals, and this period, which lasted until 1879, when Le Myre de Vilers was appointed the first civil governor, is referred to as the "Rule of the Admirals." During this period the authorities were chiefly concerned with the pacification of the country. As a logical result of the development of democratic principles in the mother country, a policy of rapprochement and gradual emancipation of the local population has since been pursued by the French civil administration, endeavoring to establish an adequate educational system adapted to the needs of the local population (before the outbreak of the war there were more than half a million pupils in primary and secondary schools), and to grant the natives a greater share in the administration. Increasing respect was paid to local customs, laws, and traditional forms of local self-government. Among the foremost Governors General whose contributions have been particularly remarkable in furthering the general development of the confederacy, the following names should be



PLATE 6

Upper: Harrowing the flooded rice fields in the lowland of northern Indochina, the cradle of the Annamite people. In the background are seen the first humps of the Cordillère Annamitique. Thanh-hoa, northern Annam. Photograph by the author.

Lower: In upper Laos the heavy teak logs floated down the rivers are pulled out on the rocks by trained elephants. Courtesy National Geographic Society.

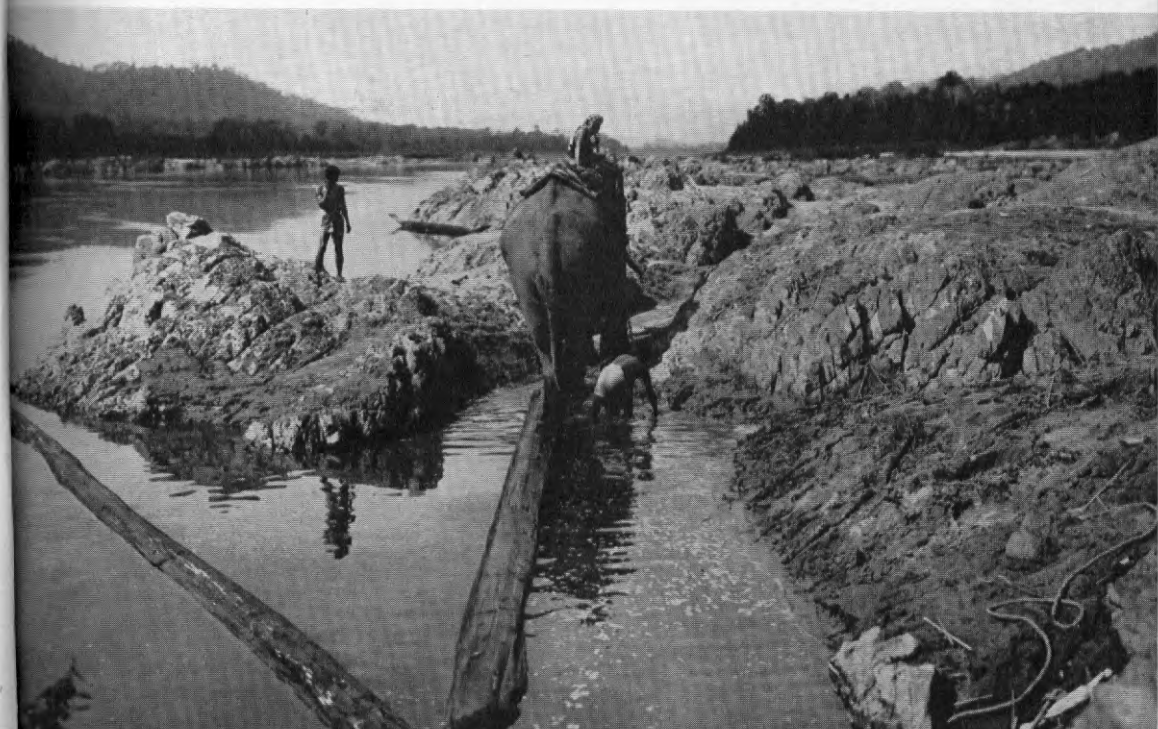




PLATE 7

Upper: The sheltered harbor of a small fishing village in its verdant setting of tropical vegetation. In the background are seen sand dunes. Cua-tung, central Annam.

