



CULTURAL ORIENTATION

VIETNAMESE



Vietnam, one of the largest rice-growing regions of the world

Flickr / ttjabeljan

Ti
2019



DLIFLC
DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER



CULTURAL ORIENTATION | Vietnamese

Profile

Introduction	6
Geographic Divisions	7
<i>Northern Highlands</i>	8
<i>Red River Valley</i>	8
<i>Central Coast Lowlands</i>	9
<i>Central Highlands</i>	9
<i>Mekong Delta</i>	10
Climate	12
Bodies of Water	12
<i>Mekong River</i>	12
<i>Red River</i>	13
<i>Huong River</i>	13
Major Cities	14
<i>Ho Chi Minh City</i>	14
<i>Hanoi</i>	15
<i>Haiphong</i>	16
<i>Da Nang</i>	16
<i>Hue</i>	17
History	18
<i>Introduction</i>	18
<i>Early History</i>	18
<i>Imperial Governance</i>	19
<i>French Colonial Rule</i>	20
<i>Japanese Occupation</i>	20
<i>Vietnam Divided</i>	21
<i>Counterinsurgency and Buddhist Challenge to Diem</i>	22
<i>The Republic of Vietnam under Siege</i>	22
<i>Vietnam War</i>	23
<i>Reunification—The Socialist Republic of Vietnam</i>	24
<i>Doi Moi</i>	24
<i>The 21st Century</i>	25
Government	25
Media	26
Economy	27
Ethnic Groups and Language	28
<i>Kinh (Vietnamese)</i>	29
<i>Hoa</i>	29
<i>Khmer Krom</i>	30
<i>Montagnards</i>	31



CULTURAL ORIENTATION | Vietnamese

<i>Hmong</i>	32
<i>Other Northern Tribal Groups</i>	33
Assessment	45

Religion

Introduction	46
Overview of Major Religions	47
<i>Buddhism</i>	47
<i>Catholicism</i>	48
<i>Cao Dai</i>	49
<i>Hoa Hao</i>	50
<i>Taoism</i>	50
<i>Folk Religion</i>	51
Religion and the Modern State	52
Religion in Daily Life	53
Religious Holidays and Festivals	54
<i>The Birth of Buddha</i>	54
<i>Ghost Festival</i>	55
<i>Christmas</i>	56
Buildings of Worship	56
<i>Pagodas</i>	56
<i>Temples</i>	58
<i>Catholic Churches</i>	59
Assessment	64

Traditions

Introduction	65
Honor and Values	66
<i>Communication</i>	67
Greetings	67
Dress Codes	69
<i>Traditional Dress</i>	70
Hospitality	71
Gift Giving	73
Gender Roles and Relationships	73
Cuisine	74
<i>French Influence</i>	76
The Arts	76
<i>Literature</i>	76
<i>Music</i>	77
<i>Water Puppets</i>	78



CULTURAL ORIENTATION | Vietnamese

Sports	78
<i>Vovinam</i>	78
<i>Dragon Boat Racing</i>	79
<i>Buffalo Fighting</i>	79
Nonreligious Celebrations	80
<i>Lunar New Year</i>	80
<i>Tomb-Sweeping Day</i>	81
<i>Reunification Day</i>	82
<i>Ho Chi Minh's Birthday</i>	82
<i>National Day</i>	83
<i>Mid-Autumn Festival</i>	83
Dos and Don'ts	84
Assessment	92

Urban Life

Introduction	93
Telecommunications	94
Industry	95
Traffic and Transportation	96
<i>Trains and Buses</i>	97
<i>Getting around within a City</i>	98
<i>Renting a Vehicle</i>	99
Health Care	100
Education	101
Restaurants and Dining Out	102
Marketplace	105
<i>Beggars and Hawkers</i>	108
Street Crime and Safety	109
Assessment	115

Rural Life

Introduction	116
Social Organization and Local Politics	117
Land Use and the Rural Economy	119
<i>Coffee</i>	120
<i>Aquaculture</i>	121
Transportation and Lodging	121
Health Care	122
Education	123
Village Life	125



CULTURAL ORIENTATION | Vietnamese

Identification	126
Checkpoints	127
Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War.....	128
Assessment	134

Family Life

Introduction	135
Typical Household and Family Structure.....	136
Male and Female Interactions within the Family	137
Status of Elders, Adolescents, and Children	138
<i>Children</i>	138
<i>Elderly</i>	139
Married Life and Divorce	140
<i>Married Life</i>	140
<i>Divorce</i>	141
Rites of Passage	142
<i>Marriage</i>	142
<i>Funerals</i>	143
<i>Childbirth</i>	144
Naming Conventions	145
Assessment	151

Further Reading and Resources

Further Reading and Resources	152
-------------------------------------	-----

Final Assessment

Final Assessment	155
------------------------	-----



Gate in the citadel, Imperial City, Hue
Flickr / Yiannis Chatzitheodorou CC BY-NC 2.0

Chapter 1 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Profile

Introduction

Squeezed between the South China Sea to the east and Laos and Cambodia to the west, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a narrow, S-shaped country with more than 1,000 years of recorded history. It is a one-party communist state with an increasingly capitalistic economy that is one of Southeast Asia's fastest-growing. In the Western world, Vietnam is often associated with the two decades of war in which the northern communists fought against U.S.-backed South Vietnam. This conflict came on the heels of the French Indochina War (1946-1954) when the Viet Minh fought for independence from France, resulting in the partitioning of Vietnam into North and South. In 1975, Vietnam became a unified country once more.^{1, 2}

