



# UNIVERSITY OF HUE

HUE  
SOUTH VIETNAM



1963

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*Dear Friends,*

*In March, 1957, the President of the Republic of Vietnam issued a decree establishing at Hue a coeducational university to serve the needs of higher education in central Vietnam. A salient feature included the complete academic freedom to be afforded on campus, divorced from political and religious control of any sort, in spite of the Rector's being a Catholic priest and the country's being predominantly Buddhist.*

*By November of that same year the University of Hue opened its doors to 387 students. Even the most favorable critics gave it three or four years before the University of Hue would be an embarrassing mistake in the history of education in Vietnam. The enrollment for the past academic year at the University was 2488 and faculty membership 168.*

*Those who said that Vietnam could not support a second university had forgotten to compare statistics. I wonder what they would have found if they had looked into the ratio of universities per 12,000,000 population in, say New York State or Michigan. The critics, too, omitted taking into consideration the staff and faculty members who were so anxious to see that their compatriots received an education commensurate with, or better than, their own. Certain other critics are still waiting for me to open a department of theology.*

*The history of the University of Hue has been a series of crises. We at Hue have found that the conquest of one crisis is a most admirable preparation for the next crisis.*

*Perhaps our faith in ourselves is excessive. Perhaps our faith in freedom is also excessive, particularly as seen against the floods of communism dammed up by the nebulous 17th parallel division zone only 60 miles north of Hue. And perhaps our faith in our friends throughout the world is also excessive. If either of these premises is wrong, then is history a liar, for the six-year history of the University of Hue has given us growth in self-confidence, an increment in freedom, and a rapid solidification in the strength of our friendships throughout the world.*

*It is the firm conviction of our staff and faculty that one day in the near future we shall say in all truth : « The University of Hue is successfully working towards the fulfillment of its mission to educate the people of central Vietnam in such a manner that they will be a positive asset to this young emerging nation and to the free world in general. This could not have been done without our faith in our own abilities, the surging strength of freedom, and the warm encouragement and assistance of our friends throughout the world ».*

*Sincerely,*



*Reverend Cao-van-Luận  
Rector*

*Đây là một bài phát biểu ngắn gọn của một thành viên của Ban chấp hành Đảng bộ trường Đại học Huế. Bài phát biểu này được dịch sang tiếng Anh bởi một thành viên Ban chấp hành Đảng bộ trường Đại học Huế.*

## VIETNAM : A Background of the Nation

Vietnam first emerged as a firm political unity within the same boundaries as it exists today in 1802, when Nguyễn Phước-Anh (Emperor Gia-long) put down warring factions, united the country and established the Nguyễn Dynasty, making his capital at Hue, in central Vietnam. This Dynasty lasted through the period of French domination which began in 1886, through loss of other vassal states now known as Cambodia and Laos, and finally came to an end in 1945 when Emperor Bảo-Đại fled the country in the wake of internal strife among the French, nationalists, communists and dissident sects. A semblance of peace returned only in 1954 when the signing of the Geneva Accords divided the country at the 17th parallel — the north to the communists, the south to the nationalists under the presidency of Ngô-đinh-Điêm.

Geographically, Vietnam is an S-Shaped country on the western coast of the South China Sea. It is the eastern-most country on the Indo-China peninsula and is bounded on the north by China, the west by Laos and Cambodia.

Today South Vietnam is engaged in a fierce civil war with its communist brother to the north. The fight is being waged in every hamlet, village, mountain valley and with every weapon possible, from the printed word to jet helicopter. Its outcome will determine South East Asia's future and, to a large extent, that of the free world.

The earliest record of the people now known as Vietnamese is in the southern part of present-day China. As the people moved south they drove back a Malayan people known as Cham and Khmer and pushed up into the mountains an Indonesian people now known simply as the mountain people. These latter minority groups live in a relationship to the lowland-dwelling Vietnamese somewhat similar to that of the American Indian to Americans of European descent. The minority groups enjoy Vietnamese citizenship.

