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VIET-NAM BULLETIN

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VIET-NAM CULTURE (12-69)





Traditional theater from South Vietnam, «Hat Boi,» is one of four main sections of drama taught at Saigon's Conservatory of Music and Drama. Scene from a «Cai Luong» (at right), comic opera entitled «Wife and Lover.» One of the early examples of modern theater in Vietnam, this play is authored by Nam Chau (second left).

After a hiatus of three decades when the arts took a back seat to survival, culture in Vietnam is going through the ferment of change and new development.

For the first time since the outbreak of World War II a Vietnamese administration is actively encouraging the arts, stimulating the modern mass media while bolstering the traditional cultural forms. The nation's first Minister of State for Cultural Affairs has been appointed; the first Cultural Week has been officially proclaimed and successfully celebrated. Aimed at inculcating a sense of nationhood or ethnic allegiance in a historically centrifugal society, the Saigon government's efforts coincide with a ground swell of interest in cultural attain-

ments and entertainment — a wave propelled largely by the impact of the Western world's modes.

Today the Vietnamese, particularly the restless, questing, experimenting youth, are being caught up in their nation's third major cultural renaissance. The first was the neoconfucian renaissance of the 12th century, and the second was the sinophilia of the 19th century in reaction to French acculturation. The third is a search for truly expressive forms in an atmosphere of burgeoning nationalism which seeks sustenance in the traditional arts and mores but is assaulted unsubtly by the vigorous forms of Western culture circling the globe.

The third renaissance is shaping a new cultural ambience for Vietnam's future. That future will see

THIRD CULTURAL REN



neither a thoroughgoing revival of waning traditional forms nor a sweeping Westernization of popular culture — although in the current transitional period there does seem to be such a dichotomy. Aesthetes in Saigon, Dalat and Hue believe the future will see the emergence of a contemporary culture — already perceptible in the performing arts — in which Western forms are adapted to Vietnamese mores. It will be a culture far removed from what the French like to call «a creeping thirst for Coca Cola.» Just as the 19th-century Japanese took Western technology, twisted and shaped it and brought it forth again as an essentially Japanese manifestation, so the 20th-century Vietnamese seem intent on merging the West's cultural forms with the East's sensitivities to produce an indigenous culture of their own. In the words of Mai Tho Truyen, new Minister of State for Cultural Affairs in the Saigon cabinet:

Time is Ripe

«It will combine the best of oriental and occidental worlds. The Western cultural influences which



Mai Tho Truyen is first Minister of State for Cultural Affairs of the Republic of Vietnam.

RAISSANCE

have so strongly affected Vietnamese culture will be adapted and made more acceptable.»

In the view of some Vietnamese scholars, the development of such an indigenous culture is overdue. They contend that much of traditional culture is not Vietnamese at all and that the time is ripe for the blossoming of a true Vietnamese culture. Implicit in today's renaissance, as they see it, is the peeling off of ancient Chinese influences and the accommodating of Western forms more congruent with modern Vietnamese life and aspirations.

Life is not modern

But for the moment, in a society still 65 per cent agrarian, much of life is not modern and many aspirations have not changed from Confucian days, so the East-West dichotomy in culture seems as sharp as the rural-urban dichotomy or the universal dichotomy of the older and younger generations.

A middle-aged scholar, born in North Vietnam, widely traveled, well-versed in both European and

Vietnamese teenagers display talent with various stringed instruments at Saigon program. The strong Chinese influence on Vietnam's culture is most apparent in performances of traditional music and song by artists from the old capital of Hue.



A blend of East, West sensitivities

Eastern cultures, says the gap is wide between old and young, rural and urban, conservative and liberal, patriarchial and independent, illiterate and literate, Eastern- and Western-oriented.

«We Vietnamese,» he says, «claim 4,000 years of culture. But this is not really true. Even before we became another of China's «barbarian» colonies about the time Christ was born, our culture was based on the Chinese. And during a thousand years of Chinese occupation we adopted their way of life and their culture. In the 12th century, 200 years after independence from China, we adopted the neoconfucian forms — a mixture of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism — which were then sweeping China. Our music is Chinese, our art is Chinese, our architecture, poetry and writing styles are all Chinese.