An estimated 96 million people live in Vietnam today, making it the 14th most populous country in the world.^{3, 4} Agriculture remains a key part of the economy—64% of Vietnamese live in rural areas.^{5, 6} There are 54 different ethnic groups in the country, though the vast majority of the population are ethnic Kinh, who speak Vietnamese. English is increasingly used as a second language, and French, Khmer, Chinese, and various highlander languages are also spoken.⁷

Because Vietnam is a communist country, the majority of Vietnamese do not profess a particular belief; approximately 9% percent are Buddhist.⁸ The country is relatively young, with 70% of the population under age 35.^{9, 10}



Vietnam and its neighbors
Graphic / DLIFLC

Geographic Divisions

Vietnam is a country of densely forested highlands, hills, and tropical lowlands.¹¹ Ranked the 16th most biodiverse country in the world, mammals such as elephants, tigers, and monkeys live in its dense forests.¹² Vietnam stretches 1,650 km (1,025 mi), from the southern boundary of China southward to the Gulf of Thailand, making it slightly larger than the U.S. state of New Mexico.¹³ At its widest, the country is 500 km (311 mi), narrowing to just 50 km (31 mi) in the central Quang Binh Province.¹⁴



Mount Fansipan from the town of Sapa
Flickr/Nicolas Mirguet, CC BY-NC 2.0

Vietnam's long coastline stretches 3,260 km (2,025 mi), and its territorial waters include numerous islands and archipelagoes.¹⁵ About 80% of the country is mountainous, with the Truong Son Range (Annamite Cordillera Range) dominating the interior and forming Vietnam's boundary with Laos. At either end of the country are two extensive deltas created by the Red River in the north and the Mekong River in the south.^{16, 17}

Northern Highlands

The highlands and mountain plateaus in the north and northwest make up the Northern Highlands. Much of the northwest lies at altitudes greater than 2,000 m (6,600 ft). Popularly known as the “Roof of Indochina,” the Hoang Lien Mountains are home to Mount Fansipan, Vietnam’s highest mountain at 3,143 m (10,312 ft).¹⁸ The northwestern highlands is also famous for the historic site of the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the decisive engagement of the First Indochina War (1946-1954).^{19, 20}



Lao Cai Province, northwest Vietnam
Flickr / Eustaquio Santimano CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The Hoang Lien Mountains support over 30 tribal groups, including the Hmong, Dao, Kinh, Tay, Giay, Hoa, and Xa Pho.²¹ Many tribal groups are highly dependent on forest resources for their livelihood. These tribes, who began to migrate into the area from China centuries ago, rely on slash-and-burn farming and hunting. Recent migrations to the Northern Highlands have primarily been to develop the tourist industry in the resort town of Sapa, accessible by road and rail.^{22, 23, 24}

Red River Valley

Bordered by the Hoang Lien Mountains and rice-terraced hills, the Red River Valley cuts a deep swathe across northern Vietnam—from its border with China to the Red River Delta and the Gulf of Tonkin.²⁵ The Red River Delta, or Northern Plain (Bac Bo), makes up a large part of northern Vietnam. It is roughly triangular, covering approximately 7,000 sq km (2,700 sq mi), with Hanoi at its core. The delta extends inland 150 km (93 mi) and runs 80 km (50 mi) along the Gulf of Tonkin. Haiphong, the principal northern port, is on an arm of the delta.²⁶ The Red River Delta is subject to frequent flooding by unusually high tides, especially in the low-lying eastern portions, which are less than 2 m (7 ft) above sea level.²⁷

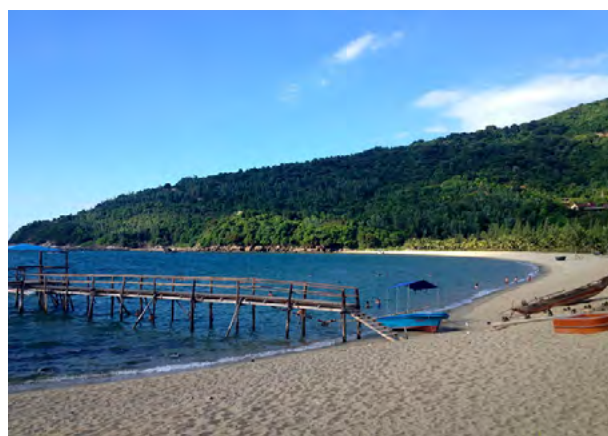


Tam Coc, Ninh Binh, north Vietnam
Flickr / Hoang Giang Hai

Formed by alluvial deposits carried from the Red and Thai Binh rivers, the Red River Delta is densely populated and farmed extensively. The junction of the two rivers is the ancestral home of the Kinh (Viet), or ethnic Vietnamese. They developed an agricultural economy based on wet-rice cultivation, which relied on a sophisticated system of water control. Before 1975, the Red River Delta accounted for almost 70% of northern Vietnam's agriculture and 80% of its industry.²⁸ Today, the delta is the area's rice bowl.²⁹

A group of around 3,000 islets in the Gulf of Tonkin belongs to Vietnam, including Ha Long Bay, Bai Tu Long Bay, Cat Hai, Cat Ba, and Bạch Long Vi. In the South China Sea lie the contested Paracel Islands (Hoang Sa Archipelago) and Spratly Islands (Truong Sa Archipelago). These are claimed in part or whole by several countries in the region, including Vietnam.³⁰