Of the 12 million population, approximately 2 million are Roman Catholics; the remainder generally practice a religious mixture of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism. There are a few Protestants and Cao-Daists,

the latter being an eclectic religion peculiar to Vietnam. The people speak a Chinese-type language, but have abandoned the character writing for the most part in favor of a much simpler phonetic latinized alphabet invented by a Portuguese Jesuit missionary in the 17th century.

The Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) has a parliamentary constitutional government with strong powers vested in the Chief Executive. This is the government which came to power in 1954. Against most unfavorable odds, not the least of which was the lack of faith in it on the part of other nations of the free world at the time, this government has succeeded in creating a national image and, with large doses of foreign assistance and advice, in injecting a political unity.

Resultant from this have been many economic, social, and educational attainments of note. The currency is solid, most families have a bicycle where previously even one bicycle per village was the exception, permanent type structures are now the rule rather than the exception, and money is widely circulated.

Different social strata now mix freely with each other, and women are playing an increasing part in mixed social gatherings. People are awaking to the fact that they have a duty to the community by taking an active interest in such activities as education, orphanages, and responsibility for public sanitation. Thousands of families have been resettled from the rocky, dry lowlands to the rich fertile earth of the highlands.

Perhaps the most striking steps forward have been taken in the field of education. Every hamlet has its elementary school and the two government universities of Hue and Saigon are training teachers for the purpose of providing one secondary school for each hamlet. While the system of education is still largely a repetition of that left by the French, educational authorities are exploring many different types of education systems with a view of developing course programming fitted directly to the needs of Vietnam and its people as responsible and vocal citizens of the free world. One small but very important example of rethinking the educational process is the introduction of work-scholarships at the University of

Hue, where students are taught that, contrary to former belief, manual labor is neither undignified, nor incompatible with the educated man.

Slowly, methodically, but surely, Vietnam is endeavoring to use its foreign aid towards the same goal after which those countries which so generously assist us are striving: to establish an economically and politically independent, viable anti-communist member of the family of nations. This is the job to which we, the educators of Vietnam, are addressing ourselves so that our country will be ready with a positive, constructive offensive when the soldiers on the front line have completed their mission.

**IMPERIAL CITY  
OF HUE,  
VIETNAM**

The name *Huè* originated in the 17th century as a degenerative form of the words *Thuận-Hóa*, the province wherein the city was situated. This latter was the Vietnamese name for the two provinces on whose boundaries the city lay. These two provinces, called *Ô* and *Lý* previously, came under Vietnamese control by way of a dowry from the Chàm King when the Vietnamese Emperor Trần Anh-Tông betrothed his daughter to the Chàm King. In 1558 Nguyễn-Hoàng established his capital just outside the present city of Hue. Emperor Gia-long, founder of the Nguyễn Dynasty and first to unite the entire country, established his capital here and began construction of his royal court—now known as the « Citadel » or « Forbidden City »—in 1802.

Hue is situated at the foothills of the Vietnam Cordillera, 10 miles inland from the South China Sea in an immense bowl created by the mountain chain to the west and its extensions to the sea on the north and south. The city is approximately equidistant between the northern and southern extremities of Vietnam, at the narrowest width of the country. It is in the tropics, 60 miles by road from the 17th parallel which separates free South Vietnam from communist North Vietnam. National Highway No. 1 and the main line of the national railroad, both of which extend the entire length of the country, go through the city itself. A beautiful river, known as the River of Perfume, bisects the city and runs out to the sea, although it is navigable only in light craft.



*One of Hue's most beautiful sights: co-eds board the ferry after school to cross the Perfume River.*

Hue (pronounced « whey » as in the nursery rhyme) reflects its royal heritage in everything from the velvet blue park-and-tree-lined River of Perfume to the delicate and regally poised girls in their unique tunic-and-silk trousers costume. Radiant flamboyant trees and stately camphor trees stand guard along the streets and wide avenues. Such considerations led the Emperors to make Hue the center of government, the seat of their Imperial Court. Within the city still stands the Forbidden City, rising in brooding majesty above its surroundings. Outside Hue are the tombs of the Emperors, which resemble languid country estates more than places of interment.