«It was not until the 18th century during the Le dynasty, when Nguyen Du, a famous Vietnamese poet and administrator, wrote the Kim Van Kieu in Vietnamese — the first major work to be written in Vietnamese — that our culture began developing as something peculiar to us. But this development was short-lived. When the French came, bringing their culture, the Vietnamese at first resisted and rejected the new ways, and turned towards a form of nationalism which was really sinophilia. Gradually the urban elite accepted the French ways. But the rural people did not; instead they clung tenaciously to their old oriental ways and the cultural gap developed. It has not yet been healed and may, in fact, be widening.»

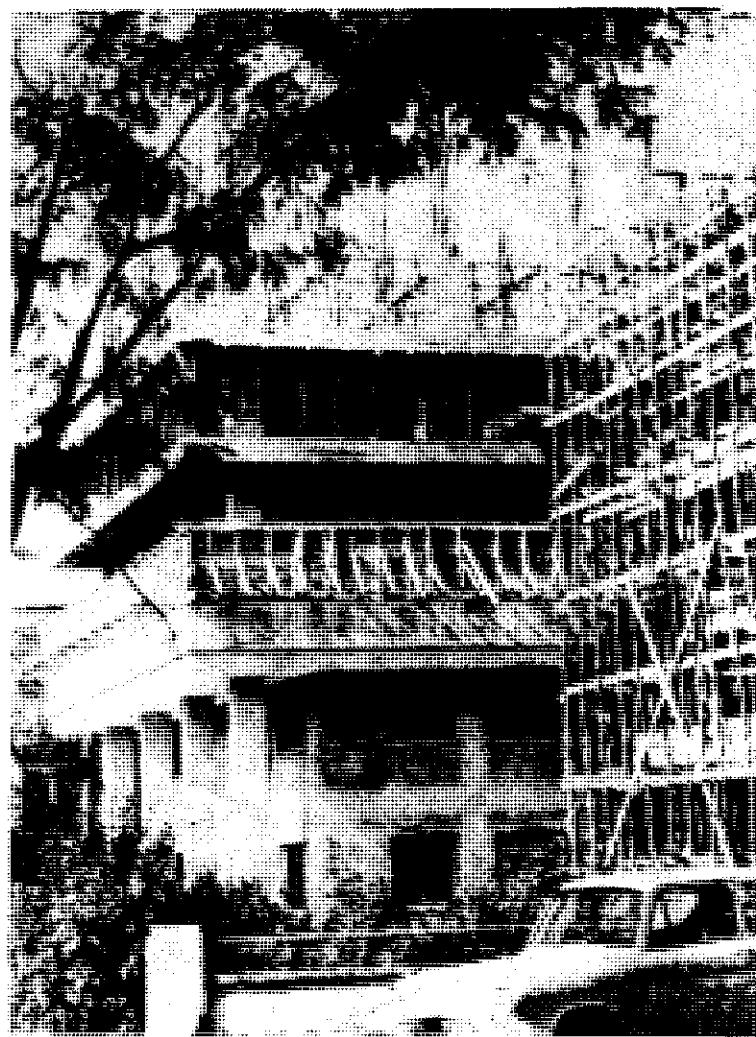
The size of the cultural gap is evident in an hour's drive from downtown Saigon, where modishly dressed youths stroll past shop windows filled with expensive stereo tape decks, amplifiers, record players, television sets and radios, to a provincial hamlet typical of much of South Vietnam. It is a drive between centuries.