Central Coast Lowlands



Tien Sa Beach, Da Nang
Flickr / Brent De Vries CC BY-NC 2.0

The narrow, flat Central Coast Lowlands extend south of the Red River Delta to the northern edge of the Mekong Delta. The Truong Son Range rises sharply above the coast, jutting into the sea in several places. The coastal strip is densely populated and fertile, and rice is cultivated intensively.³¹

The Central Coast Lowlands are less susceptible to flooding than the deltas, thus providing a more stable livelihood to residents who farm and fish. Proximity to sand beaches has made tourism an important component of the local economy for many coastal lowland communities.³²

Central Highlands

Within southern Vietnam, a series of upland plateaus—the Central Highlands (Tay Nguyen)—span approximately 51,800 sq km (20,000 sq mi). Here, plantation agriculture and hill farms are interspersed with rugged mountain peaks and extensive bamboo and tropical forests. To the east, branches of the Truong Son Range jut east toward the sea, creating a natural border through the middle of the country.³³ The Central Highlands accounts for 16% of Vietnam's arable land and 22% of its total forested



Hai Van Pass, Da Nang
Flickr / David McKelvey

land.³⁴ Under French colonial rule, the highly forested area was developed for cash-crop agriculture. The area devoted to coffee, tea, and rubber plantations expanded after independence. In this sparsely inhabited region, the long-standing residents, a group of ethnic tribal minorities collectively referred to as Montagnards, were joined by Vietnamese settlers. This led to violent land disputes over the years.^{35, 36, 37}

Before 1975, North Vietnam considered the Central Highlands and the Truong Son Range of paramount strategic importance—essential for the North’s domination of not only South Vietnam but also of southern Indochina (today’s Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos).³⁸ The main arteries of these mountains run north-south along Vietnam’s border with Laos and Cambodia, where heights can reach 3,048 m (10,000 ft).³⁹ Here, the intricate network of footpaths, trails, and unmarked dirt roads, known collectively as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, served as supply routes during the Vietnam War.^{40, 41} A main artery of these trails is now the Ho Chi Minh Highway, connecting northern and southern Vietnam.⁴²

Mekong Delta



Mekong Delta, Tien Giang Province
Flickr / Prince Roy

The Mekong Delta is the world’s third-largest delta, covering 60,000 sq km (23,000 sq mi). This low-level marshy plain is sustained by nine branches of the Mekong River.⁴³ It was originally part of Cambodia, and an ethnic Khmer Krom minority remains. The Mekong River is the economic backbone of the Mekong Delta, where sometimes the only access to towns and villages is by ferry through a maze of waterways. Houses are built on stilts to withstand the monsoon rains.

Flooding caused by the rains submerges much of the delta. The sediment carried by the water renders the soil rich with nutrients.^{44, 45, 46}

The Mekong Delta accounts for 12% of Vietnam's surface area yet provides most of the country's fish and fruit. About 13,400 sq km (5,200 sq mi) is used to cultivate 90% of Vietnam's rice, making the area one of the largest rice-growing regions of the world.⁴⁷ An estimated 18-19 million Vietnamese people fish and farm in the Mekong Delta.^{48, 49}

The viability of the Mekong Delta is under threat from climate change and upstream activities. In countries such as China and Laos, the construction of numerous hydropower plants, sand mining, and other projects on the Mekong are reducing sediment flows, impoverishing the soil and water of the delta downstream, and eroding its shoreline.⁵⁰ Encroaching salt water, caused by rising levels of the South China Sea, is reducing the area of farmable land and turning delta water brackish. Scientists estimate that erosion and rising seawater will cause the delta to shrink by 30% in the next 20 years; by the end of the century, it may disappear altogether.^{51, 52}

The southern tip of the Mekong Delta, known as the Ca Mau Peninsula (Mui Bai Bung), is covered by dense jungle and mangrove swamps.⁵³ To the west and the southwest of the delta, in the Gulf of Thailand, there are several groups of islands including Con Son, Phu Quoc, and Tho Chu.⁵⁴

Southeast

Lying between the Central Highlands, Central Coast Lowlands, and Mekong Delta, the Southeast (Dong Nam Bo) is the most economically developed region in Vietnam. It stretches 23,564 sq km (9,098 sq mi) across five provinces and is dominated by Ho Chi Minh City, the economic center of Vietnam, which covers about 2,061 sq km (796 sq mi).⁵⁵

The region is relatively flat, with hills and forests near the highlands and numerous lakes and rivers, of which the Saigon River



Cat Tien National Park, Dong Nai Province
Flickr / Vyacheslav Argenberg

is the largest. The area includes the Kalon Song Mao Nature Reserve and the Cat Tien National Park, a 72,000-hectare (177,915-acre) park. There is an even mix of industry (petroleum and light industry) and agriculture (aquaculture, livestock, cashew, nuts, rubber) in the Southeast.⁵⁶ Tay Ninh Province, a former Khmer Krom territory, is the birthplace of the Cao Dai religion.^{57, 58}

Climate

Vietnam lies in the tropical belt between the equator and the Tropic of Cancer. Seasonal changes are mainly variations in rainfall. Any seasonal difference in temperature is most noticeable in the North. Vietnam's weather is dictated by cyclical monsoons (*gio mua*). There are approximately 100 days of rain a year, with the average annual rainfall being 150-200 cm (59-79 in). In the South China Sea region, up to 12 tropical cyclones, or typhoons, occur annually. As a result, water-induced destruction is the main form of natural disaster in this region.^{59, 60}