*On the outskirts of Hue are located many tombs of former Emperors. This tomb, that of the Emperor Tu-Duc, is typical and complete even to an artificial lake with lotus and stocked with fish.*

Materially, the Hue area produces little besides native straw hats, some lime for making cement and not quite enough rice to support itself. Its foremost product is education. In this city of approximately 120,000 population there are no less than four public secondary schools and five private, with innumerable elementary schools. Education and government are its biggest businesses. Although there are myriads of craftsmen, they are not organized and they work only in a desultory fashion. Its economic future would seem to be capitalizing on the small craftsmen's abilities, on the spectacular his-

toric and natural beauty to attract tourists, and on the abundant clay, lime and water supply for light industrial production.

Hue has traditionally been the educational and cultural capital of the country. It was in Hue that the mandarin examinations were held, and it was in Hue that the poets — even the Emperor himself — composed poems and verses, that playwrights, actors, ballet dancers, musicians, artists and artisans created their best productions for the royal court. This is the city where the national archives were stored and where a woman's poise was considered so important that, until the last few years, « good families » did not permit their daughters to ride bicycles.

The historic heritage, the proximity to communist North Vietnam, accessibility, need for application of productive-minded young people to the development of the area and the historical identification in the minds of the population of the city with education, are the major considerations which prompted the Government to establish a second university at Hue.

It will be one of the University's major aims to determine how it can best live up to the traditions it has inherited and to the hopes based on it by assuming leadership in the area's development.

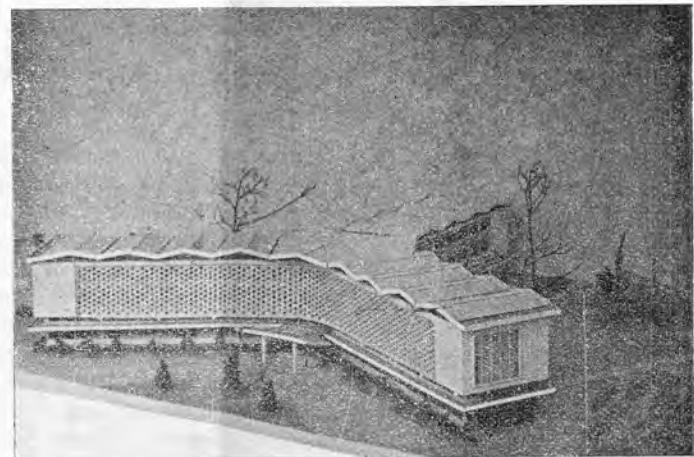
## DEVELOPMENT OF HUE UNIVERSITY

**Foundation :** March, 1957 by Presidential decree at Hue, 60 miles by road south of partition line of communist North Vietnam.

**1957-1958 :** General and preparatory year courses, including one-year speed-up teacher training course. Enrollement: 367



*The former Morin Hotel temporarily houses the College of Education.*



*The new College of Education is now under construction.*

**1958-1959 :** Definition of Colleges of Letters, Law, Science, and Education. First issue of bi-monthly magazine « Dai-Hoc » (University). Central Library.



*Typesetting at the University Press.*

**1959-1960 :** Addition of Institute of Chinese Studies, Committee for Translation of Vietnamese Historical Sources. Student Residence Center.



*The Institute of Chinese Studies is situated on a lovely spot along one of the many canals that lace the Hue area.*

**1960-1961 :**

Medical School preparatory year. Construction of two 6-apartment buildings for faculty housing.

*Apartments housing faculty members.*



**1961-1962 :**

1st year Medical School. 1st phase construction new Medical School. Construction of additional Central Library facilities. First elections for Student Association.