Rural Culture

A good deal of the rural culture is based on religion, much of it animistic. The farmers have rain, wind and agricultural gods, planting and harvest festivals, their own musical forms, and a way of life that always has resisted the winds of change. From early times each of Vietnam's villages has had its own Divine Protector, a god nominated by the Emperor to see to the welfare of the villagers. Shrines were built on the Emperor's orders for the worship of these Protectors, and succeeding dynasties perpetuated the tradition as a means of bringing unity to the people along with a sense of kinship with and obligation to the royal throne. An imperial edict might conceivably be ignored in villages traditionally enjoying a considerable degree of local autonomy,

but it was more likely to be obeyed if presented as part of the design of the village's Divine Protector. While it may thus have originated as a social innovation partly motivated by political expediency, the tradition grew through the centuries, became cross-mixed with ancestor worship and neoconfucianism, and developed into a native religion that remains deeply rooted in rural areas. A village today may have a Catholic church and a Buddhist temple, but it also is likely to have a newly painted Divine Protector's shrine and a sizeable congregation of the faithful whose forms of worship are the forms of rural culture.

The countryfolks' cultural forms have changed little over the years. Except for the visual aspects of the highly exaggerated, almost grotesque theater patterned after Peking opera, their culture is almost purely verbal. They are fascinated by the oriental



National Library estimated at over US\$1 million will be completed next year on Gia Long, Saigon.

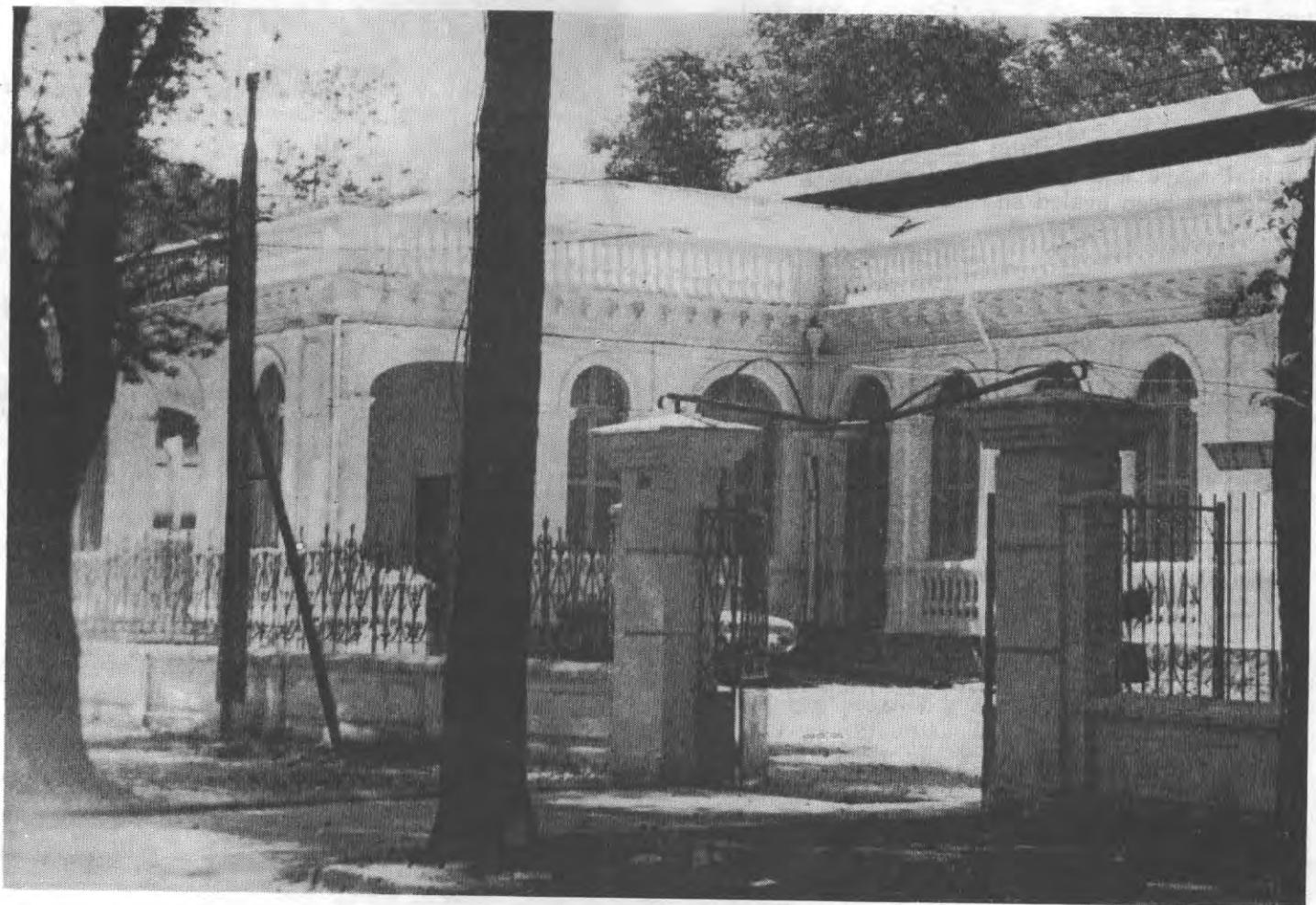
tragi-comedies and the love poems featuring beautiful maidens and dashing war heroes. Their epic poems and songs are sad, and their drama is filled with the vicissitudes of life.