Lower: Annamite fishing craft in the scenic Fatsi-long, Bay of Along, Tonkin.

Photographs by the author.





PLATE 8

Upper: The palace of the Governor General in Hanoi, Tonkin, an example of modern French architecture. Courtesy National Geographic Society.

Lower: The rugged mountains surrounding the Dong-van military post in upper Tonkin, near the China border in the homeland of the Man and the Meo tribes. Photograph by the author.





PLATE 9

Burial mounds from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.—A.D. 220) are the oldest tangible traces of Chinese settlements in northern Indochina. Before excavations of these monuments can be carried out, it is sometimes necessary to hire local sorcerers to perform ceremonies to propitiate the dreaded spirits believed to have chosen the mound as their abode. The picture above shows the sacred paraphernalia being brought to such a mound. Below, local Annamite officials staging a display of banners and umbrellas in honor of the Governor General, who attended the excavations. Both monuments, located in Thanh-hoa Province, were excavated by the author in 1937. Photographs by the author.



mentioned: Paul Doumer (1897-1902), Albert Sarraut (1911-1914, 1917-1919), and Pierre Pasquier (1928-1934). The present Governor General Vice Admiral Jean Decoux, appointed in 1940, has so far (1944) managed to prevent the Japanese from taking over the control of the confederacy, in spite of terrible odds.

PEOPLES

The striking contrasts of the country—the configuration of the land with its plains and mountains, the heat and cold, the alternation of dry and rainy seasons—correspond to the extreme variety of ethnic groups. Though many of these groups still stubbornly cling to their beliefs and ancient customs, the French penetration, which, as mentioned, started in the fifties of the last century, has largely contributed to the leveling of the various social and racial barriers and to orienting the elite of these peoples toward human progress.

Today the French number approximately 45,000 people, most of whom are civil and military officials. A great many, however, belong to the professional class, and others are planters, or owners or managers of mines and industrial plants.

It is very difficult to find a basis for a logical division of the local peoples of French Indochina. From a purely scientific point of view, the attempt made by Henri Maspero to classify them according to language is probably the most satisfactory thus far made. This classification is, however, somewhat artificial, besides requiring a familiarity with philologic terminology, and we therefore prefer for practical reasons to deal with the peoples in Indochina chiefly according to their numerical or cultural importance. Thus we are able to distinguish two main groups: (1) the more developed peoples of the plains and the Mekong valley, and (2) the less developed mountain tribes.

PEOPLES OF THE PLAINS AND THE MEKONG VALLEY

ANNAMITES

The numerically most important people not only in this group, but in the whole of Indochina, are the Annamites, also referred to as Annamese, living in the lowlands of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin-China, numbering approximately 17,000,000 souls, or nearly three-fourths of the total population of French Indochina (24,000,000).

The Annamites of today are culturally and physically closely related to the Chinese, and it has been surmised that the former before historic

times immigrated to Tonkin from China. This theory, however, seems to have little or no real foundation. To judge from ancient written Chinese records, as well as from the results of recent archeological and anthropological research, it is more likely that the Annamite group originated and developed in northern Indochina (Tonkin and northern Annam) from an amalgamation of Chinese, other Mongolic invaders (Thai or Muong?), and the local population, possibly Indonesians (cf. p. 25). This development undoubtedly took place at the very beginning of the Christian Era.

The Annamite is generally of small stature (average height, 5 ft. 2 in.), but well proportioned, and brachycephalic (index 82.2). He has prominent cheek bones, slanting eyes, straight, black hair and sparse beard. Owing to climatic and other conditions, the Annamites in Tonkin have become differentiated from their kinsmen in the south. The northern type is stouter and more energetic than his southern brethren, who often are rather delicate and somewhat effeminate. The northern and southern types also differ in dress. North of the Gate of Annam (La Porte d'Annam), men and women generally wear brown-colored clothing and the women wrap the hair in turbans, while in the south the dress is more colorful, the women wearing tunics in bright colors and using a sheer silk scarf as headgear. The region of Hué, the capital of Annam, is reputed for the beauty and grace of its women, as well as their aptitude for the fine arts, music, and poetry.