*The University Library was once the Bank of Indochina.*



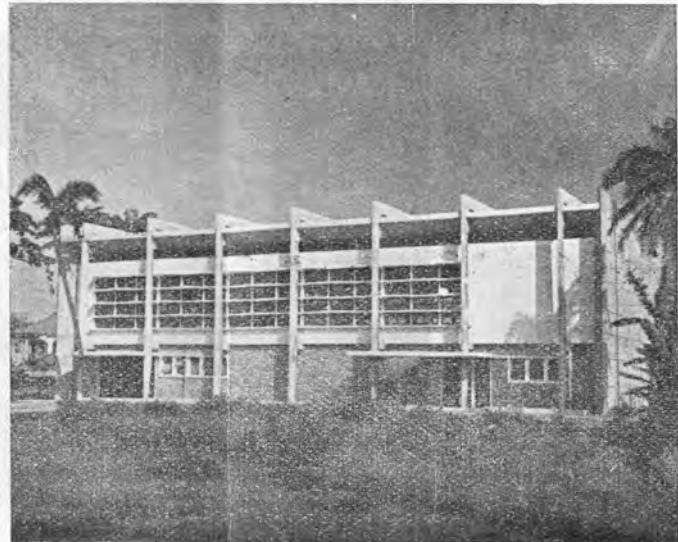
**1962-1963 :**

Initiation of work-scholarship program. Begin construction of new College of Education with demonstration high school and residence for Dean. 2nd phase construction of Medical School. Present enrollement 2488. 168 faculty members. New 410-seat Science Auditorium.

*First phase construction of the new Medical School nears completion.*



*Inauguration of the new College of Science Auditorium was held in April of this year.*



**THE FUTURE:** 1st Medical School class to graduate in 1967.  
Auditorium to seat 1100 people.  
Modern 40-place language laboratory (1963-1964).  
12-apartment building with garages for faculty members  
(1963-1964)  
Applied psychology laboratory (1963-1964).

*Main entrance to building housing class-rooms and laboratories of Education, Letters, and Sciences Colleges.*

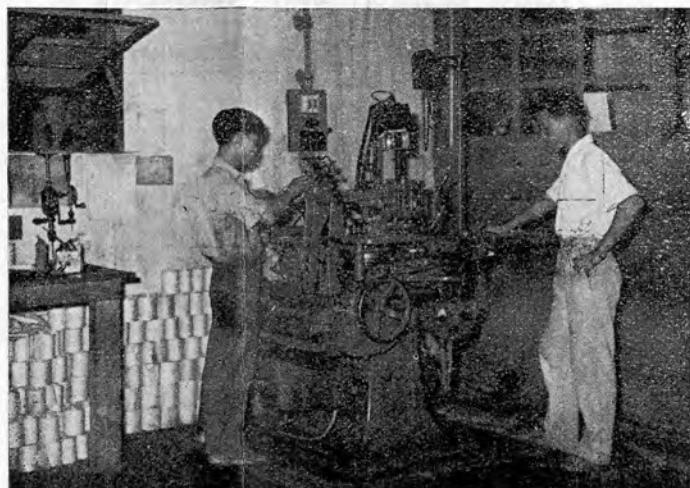


Institute of Social Studies (1964-1965).  
Physical and natural sciences research laboratories. (1964)