Saigon is another world. The war goes on, but so does everyday life. Life is very different today than it was a few years ago before the influx of thousands of Westerners, soldiers and civilians who brought their art, their music, their way of life and their cultural orientation with them. The U.S. Army particularly speeded up the acculturation process, but the «mod» style and other Western artifacts had started speeding around the world long before America sent combat troops to Vietnam. Many observers believe that urban life in Vietnam sooner or later would have felt the impact of the new culture with or without the U.S. Army. But there is no denying how much the presence of this cross-section of American life has accelerated Vietnamese acceptance of occidental styles.

Today, in Saigon's small, box-like recording studios, the young gather. They urge the owners of assorted tape decks, who earn their living by recording tapes for the urban affluent, to play Western music. As the beat, amplified through several speakers, thumps through the neighborhood, others gather

Radio, television produce impact

on the sidewalks to catch the new sound from abroad. In noodle kitchens and coffee shops the patrons watch television, the younger ones usually switching from the Vietnamese channel to the American Forces channel featuring Broadway entertainment, comedy shows, thrillers and cowboy dramas. In bars and nightclubs, combos belt out Western rhythms and long-haired youngsters sing Western songs either in English or Vietnamese, the musicians expertly playing electrical and percussion instruments their parents never heard of. Street exhibitions display paintings of hundreds of contemporary Vietnamese artists, but none are in the traditional styles. Small coffee houses frequented mainly by students play recorded Western music or Vietnamese translations of Western songs. And the customers have adopted more than just music from the West. Tight trousers and miniskirts, long



Conservatory of Music and Drama established in 1959 was formerly branch of Saigon University Faculty of Arts.

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Motion pictures are highly popular and important factor in Vietnam's modern cultural growth. More than 24 million Vietnamese annually see films in 94 theaters. Below: Cultural Drama team performs in hamlet.



hair, brightly colored shirts, «mod» sunglasses and boots — these are the garb of the young urban Vietnamese. They watch Vietnamese and foreign movies of the James Bond genre, and they patronize newsstands covered with bright magazines filled with teenage fashions and stories about popular Vietnamese singers and movie actors and actresses. They prefer ice cream to noodle soup.

«Few of these young city people know much about their own culture except for the well-known festivals such as Tet or the Mid-Autumn Festival,» says the scholar versed in Eastern and Western cultures. «It is not that they don't care. But access to Western ways is easier than access to traditional Vietnamese culture. They are caught between wanting the modern culture, including its material objects, that the West offers and feeling the surge of nationalism, which means the traditional mores.»

Radio and television are the media mainly responsible for the changes. As a Saigon University coed says, «Probably 80 percent or even more of the young people in Saigon prefer Western music and art. We like the music especially. Few of us

understand our own culture, mainly because we have never had the opportunity to study its features. But the Western forms can be seen and heard daily on the American Forces radio and television stations. And now even Vietnamese radio and television have programs devoted to Western music.»