It is difficult to classify with certainty the Annamite language in any of the great philologic categories established for the Indochinese peoples. As a matter of fact, the structure of the syntax is of Thai character, but the vocabulary seems to be partly of the Môn-Khmer family. In addition, about one-third of the vocabulary is of Chinese origin (words pertaining to administration, religion, philosophy, place names, etc.), which is understandable because of the profound Chinese influence in the country for two millenniums.

In his behavior, the average Annamite is reserved, ceremonious, and cautious. He is generally capable of great self-control, and though, as a rule, he does not ostentatiously express his feelings, he judges severely those who antagonize him, especially by vulgar or brutal manners, is prone to catch and capitalize the ridiculous, and has a certain sense of humor. Temperamental persons are thoroughly disliked.

The Annamite is exceedingly frugal. His food consists mainly of rice, some vegetables, a little fish, and a seasoning called *ngoc-mam*, a "fish sauce" rich in vitamins and calories. On more festive occasions, he may add

some meat such as pork or duck to his menu. He is very seldom seen drunk, is not a great smoker, but enjoys chewing the betel nut with lime. In some of the overcrowded areas, as, for example, in the delta of Tonkin, a considerable proportion of the local population suffers periodically from undernourishment.

As with the Chinese, group interests are important among the Annamites, and the family system, based on filial piety and ancestor worship, is strongly established. The political and moral concepts of Confucius have penetrated the social organization.

The basic popular unit of government is the commune or rural center, governed by an oligarchy of notables, based on the triple standard of age, wealth, and knowledge. The French administration has respected and preserved this local government.

The religion of the Annamites is a mixture of nature worship or animism (resulting in ancestor worship), of Taoism and Buddhism, the latter belonging to the so-called Greater Vehicle or Mahayana sect which came by way of China.

The Annamites converted to Christianity form a very important minority of more than a million people, most of them being Roman Catholics. They are most numerous in southern Tonkin, northern Annam, and in the Saigon region. The activities of the French missionaries have been of great benefit to the Annamites, as well as to other natives, especially in the field of education. They have also contributed to the development of agriculture, and their social work deserves much praise.

A peculiar religious movement is Caodaism, with important ramifications also among the Cambodians. The sect was founded around 1924, obviously on Japanese instigation, and has served as a means of control of the masses. From a humble beginning, the sect gained ground rapidly and counted at the outbreak of the war about a million adherents. Caodaism professes to strive for closer relationship between Christians, Buddhists, Confucianists, Taoists, and nature worshipers, but its real aim is to serve as a tool for Japanese political penetration into Indochina, especially in Annamite countries. This politico-religious movement must be regarded as an evidence of the Japanese attempt to dominate the mind of the peoples of East Asia. The ultimate goal of this policy is to bring various religious sects together into a few large groups (or "Internationales") under the supreme leadership of the god-emperor.

At least 80 percent of the Annamites earn their livelihood as peasants and fishermen. The officials, belonging to the highly hierarchic Mandarinate, are today considerably Gallicized. Among the officials, especially

those more closely connected with the court of Hué, capital of Annam, a great many are remarkable for their learning and ability. In addition to the above classes, there is a relatively small, but nevertheless rather influential, middle class made up of landowners, small merchants, and intellectuals.

CAMBODIANS

From both the political and cultural point of view, the Cambodians, who number about 3,000,000, form the most important group after the Annamites. They live in the lower Mekong valley, principally in Cambodia. There are, in addition, small minorities in western Siam and in eastern Cochin-China.

The origin of the Cambodians is not exactly known, but it is generally assumed that they are the descendants of the Khmers, who made their country and their civilization famous through their impressive buildings of religious character, a great many of which have been preserved to the present time, for example, the Angkor group, well known to all those who have visited East Asia.

From a linguistic point of view, the Cambodians are classified as belonging to the Môn-Khmer group, but from a physical point of view they are, at least to a certain extent, mixed with Thai and Chinese. In addition, there may also be a certain mixture of Hindu and Malay blood.