*Office, College of Sciences.*



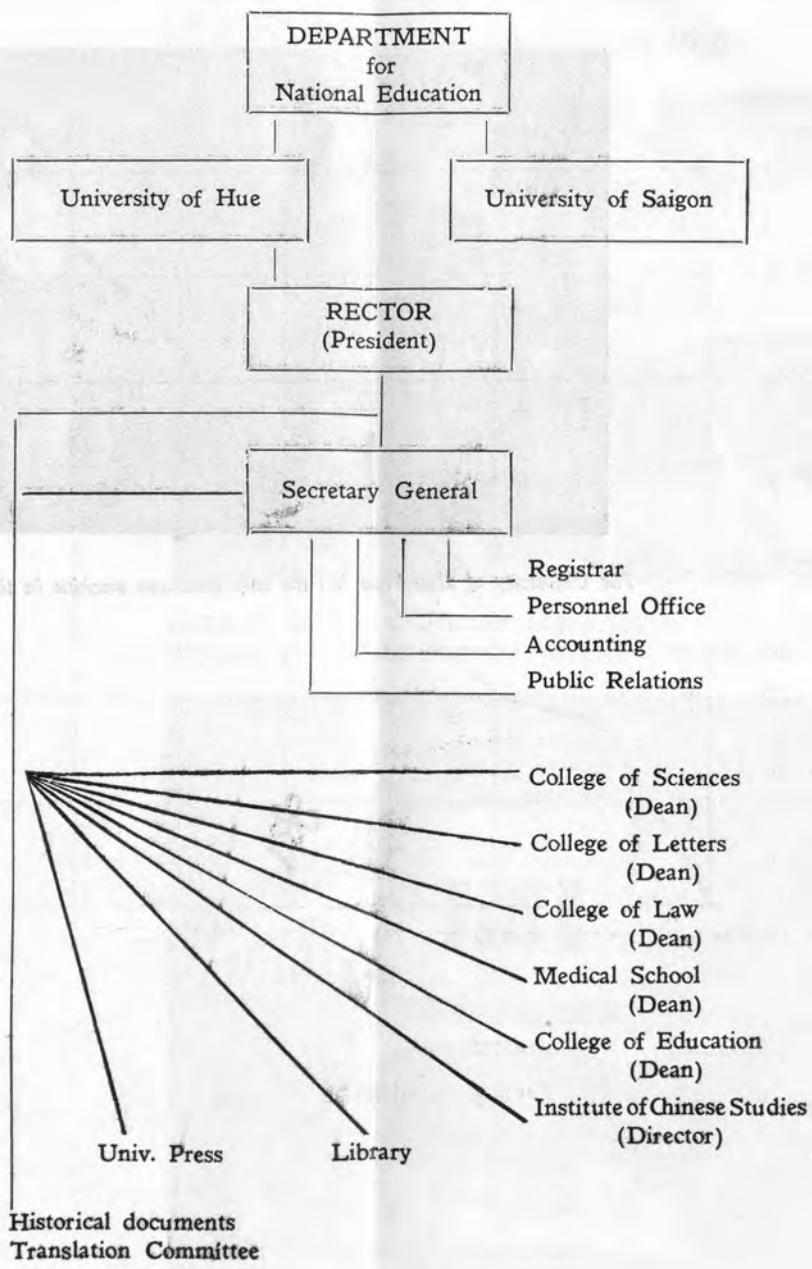
University clinic for internship. (1964)  
School of Engineering.