Television first came to Vietnam in February 1966 when both the American Forces and the government-sponsored channels went on the air. At first the programs had to be transmitted from Super-constellation planes flying overhead, but by October 1966 the main transmitters were on the ground. (The planes still fly over remote areas unreachable by present ground-based transmitters.) TV sets were airlifted throughout the country to be placed in village squares, store windows and other public places. The American Forces network now telecasts through the afternoons and evenings, while the Vietnamese networks 100 employees manage to produce enough programs to stay on the air at least four hours each evening. (While the U.S. fare includes movies and other taped material, much of the Vietnamese offering is live — and live production eats up scripts and talent at a fast rate.)

The most popular Vietnamese programs are comic-dramas patterned after the Cai Luong theater of World War I vintage. Much of the programming is patriotic in character — presentations of medals to soldier heroes, documentaries on rural development and popular self-defense forces, speeches by public officials. But more and more the new culture is being shown. Beautiful young girls with long hair and high-necked ao dai gowns may open their presentations with a sad old Vietnamese song about a lover who went off to war, but before the show is finished they are likely to be singing, in either Vietnamese or English, a song that left Tin Pan Alley within the past few months. And currently rivaling even the Cai Luong in popularity are situation comedies played out in modern upper-middle-class urban settings — comedies involving heroes, heroines and buffoons easily recognizable as one's next-door neighbors and all well indoctrinated with Western habits, virtues and petty vices.

New Organizations

Groups and associations of young musicians, artists and writers have mushroomed in Vietnam's cities, too numerous to count. They cut across class, educational and religious lines, assimilating those interested in the live and active culture from the West — exciting musical forms like pop, jazz, soul, rock, rhythm and blues, and vigorous art styles far removed from oriental delicacy of execution. These younger Vietnamese have come to prefer art works that look well on a wall, while the older Vietnamese consider the story of a painting, why it was painted and what it means more important than whether the work is well executed. «Young Turks» of the new groups applaud the new trend in architecture. Where Vietnamese buildings once combined the worst of Chinese and European styles, now they are

becoming more functional and at the same time more aesthetically pleasing in their clean lines. And giving organizing strength to the new groups is the fact that the new culture, unlike the forms introduced by the French, is not necessarily confined to a small urban, educated elite. Anyone with an inexpensive transistor radio can enjoy jazz.

Ranged against these new cultural groups of «Young Turks» are 42 traditional organizations, the «Old Guard,» most of them in Saigon, a few in Hue, none in the rural areas. During the 30-year lull in cultural development these organizations were all that manned the urban barriers against fatal erosion of the traditional forms. Protective rather than active in character, dedicated to perpetuating and reviving the old culture, they have memberships centered around mature scholars. Says a Ministry of Cultural Affairs spokesman: «They did effective work during our three decades of cultural hiatus. But now many of these groups are like many of our political parties — membership is often limited to the founder, his family and a few close friends.» To this our widely traveled scholar from the North adds:

«Most of the Vietnamese interested in traditional culture are middle-aged academics. Many are Western-educated but are strong nationalists and often refuse to recognize the influence the war and the influx of foreigners have had on Vietnamese culture. They believe that when Vietnam is at peace they will be able to pick up the threads of their culture, exclude all Western influences and return to the past. These people are looking to the past and to China for cultural utopia. The young people are looking to the future and to the West.»

Old Guard' is needed

But the 42 Old Guard organizations cannot be written off as ineffective. Some observers believe that it will be these groups, stimulated by government initiative and prodding, which will be largely responsible for making the traditional culture hold its own and provide a base on which an eclectic new culture can be built.

Renewing interest in Vietnam's ancient cultural heritage will not be easy in a nation with a growing urban population, a population becoming increasingly younger in median age. Aside from the competition it faces from the imported culture and aside from its inherent Chinese character, the traditional culture faces major barriers to its popularization among nonrural residents. An organized campaign by traditional adherents would be inhibited by wartime uncertainties, difficulties and tight budgets, with these problems compounded by the inescapable fact that there is an acute shortage of musicians, artists and drama troupes trained in the traditional ways.