Cat Ba Island, Haiphong
Flickr / Caitriana Nicholson CC BY-SA 2.0

The country's two climatic regions are separated by the Truong Son Range. In the north, the rainy season runs mid-April to mid-October; in the mountains, annual rainfall may exceed 406 cm (160 in). Daily temperatures fluctuate considerably in the Red River Delta region; around the capital of Hanoi, temperatures may drop to 5° C (41° F) in the dry season and average 30° C (86 F) in the wet season.^{61, 62}

The south enjoys a moderate tropical climate; temperatures in Ho Chi Minh City are 18-33° C (64-91° F) throughout the year. Temperatures in the Central Highlands are cooler and less humid, ranging from about 17° C (63° F) in winter to 20° C (68° F) in summer. The typhoon season lasts from July through November, with the most severe storms occurring along the central coast. Typhoons frequently lead to destructive flooding, crop damage, and loss of life.^{63, 64}

Bodies of Water

Mekong River

With headwaters in Tibet, the Mekong (Cuu Long) River is the 10th-largest river in the world, emptying into the South China Sea (East Sea) from Vietnam.⁶⁵ It flows through China (where it is called the Lancang), Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, where it branches into multiple waterways. Along its 4,350 km (2,703 mi), the Mekong nourishes rice fields and supports as many as 60 million people.⁶⁶ Floating

markets in the Mekong Delta, such as Cai Rang, are a common sight.^{67, 68}

Second only to the Amazon River region, the Mekong River basin is the world's second-richest river basin for biodiversity.⁶⁹ The river provides 60% of Vietnam's seafood.⁷⁰ But all of the countries along the Mekong, including Vietnam, are interested in exploiting the river's hydroelectric power potential.⁷¹

By 2030, 70 dams could be operational.^{72, 73} Though there is some coordination between governments, these projects threaten the river's ability to sustain not only human communities dependent on the monsoonal cycle of water delivery, but the region's biodiversity as well.^{74, 75, 76}



Cai Be Floating Market, Tien Giang Province
Flickr / McKay Savage

Red River

The headwaters of the Red (Hong) River lie in China's Yunnan Province. After entering Vietnam, the river is joined by several tributaries. It forms a vast delta before emptying into the Gulf of Tonkin after a 1,200-km (750-mi) journey. In the Delta, the water level undergoes dramatic changes between the dry and rainy seasons. This change is attributed to mountain origins coupled with Vietnam's monsoon climate that sometimes results in very violent floods that destroy communities and croplands. The flooding season occurs from June to November in the upstream region, and June to October in the downstream area.⁷⁷



Flooding, Red River Delta
Flickr / Water Alternatives CC BY-NC 2.0

Huong River

While central Vietnam lacks a dominant river, there are numerous smaller ones including the Huong (meaning “perfume”), which is fed by two separate rivers in the Truong Son Range. Only 30 km (19 mi) long, the river has historic significance because

a series of imperial tombs line its banks. Popular with domestic and international tourists, the Huong River is also a lively site of local commerce.^{78, 79, 80}

Major Cities

Ho Chi Minh City

Modern and dynamic, Ho Chi Minh City is widely referred to by the Vietnamese as Saigon, the city's pre-1975 name and the name of its District 1 commercial center.⁸¹ First named Prey Nokor, Ho Chi Minh City was part of Cambodia before it became part of Vietnam in the 17th century. The city was captured by the French in 1861, and French influence is visible throughout the city—from the Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica to the vibrant coffee culture.⁸²



Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / jo.sau

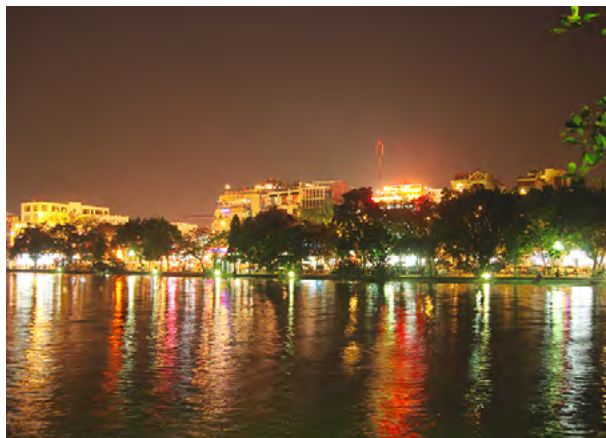
As the country's largest city, Ho Chi Minh City is a bustling business center and port. Commerce was briefly disrupted after the country was reunified in 1975, but it has again become a modern boomtown. At a mere 19 m (62 ft) above sea level, the area is particularly vulnerable to flooding.⁸³

Saigon was the capital of Cochinchina—the southern region of Vietnam during the French colonial period—and the capital of the American-backed Republic of Vietnam (1955-1975).⁸⁴ Flanked by the Saigon River, this former southern government seat was at war with the Hanoi-based government throughout most of its existence. The city's population swelled to 4 million during the latter years of the conflict as villagers sought safety from the bombings. In 1975, the cessation of hostilities and commencement of reunification allowed some of the displaced to return to their villages. The new government, which nationalized the economy, took measures to further reduce Ho Chi Minh City's population. Urban jobs were in short supply, resulting in resettlement programs to new economic zones.⁸⁵