The Cambodian is generally relatively tall (average height, 5 ft., 5 in.) and of vigorous constitution. He is subbrachycephalic (index 83.6) and has a brown skin of various shades from light to dark. The nose is large with the bridge often almost lacking, and the eyes are generally not slanting. Men and women have the hair cut so that it stands up like the bristles of a brush. The Buddhist priests and monks, however, have their heads shaved.

The Cambodians dress in a picturesque way, using bright-colored textiles. The numerous priests or monks, often seen walking in files on the roads, are wrapped in a lemon-yellow togalike cloak. The most typical garment of both sexes is the *sampot*, a brightly colored strip of cotton or silk tucked around the waist with the lower end brought up between the legs and fastened to the belt in front. The upper part of the body is covered by a tight-fitting jacket or tunic, buttoned in the front. Sometimes the women use, instead of a jacket, a strip of cloth or a scarf.

The Cambodians live in houses built on high stilts, or in floating houses anchored along the rivers or on the periodically flooded plains.



PLATE 10

Upper: The Buddhist stupa on the sacred mound in the center of Pnom-Penh, the capital of Cambodia. The space surrounding this monument has been converted by the French into an attractive park. Photograph by the author.

Lower: A typical Buddhist monastery in Luang Prabang, upper Laos, the "Vat Xien Ten," rebuilt in 1561 by King Jettah. Courtesy National Geographic Society.

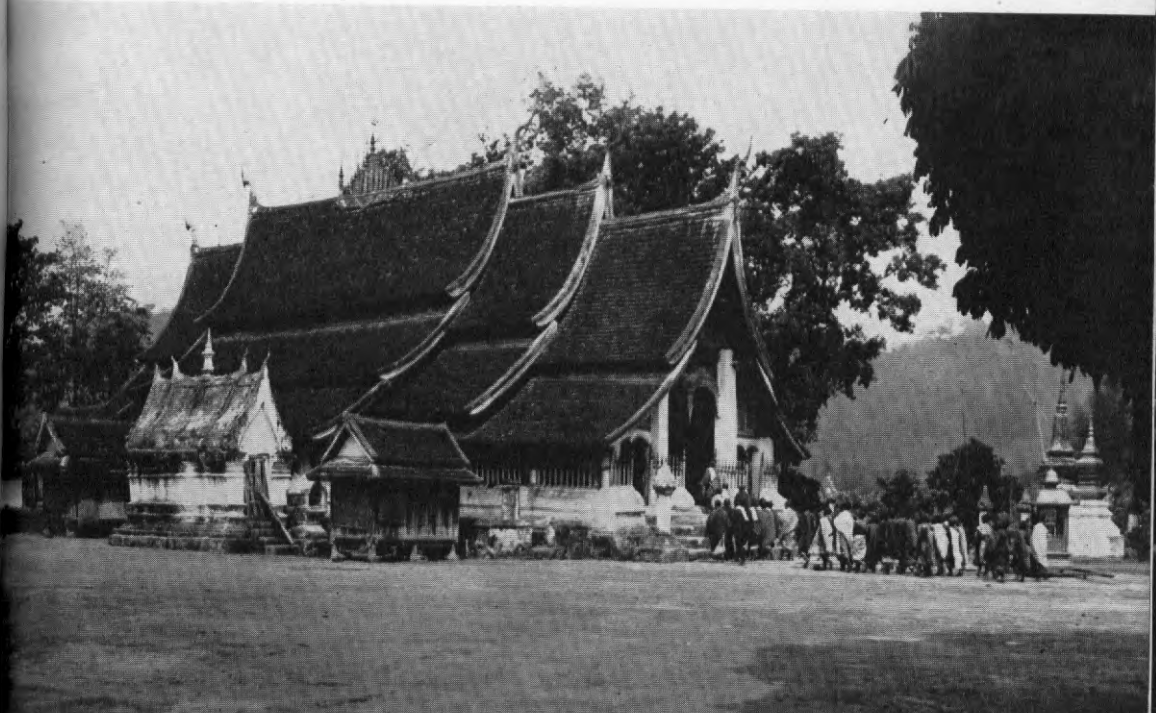




PLATE 11

Left: An Annamite shrine in the town of Thanh-hoa, northern Annam. In the foreground, a sacred tree with offerings of lime pots, believed to be "animated." The latter are respectfully referred to by the natives as "Sir Lime Pot." In the background, a multi-colored dragon made of paper.