The gap between the Young Turks and the Old Guard is wide, but neither represents the middle



Piano organ sound system controls draw attention of Vietnamese girls in store.

ground that ultimately should prove more viable. «Never forget the Vietnamese genius for accommodation,» says one observer who believes that the traditional culture will survive after a liberal assimilation of Western modes and artifacts. «Assimilation probably will be slow,» he says, «and its success will depend on two variables: the degree of interest shown in an eclectic culture by the younger set, and the degree of readiness on the part of the traditionalists to give up their belief that the impact of Western culture is merely a passing event.»

Government Efforts

Reaching out a hand to both the Young Turks and the Old Guard, accepting the role of catalyst, is the Saigon government. Through its Ministry of Cultural Affairs, its Ministry of Information, its Ministry of Education, its recently formed Culture and Educational Council, its government-owned motion picture, radio and television enterprises and the music and drama institute it subsidizes, the government of President Nguyen Van Thieu is stimulating the cultural renaissance. Support is being given to the traditional; through it the government hopes the people will conceive a stronger national identity. But a viable culture, not just the artificial perpetuation of waning forms, is the government's objective, so the infusion of virile strains from the West is part of the development plan.

«There will be no turning the clock back,» says an official of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. «We anticipate that the best of Vietnamese traditional

culture can be salvaged and strengthened, and that it can very well benefit from the influence of the best of Western traditions and cultural forms.» To this the new Minister adds: «We will not look on these influences as being distinctly French or American or from any other country. We will consider them merely as Western, and accept the best. But if we neglect our own culture or reject it, we will cease to be Vietnamese. We want to do the same as the Japanese. They became a great industrial power with Western ways and technology, but at the same time they kept the basis of their ancient culture and their national identity.»

Mai Tho Truyen is a South Vietnamese by birth, a scholar, a Buddhist lay leader, a founder of the Xa Loi pagoda, a founder of the Buddhist-supported Van Hanh University in Saigon and chairman of the Association of Buddhists. When the government formed a Cultural Affairs Office in December 1968 as a branch of the Ministry of Education, Truyen was named its head. When it was elevated to the status of a ministry in September 1969, he became the first cabinet minister charged with the development of culture. The Ministry still has no budget, and until the next fiscal year it is operating with funds funneled to it from the Ministry of Education.

Minister Truyen's Plans

Minister Truyen's plans are far-reaching. They include projects to:

- * Bring a common language to Vietnam, one that overrides the accents, nuances, writing styles and word meanings which distinguish the dialects used respectively in the north, central and southern parts of the Republic of Vietnam;

- * Establish a translation center with two major tasks: to translate into Vietnamese the best of the foreign world's classics and modern works, and to translate into modern Vietnamese those indigenous classics revered by the traditionalists but written in a Chinese distinguished by mandarin styles of word usage and construction;

- * Complete by next year a new national library, planned since 1957 and now under construction on Gia Long St. in downtown Saigon at a cost of 120 million piasters (US\$1,016,950 at the official exchange rate of US\$1 to 118 piasters), and seek an additional 100 million piasters for library equipment and books;

- * Establish with both private financial assistance and government subsidy a separate television station reserved for educational and cultural programs, including reproductions of traditional Vietnamese theater and performances of ritual music most Vietnamese have never heard;

- * Send dramatic troupes on tours of rural areas not yet served by television.

Minister Truyen's most ambitious hope is that a cultural center can be built on a site he has already selected on Nguyen Du near Saigon's Cercle Hippi-

que. He envisions a 60-million-piaster building with lecture halls, discussion rooms, galleries for permanent exhibitions and a 4,000-seat auditorium for concerts, drama and movies.

Cultural Week

The Minister's first task on assuming office was planning for Cultural Week, which was celebrated the last week in September. Features included evenings of modern and traditional Vietnamese drama from both the North and the South, movies, discussions on making movies and other problems of the motion picture industry, exhibitions of books and periodicals published in Vietnam during the past 15 years, exhibitions of children's paintings, lectures on music, and concerts.