The economic reforms introduced in 1986, referred to as “renovation” (*doi moi*), created a bustling commercial metropolis with a flourishing private sector.⁸⁶ Migrants are again flocking to Ho Chi Minh City in search of opportunity, and the burgeoning population (estimated at over 8 million in 2017) is putting pressure on the city's

infrastructure.^{87, 88, 89} This has not slowed growth in suburban districts, which are, in reality, squatter settlements.^{90, 91, 92}

Hanoi



Cityscape, Hanoi
Flickr / Jorge Láscar



Shops line the streets, Old Quarter, Hanoi
Flickr / Richard Mortel

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, lies in what is considered the birthplace of Vietnamese culture. In 2010, Hanoi celebrated its millennium, making it one of the oldest capitals in Southeast Asia.⁹³ It became the capital of Vietnam under the first emperor of the Ly Dynasty (1009-1225 CE), who named it Thang Long (Rising Dragon). The capital was moved to Saigon and Hue for shorter periods; in 1976, Hanoi became the capital of the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam.⁹⁴ Prior to southward migration, Hanoi was the country's commercial and manufacturing hub. The name Hanoi means "inside the river bend," reflecting the city's prominent location between multiple waterways. While this placement naturally constrained growth, it also made the city more defensible.^{95, 96}

Hanoi has evolved from post-war devastation into a sophisticated city with high-rises and world-class art. Today, the city of 7 million people is regarded as one of the most beautiful cities in Asia.⁹⁷ Hanoi's St. Joseph's Cathedral, the Hotel Metropole, and the Hanoi Opera House, modeled after Opéra Garnier in Paris, are among the many examples of French colonial architecture in Vietnam.^{98, 99, 100} The city is dotted with landmarks commemorating the defeat of the Chinese, who occupied Vietnam for 1,000 years before making it a vassal state. Hanoi contains more than 1,000 historic buildings, including 676 pagodas and 261 temples that reflect the importance of Buddhism in imperial history.¹⁰¹

Following the Chinese model, Hanoi developed as a guild city comprised of neighborhoods (*phuong*) that each specialized in one product. This heritage remains evident in the Old Quarter, where businesses are organized by commercial specialization (*hang*). The silk shops of Hang Dao Street, for example, sell silk fabric and garments procured from villages that specialize in silk production. These business relationships may span several generations of shop ownership.^{102, 103}

Haiphong



Dinh Vu Port, Haiphong
Wikimedia / Báo công thương CC BY-SA 4.0

Haiphong has been northern Vietnam's principal port since 1874. During French colonial rule, it became the site of heavy industry powered by locally mined coal. In addition, it was the southeastern terminus of the rail line coming through Kunming (in southwestern China) and Hanoi to the Gulf of Tonkin, where goods could be transported via water.^{104, 105}

The French bombed the port in 1946, setting off the First Indochina War.^{106, 107}

Later, during the Vietnam War, Haiphong was heavily bombed to disrupt supply lines of munitions and materials sent by the Soviet Union and China for the communist cause.^{108, 109}

Today, Haiphong is a city of 1.9 million people and serves as an industrial hub and Vietnam's leading ship-building center. Although the city is dominated by industry, it has a laid-back air and a strong café culture. Known as "The City of Flame Flowers," many of its boulevards are lined with flame flower trees and graceful colonial-era buildings. It is a popular hub for tourists traveling to nearby Halong Bay, Cat Ba Island, and other smaller islands in the vicinity.^{110, 111}

Da Nang

Da Nang is a major port and central Vietnam's largest city. Known during French colonial rule as Tourane, Da Nang became an important port during the 19th century.¹¹² In 1965, as American involvement in Vietnam escalated, U.S. combat troops landed in Da Nang. During the war, a large American airbase near the city stored dioxin, used to make the chemical defoliant Agent Orange.

Though the pace of life is slower than in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang today is a thriving and fast-growing seaport city of 753,000 people and the heart of Vietnam's high-tech boom.^{113, 114} Government and private investment over the last decade have financed a modern airport and highway system, with improvements in public transportation and water quality. Da Nang Hi-Tech Park is home to a growing number of international IT and software companies and hardware manufacturers. Tourism is increasing, with new hotel developments and contemporary bridges, including the fire-breathing Dragon Bridge and the Golden Bridge.¹¹⁵ Beaches like Non Nuoc Beach, called China Beach by American troops during the Vietnam War, are popular tourist destinations.¹¹⁶



Golden Bridge, Ba Na Hills, Da Nang
Flickr / Trung Le

Hue

Hue lies on the banks of the Huong River in central Vietnam, just a few miles inland from the South China Sea. By the early 19th century Hue was the center of scholarship and debate in Vietnam, having already served as the political center of the country for 200 years. As the capital of Vietnam's last dynasty, the House of Nguyen, Hue houses the royal tombs of the Nguyen monarchs, and shows impressive architecture, such as the Imperial City.¹¹⁷ Under French authority, the monarchy was abolished in 1945 and Hue became a provincial center.^{118, 119}



Tomb of Ming Mang, the second Nguyen ruler, Hue
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

In 1954, the Geneva Accords divided Vietnam into a communist-governed North and a non-communist South. Hue was a mere 88 km (55 mi) from the line of demarcation in the demilitarized zone (DMZ). It became the site of the bloodiest engagement of the 1968 Tet Offensive, during which the communists captured control of Hue and held it for 3 weeks. The city was reduced to rubble under intense fighting. Rebuilt

after the war, the city now has a population of 300,000. Its cultural relics play a role in Vietnamese national identity, while its international tourist appeal relies on its proximity to the former DMZ.^{120, 121}