Right: The Annamite Mot-cot or single-pillar shrine in Hanoi, Tonkin, in recent years saved from destruction and restored under the auspices of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient.

Photographs by the author.

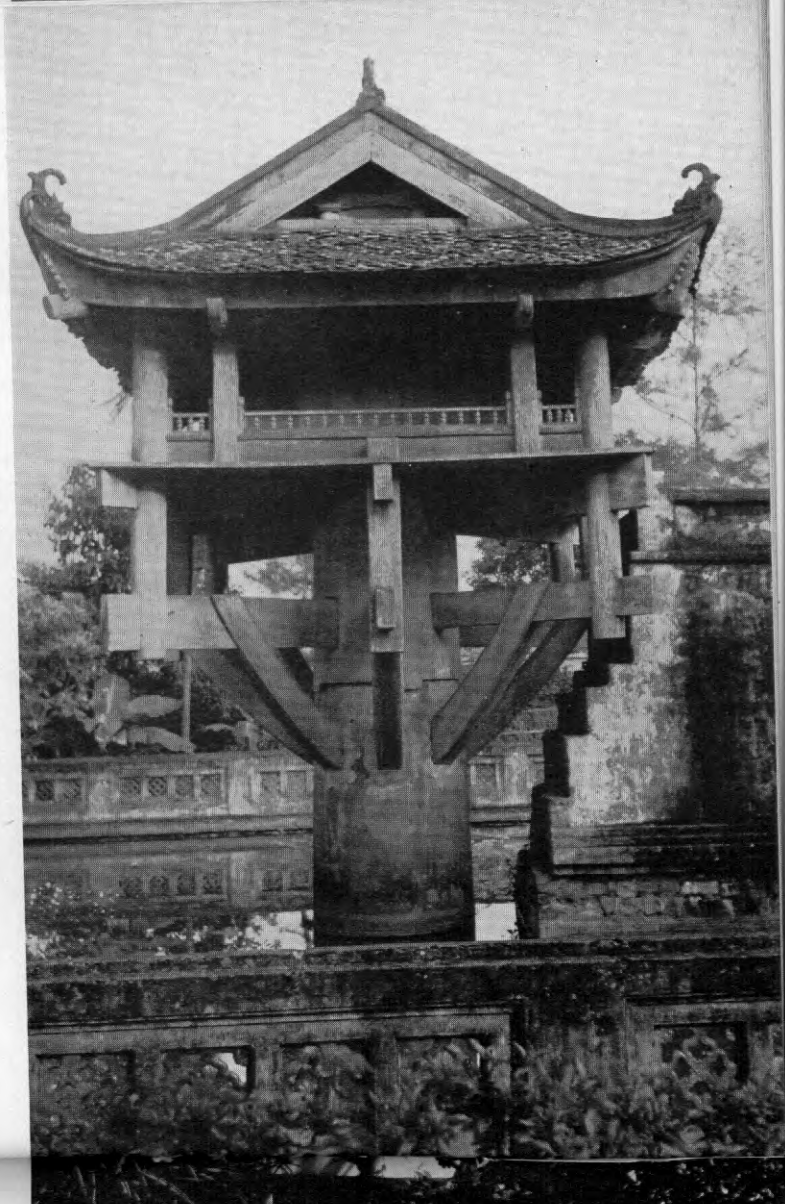




PLATE 12

Upper: The decorative gate of a famous Annamite shrine built on an islet in a pond ("Le petit lac") in Hanoi, capital of Tonkin.

Lower: Annamite fortune tellers at the Sacred Fish or Phu-cat shrine (Pagode des Poissons sacrés) in Thanh-hoa Province.

Photographs by the author.





PLATE 13

Upper: An Annamite shrine at Mat-son in the district of Dong-son, Thanh-hoa Province, northern Annam. An altar, supporting incense burners, screens the entrance (to prevent evil spirits lurking around in the air from intruding). To the left, stone statues representing guardians.

Lower: A close-up of the guardians of the shrine.

Photographs by the author.