The Conservatory of Music and Drama, established in 1959 after two years as a branch of Saigon University's Faculty of Arts, played a major role in presenting traditional cultural forms to the public. The only institution in the country teaching young students traditional music and drama, it also teaches Western music. It is financed by a Ministry of Education budget allotment of one million piasters a year and has an enrollment of 700 in Saigon and 200 at its Hue branch. Most of Cultural Week's events featuring traditional music and drama were presented by private groups formed by Conservatory teachers and students. These groups travel throughout Vietnam and often to Laos and Cambodia, charging 450,000 piasters per performance to cover travel and living costs. Most of the 200 Saigon students in the Conservatory's traditional music classes begin studying at the age of seven. Those who first complete an ordinary education must attain the second baccalaureate (equivalent to a high school diploma). Even then a rigid examination is required to select the 80 to 120 new students each year from the 500 or more who apply. Each student specializes in one of the 15 traditional instruments. For a second-class bachelor's degree the student must study for three years, and for a first-class bachelor's degree the course is five years. A master's degree is granted after eight years of successful work.

Classes in Western music are given to 300 Saigon students. They are the Conservatory's most popular courses, and each year more than 800 apply for the 150 seats in the beginners' classes. Students who select the piano or the violin must study seven years for a bachelor's degree and 10 years for a master's. Those selecting simpler Western instruments like the guitar or a woodwind or brass instrument study five years for a bachelor's degree. Most students become music teachers on graduation. Like their colleagues in the traditional music classes, these students and their teachers have formed private groups to go on tour. Four of them now are organized, but they give concerts only in South Vietnam. Their performances are much in demand, for there are no municipal or national orchestras in the country, and even the Saigon Symphony Orchestra, led by Con-

servatory director Nguyen Phung, is a private group.

The Conservatory's drama classes, all traditional, are divided into four sections totaling 200 Saigon students. Each section specializes in a particular form: the *Hat Cheo*, traditional drama from North Vietnam, the *Hat Boi*, traditional drama from South Vietnam, the *Cai Luong*, comic opera introduced about 50 years ago, and the *Thoai Kich*, modern drama relying mainly on gestures for dramatic effect.

The Conservatory's 200 students in Hue follow the same curricula and the division of pupils among traditional music. Western music and traditional drama is roughly the same. For the future it is hoped that branches can be opened in other cities, possibly Dalat, Can Tho and Da Nang, to accommodate some of the hundreds of students whose applications have to be rejected each year. And the Conservatory wants to send more musical groups and drama troupes overseas to show the world that Vietnam is more than just a country engrossed in warfare. The 105 teachers at the Conservatory also hope to be able to establish a section specializing in the traditional dance, but the shortage of qualified teachers in this field makes their hopes dim.

Motion Pictures

The first day of Cultural Week was set aside as the day that five of Saigon's movie theaters offered free showings of Vietnamese movies. Most were products of the government's National Motion Picture Center, others were produced by the Vietnamese armed forces, and a few came from private producers.

The highlight of Cultural Week was a ceremony honoring Nguyen Du, the 18th century's famous poet, the first Vietnamese to do important work in Vietnamese (he also wrote in Chinese) and the author of the *Kim Van Kieu*. This poem can be recited by heart, at least in part, by almost all Vietnamese. It is an adaptation of an old Chinese story, and while the characters are Vietnamese, the scene is set in China. It is a love story, a tragedy and a moral poem upholding filial duty: a beautiful girl sells herself as a prostitute to save her parents, falsely accused of a crime, from death and dishonor.

In anticipation of Cultural Week a movie was filmed by the National Motion Picture Center based on the *Kim Van Kieu*. The movie focused on 33 paintings completed after months of work by Tu Duyen, one of Vietnam's few contemporary artists who can paint in the traditional style. He used water colors on silk, both traditional mediums, to compose delicate and highly expressive paintings depicting the 15 years in the life of the *Kim Van Kieu* poem's heroine.

How important the motion picture industry is to Vietnam's culture may be estimated by statistics showing that 24 million Vietnamese annually see films in 94 theaters with a total of 64,000 seats, thus pro-

viding the government with 180 million piasters a year in entertainment tax receipts.