History

Introduction



Mausoleum of King Ngo Quyen, Hanoi
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Vietnam has a long history as a settled civilization with a complex network of Chinese, Cambodian, and French roots. Forced Chinese integration and assimilation dates to the second century BCE. The Chinese tributary state system subjugated neighboring countries through numerous successive dynasties. Thus, most of Vietnam's history has been consumed with the struggle to carve out a sphere independent of China. Once self-governance was achieved, however,

the basic Chinese imperial administrative structure was replicated since there was no clear alternative.^{122, 123}

After absorbing parts of the ancient Cham and Khmer Krom empires, Vietnam struggled to maintain its territorial unity in the face of civil strife and, eventually, foreign domination.¹²⁴ While French colonial rule was brief by historical standards, it changed the course of Vietnamese history. Not only did it provide exposure to communism and other Western ideas, the establishment of a communist government in the North also made Vietnam a central front of the Cold War that left the country divided and at war for two decades. Since reunification in 1975, Vietnam has evolved into a socialist market economy.¹²⁵

Early History

In 208 BCE, the Vietnamese kingdom of An Lac was conquered by a southern Chinese kingdom known as Nan Yueh in Chinese and Nam Viet in Vietnamese. The Red River Delta became a colonial province of China, although initially this had a limited effect on daily life and local leadership. As Chinese administrators became more numerous, their demands for conformity multiplied and sparked revolts, including one led by

the Trung sisters. They became immortalized in story and legend for choosing suicide rather than life under Chinese rule.^{126, 127}

After the fall of the Tang Dynasty, China entered a period of chaos that allowed the Vietnamese to assert their independence in 939 CE.¹²⁸ They were still required to pay tribute to the Chinese emperor, but the Chinese administrators were withdrawn. Over time, the Chinese continued to make incursions into Vietnam, and those who resisted, like the Trung sisters, became cultural heroes.¹²⁹ In the early 13th century, Genghis Khan's Mongol army was driven back numerous times by Tran Hung Dao, whose name has been memorialized by major thoroughfares and monuments.^{130, 131}

Imperial Governance

Leadership in Vietnam relied on two concepts: the indigenous tradition of spirit mediation and a heavily Chinese-influenced system of imperial government. The emperor gained legitimacy by providing peace and prosperity, which proved the spirit world's satisfaction with him. The court was staffed by those who passed a series of rigorous exams—a core feature of Chinese Confucianism that organized society by hierarchy.¹³² Most early Vietnamese monarchs were soldiers who proved themselves through battlefield prowess.^{133, 134}

Population pressure drove expansion southward. Vietnam assumed its present-day borders as the kingdom's boundaries extended through the Mekong Delta, which had historically belonged to Cambodia.¹³⁵

In the latter decades of the 18th century, Vietnam was nominally ruled by rival dynasties: the Trins in the North and the Nguyens in the South.¹³⁶ The country was reunified by the Tay Son rebellion in 1786. Led by three Nguyen brothers, the Tay Son movement reflected peasant dissatisfaction with the status quo, which included heavy taxation. The leaders developed a following through a slogan: “Seize the property of the rich and distribute it to the poor.” Besides reducing taxes, the Tay Son created rights for women and honored other values held in Vietnam before Chinese influence.¹³⁷ The movement was eventually weakened by internal conflicts over leadership succession, and it was replaced by Vietnam's Nguyen-led last dynasty.^{138, 139, 140}



Royal decree reducing taxation, Tay Son Dynasty, c.1790 Wikimedia / Daderot

French Colonial Rule

When European imperialism swept the globe in the 19th century, the Vietnamese did not have the means to resist the French. Starting in the south, Vietnam was incorporated in stages into Indochine, which included Cambodia and Laos. Colonial authorities transferred authority over village affairs from traditional community leaders to newly established district courts.¹⁴¹ The French undertook a program of economic development—building port facilities, extending the dike system, installing new irrigation and drainage facilities, and building a network of modern roads and a railway system.^{142, 143} Communal land was privatized into large tract holdings; farmers who had grown food crops for sustenance began, instead, to cultivate rice and rubber for export. Indochine became France’s richest and most populous colonial holding. By controlling the money supply and imposing heavy taxes on subsistence farmers, the French created great disparities in wealth; the South was soon inhabited by landless peasants.^{144, 145} Most Vietnamese chafed under French authority and the exploitative conditions.^{146, 147, 148}



Battle between French and Vietnamese, Nam Dinh, 1883
Wikimedia / Anonymous French engraver 1883

Japanese Occupation

When France fell to the Nazis in 1940, the French-appointed Indochinese government signed an agreement to accept the presence of Japanese troops in Vietnam. The Japanese were primarily interested in Vietnam’s strategic location and left daily affairs to the French. In 1941, communist leader Ho Chi Minh established the only indigenous resistance group: the Viet Minh (short for Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh, or Vietnamese League for Independence).^{149, 150, 151}

Ho Chi Minh spent most of his adult life in exile in several countries, including the U.S.S.R. and China. His exposure to socialist and communist ideas influenced his personal ideology, and he came to view Marxism as the basis for a just society free of the exploitation suffered under the French. It was not until February 1941 that he returned to Vietnam.¹⁵² In the mid-1940s, the Viet Minh leadership, under Ho Chi Minh, looked to the United States for help.^{153, 154} Aiding the independence movement, the U.S. Office of Strategic Services, predecessor to the CIA, supplied Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh with material assistance.^{155, 156}