*The University of Hue Press has the only monotype machine in the country.*

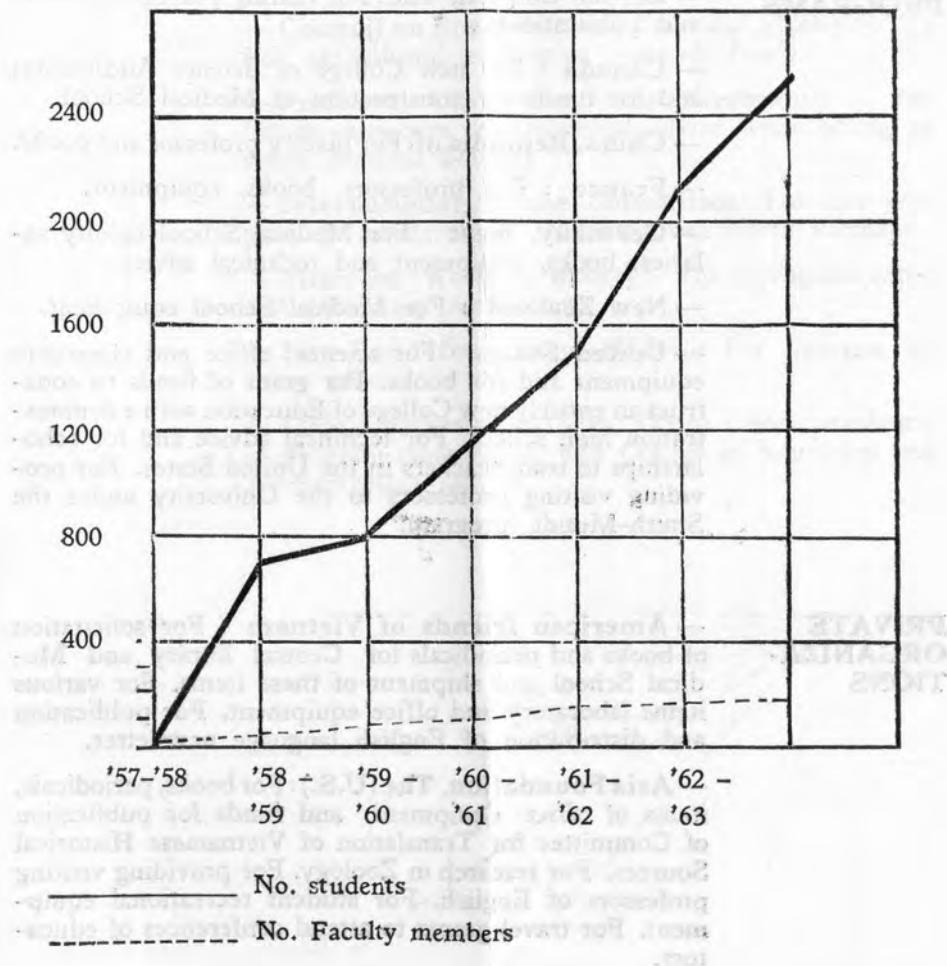


## HIGHER EDUCATION STRUCTURE



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## GROWTH OF FACULTY AND STUDENT BODY



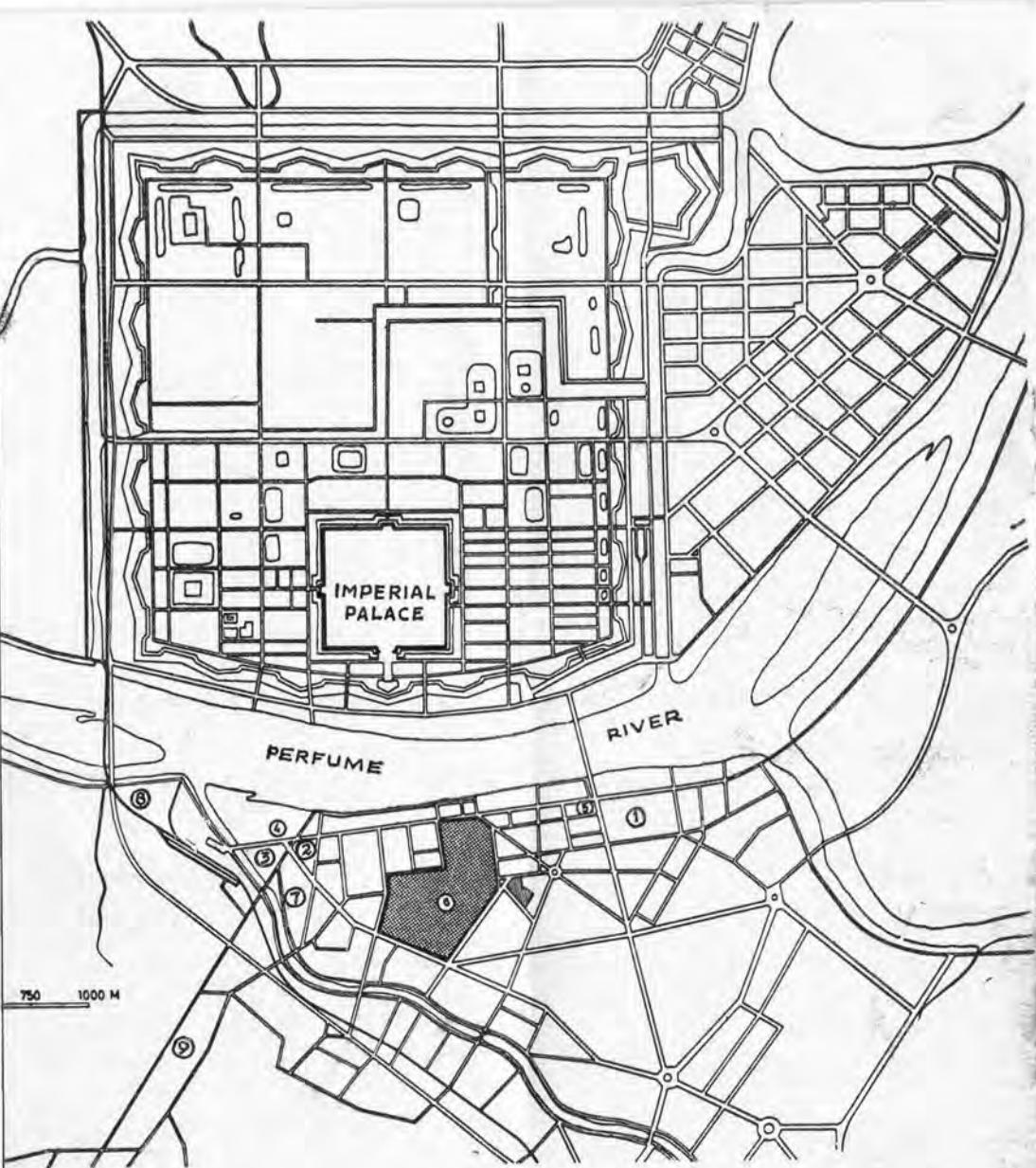
THE UNIVERSITY AND CITY OF HUE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE  
FOLLOWING NATIONS AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS FOR  
THEIR KIND ASSISTANCE (1).