The first silent film produced in Vietnam was, predictably, the *Kim Van Kieu*, and that was in 1921. The industry reached its peak in 1957 when 28 feature films were turned out by 14 commercial film producers. Today there are 18 private producers authorized to make movies, but in the past five years only six have been able to finance production of films (costs average five million piasters for a 90-minute film) and they made only 12 movies in that time. Stories of spies and beautiful women are most popular, followed by variations on the *Cai Luong* type of drama and fictitious accounts of South Vietnamese soldiers invading North Vietnam.

To supplement this fare, 34 film importers distribute from 200 to 450 foreign feature films throughout the country every year. Forty-five percent of these films come from the Republic of China and the rest from 12 other nations, principally the United States, Italy, India and Japan. Import taxes going to the government as a result of this trade total about 22 million piasters annually.

In 1959 the government established the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) Psywar Movie Center and the National Motion Picture Center. Today they account for most of the 150 films, including newsreels and documentaries, released annually by government sources. And this is the heart of the native industry. What contributions the private sector makes are the work of talented amateurs who must have other business interests to finance their occasional moving picture gambles. But Do Tien Duc, director of the National Motion Picture Center, has plans to establish a firmer footing for the private sector of the movie industry.

Government Producer

The National Motion Picture Center, operating with an 80,750,000-piaster annual budget from the Ministry of Information, produces weekly newsreels as well as feature films and documentaries. A special newsreel in Vietnamese, English and French is filmed every 15 days for distribution overseas through Vietnamese diplomatic missions. All documentaries also are dialogued in those three languages. Most show the people's support for such government programs as pacification, agricultural and educational improvement, village development, etc., and many are shown on Vietnamese television. The Center's feature films depict the daring exploits of soldiers fighting the Viet Cong or the North Vietnamese Army, or stress the theme of a spirited public accepting temporary suffering for a future opportunity to live in peace under institutions of their own choosing.

Director Duc, a graduate of the National Institute of Administration, has plans to:

* Arrange for Vietnam's 18 authorized motion

picture producers to use National Motion Picture Center facilities to help cut their costs;

* Arrange for co-production of films by private producers and the Center's technicians and cameramen, who have been trained abroad or by foreign advisers;

* Negotiate for a reduction of taxes on raw materials, cameras and other equipment private producers must import. (Now producers must pay 418 piasters for every dollar's worth of equipment they import, although the official exchange rate is 118 to US\$1.)

Duc also is proposing that the more qualified of the 18 private producers be permitted to become film importers as well. Those whose work is considered excellent by the Ministry of Information, according to his proposals, would be allowed to import one foreign movie, while those whose works win international awards would be permitted to import three movies annually, tax free, for screening in Vietnam's cinemas.

Ultimately it is hoped that a balance can be restored between foreign films and domestic productions shown in Vietnam. And it is hoped that domestic films can be upgraded to reflect more accurately Vietnam's traditional culture.

«In this cultural renaissance we now are caught up in,» says the Minister of Cultural Affairs, «we find ourselves between the flow of Western culture into our country and the lack of interest in our own culture. We once accepted the cultural patronage of the Chinese. But today we have no intention of accepting the cultural patronage of any one country, although we will eagerly study other cultures. My policy to revive and create renewed interest in our culture will be within the bounds of Vietnamese values and traditions and with strong Buddhist overtones. By embracing the mores of Buddhism it will be humanistic, liberal and nationalistic.»

How much of this culture the young «mods» of Saigon will accept remains conjectural. But our Tonkinese scholar, the widely traveled student of Western and Eastern cultures, remains optimistic about the future. «For the young people,» he says, «part of their being lies outside themselves — part in the East and part in the West. They want their culture and they want the Western culture too. The young people have become culturally lazy and they find it easier to emulate Western forms than to learn their own cultural forms. But this orientation will pass as they grow older. They will lose a lot of their present identification with the West and become more Vietnamese. By then, thanks in part to them, being a modern, well-rounded Vietnamese of cultivated tastes will require a knowledge of the best of the East and West. By then our culture will be well on its way to its eclectic solution — truly Vietnamese, but gratefully accepting Western forms that help us better to express our feelings as Vietnamese.»

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