Hoa Lo Prison Memorial, Hanoi
Flickr / dronepicr

The Viet Minh resistance, which fought both foreign armies, were successful at stirring up anticolonial sentiment.¹⁵⁷ Resistance, however, was met with brutal suppression. French-built prisons, including the infamous “Hanoi Hilton” (formally Hoa Lo Prison) that was later used to house American POWs (including the future U.S. senator John McCain), teemed with communist detainees with nationalist aspirations.^{158, 159}

As France sent its troops home during World War II, French control in Vietnam weakened. In March 1945, the Japanese ousted the French administration, but their hold on power was short-lived. The Viet Minh seized power from the Japanese in August 1945, declaring Vietnam’s independence.^{160, 161, 162}

Vietnam Divided



Battle of Dien Bien Phu, 1954
Wikimedia / Vietnam People’s Army

The French, still present in Vietnam, wanted to restore colonial control and refused to recognize Ho Chi Minh’s government. From 1946 to 1954, Ho Chi Minh led a guerrilla warfare campaign against the French in the first Indochina War. In 1947, U.S. President Harry Truman affirmed the Truman Doctrine, under which U.S. foreign policy was to assist any country threatened by communism. Consequently, in 1950 the United States stepped up military assistance to France

for their operations against the Viet Minh. The conflict ended in a Vietnamese victory at Dien Bien Phu in the spring of 1954.¹⁶³ The communists, who held control of northern Vietnam, wanted to unify the country under a single communist regime modeled after the Soviet Union and China. France hung on to power in their southern stronghold, where the Vietnamese government fought to remain more closely aligned with the West.^{164, 165}

While the final battle raged at Dien Bien Phu, an international conference was convening in Geneva to settle Vietnam’s future. The subsequent agreement partitioned the country

into a communist North and a non-communist South. The two halves were separated by a DMZ running along the 17th parallel.^{166, 167} In the North, Ho Chi Minh and his comrades set about creating the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a socialist society headed by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). An estimated 810,000 Northern inhabitants (disproportionately Catholics) chose to move to the South.^{168, 169}

The South had no single source of authority. The fledgling Republic of Vietnam (RVN) found itself competing with the National Liberation Front (NLF), a communist insurgency informally known as the Viet Cong. The NLF's goal was to reunify the country under Hanoi's leadership.¹⁷⁰ The first RVN president was Ngo Dinh Diem, a devout Catholic and staunch anticommunist.¹⁷¹ The United States committed to providing the resources necessary for the South Vietnamese to have a stake in defending the RVN from a communist takeover.^{172, 173, 174}

Counterinsurgency and Buddhist Challenge to Diem

South Vietnam was wracked by inequalities in land ownership and Diem's anticommunist campaign, under which thousands of suspected communists were rounded up, deported, tortured, imprisoned, or executed.¹⁷⁵ Repression by the Diem regime led to the rise of armed rebel self-defense units in various parts of the RVN. In 1959, communist-led uprisings in the lower Mekong Delta and Central Highlands resulted in several communist-controlled zones.¹⁷⁶

South Vietnamese forces actively harassed Buddhist groups. In 1963 in Saigon, troops killed nine demonstrators protesting Diem's discriminatory policies toward Buddhists. Hundreds of Buddhist monks responded by staging peaceful protests and by fasting. Seven monks committed self-immolation. The military raided pagodas of the major cities, killing many monks and arresting thousands of others.¹⁷⁷

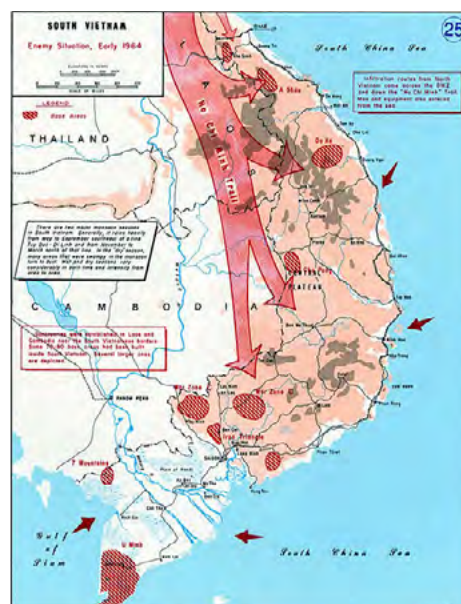
The Republic of Vietnam under Siege

The United States and elements within the South Vietnamese military (ARVN)—who resented Diem's micromanaging and lack of respect for the chain of command—had become increasingly critical of the Saigon leadership. Three weeks before John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, Diem and his brother were killed in a coup engineered by unhappy ARVN officers. But Diem's removal neither tempered the insurgency nor provided better leadership; rather, it set off a power struggle and rivals battled one another more than the communist threat.¹⁷⁸ President Kennedy ordered more help for the South Vietnamese government in its war against the NLF guerrillas.