<b>OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS</b>	— Britain : For youth leaders and language teachers under the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) program. — British Council, The: For visiting professors, books and publications. — Canada : For new College of Science Auditorium and for funds for construction of Medical School. — China, Republic of: For history professor and books. — France : For professors, books, equipment. — Germany, West : For Medical School faculty salaries, books, equipment and technical advice. — New Zealand : For Medical School equipment. — United States : For science, office and classroom equipment and for books. For grant of funds to construct an entirely new College of Education with a demonstration high school. For technical advice and for scholarships to train teachers in the United States. For providing visiting professors to the University under the Smith-Mundt program.
<b>PRIVATE ORGANIZA- TIONS</b>	— American friends of Vietnam : For solicitation of books and periodicals for Central library and Medical School and shipment of these items. For various items laboratory and office equipment. For publication and distribution of English language newsletter. — Asia Foundation, The (U.S.): For books, periodicals, items of office equipment, and funds for publication of Committee for Translation of Vietnamese Historical Sources. For research in Zoology. For providing visiting professors of English. For student recreational equipment. For travel grants to attend conferences of educators.

(1) Above listings are in alphabetical order.

- Association amitie France-Vietnam : For books and funds.
- CARE: For donation of publications to University Library.
- Catholic Relief Services (NCWC) : For paying shipping charges on items from United States to University of Hue.
- Council on Economic and Cultural affairs (U.S.) For agricultural economics research funds.
- Freiburg, University (West Germany) : For faculty members and technical advice while acting as sister Medical School.
- International Rescue Committee: For five-year grant to assist refugee students from North Vietnam.
- Misereor (West Germany) : For psychiatric clinic and laboratory equipment.
- New-Land foundation (U.S.) : For five-year library grant.
- Ohio University (Athens, Ohio) : For consultants in program planning for new College of Education and demonstration school.





MAP OF THE CITY OF HUE  
LEGEND

1. New College of Education.
2. College of Law and Historical Documents Research Section.
3. Faculty Apartments.
4. University Rectorate (Administration Building).
5. Building presently housing Colleges of Education, Letters, and Sciences.
6. Hue City Hospital and University Medical School.
7. Institute of Chinese Studies.
8. University Press.
9. Student Residence Center.