By late 1963, over 16,000 U.S. military advisors and military support personnel were in Vietnam.^{179, 180}

Vietnam War

After the North Vietnamese attacked two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin in late 1964, direct U.S. military intervention followed in 1965. This marked the start of what the Vietnamese call “The American War.”¹⁸¹ In 1966, the number of U.S. service members in Vietnam rose to 185,000, by which time more than 2,700 had already been killed.¹⁸² U.S. forces in several provinces initiated major offensives in late 1966 and in early 1967, and by late 1967, roughly 485,000 U.S. troops were scattered from the DMZ to the Mekong Delta.¹⁸³ To deny the enemy food, the North Vietnamese destroyed rice stockpiles in southern villages. Many villagers fled the bombings and took up residence in Saigon or other southern cities that were ill-equipped to handle an influx of people who had never ventured far from their village homes.^{184, 185}



U.S. military map of Ho Chi Minh Trail, 1964
Wikimedia / United States Military Academy

In January 1968, during the lunar new year (Tet) holiday, North Vietnamese forces launched a coordinated attack against targets in South Vietnam. U.S. and ARVN forces suffered heavy losses before finally fighting off the communist assault. The Tet Offensive played a decisive role in weakening U.S. public support for the war.^{186, 187, 188} In 1972, U.S. B-52 aircraft dropped at least 20,000 tons of explosives on North Vietnam, mostly Hanoi. More than 1,000 Vietnamese died. Some historians claim the assault may have helped bring the end to U.S. involvement in the war.¹⁸⁹ After a ceasefire agreement in 1973, U.S. troops exited Vietnam.¹⁹⁰

In April 1975, North Vietnamese troops invaded South Vietnam and toppled the RVN government.¹⁹¹ Leaders in Hanoi later expressed surprise at how quickly they were able to take control of the South, because ARVN forces had disappeared. High-ranking officials of the fallen regime and their families fled; the last U.S. helicopter departed only 2 hours before North Vietnamese tanks pushed through the gates of the Presidential Palace. The leadership that remained to greet them vanished. Hanoi did not allow a transfer-of-power ceremony, since it never regarded the RVN as autonomous.^{192, 193}

Reunification—The Socialist Republic of Vietnam



Viet Cong troops, 1968
Wikimedia

Northerners were responsible for reunifying a new country called the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV). Southerners who had fought for the NLF and were familiar with conditions in the South found themselves removed from decision-making at best or imprisoned at worst. Initially, the new leadership was concerned with identifying those who had collaborated with the Americans and those who had profited from their presence. As many as 1 million of

the former were sent to reeducation camps, where they performed backbreaking work, while the latter (mainly prostitutes and their families) were sent to live under harsh conditions in New Economic Areas (NEAs), which were established in underpopulated areas.¹⁹⁴

There was also a campaign of genocide against the Chinese, who had dominated commerce in Saigon. Their ethnicity and loyalty became more suspect as Vietnam's relations with China worsened. Chinese were required to surrender their assets to the government. Some Chinese were relocated to NEAs. Others, including ethnic Vietnamese, fled northward or via boat after being relieved of their valuables. By April 1978, approximately 5,000 people were leaving on boats every month.¹⁹⁵

Doi Moi

The SRV's government responded to repeated incursions into Vietnamese territory by the Khmer Rouge forces of Cambodia by invading the country in late 1978, toppling Pol Pot's regime and initiating a 10-year occupation.^{196, 197} The international community applied sanctions to force Vietnam to remove its troops from Cambodia.¹⁹⁸ Vietnam's per capita gross national product plunged from USD 241 in 1975 to USD 151 by 1981.¹⁹⁹ Goods were rationed and queuing became a way of life for urban residents. Despite price controls, annual inflation ran more than 700%.²⁰⁰ By 1986, the economy was at risk of collapse. Confronting the starvation of its populace, the government was forced to initiate *doi moi*, the market reforms of the agricultural sector. Reforms decollectivized farming, welcomed foreign investment, and allowed private businesses to hire their own employees.²⁰¹

From 1986 to 2006, Vietnam's socialist-market economy grew exponentially under *doi moi*. Between 1991 and 2000, it grew an average 7.5% a year. In 1992, Vietnam amended its constitution, recognizing the role of the private sector in the economy.²⁰² Firms seeking to take advantage of low labor costs moved production to Vietnam. Ethnic Chinese returned to invest, as did members of the overseas Vietnamese community, many of whom also helped family members who had remained. The influx of capital facilitated a consumption-oriented urban lifestyle.²⁰³ Fashionable clothing stores and café entertainment restaurants abounded in major cities. The CPV's new goal of "rich people, strong country, civilized and equitable society" seemed attainable.²⁰⁴

The 21st Century

In 2000, Vietnam entered the stock market, inaugurating the Ho Chi Minh City Securities Trading Center.²⁰⁵ It became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2007. In the 35 years since Vietnam unified, it has transformed into a thriving emerging market.²⁰⁶ The country has seen its diplomatic and political status improve, establishing diplomatic relations with more than 170 countries, and strategic partnerships with 12 important economies.²⁰⁷



Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange
Wikimedia / Ngô Trung CC BY-SA 4.0

In October 2018, the legislature in Hanoi confirmed Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong as president. He replaced Tran Dai Quang, who died after a long illness.²⁰⁸ President Trong is scheduled to serve as president at least until 2021. As both president and general secretary of the Communist Party, he is expected to have considerable power.²⁰⁹

Government

The SRV is considered one of the more politically stable countries in Southeast Asia.²¹⁰ It is a one-party state with power vested in the CPV.²¹¹ Important government positions are filled by party members.²¹² Under what Vietnam calls "balanced leadership," the country is led by four officeholders who check and balance each other: the general secretary, the president, the prime minister, and the national assembly chair.²¹³ The president is the chief of state. While the role is more ceremonial, the president

also sits on the powerful Politburo. The National Assembly—Vietnam’s legislature that enacts laws for implementation—elects the president from among its deputies for a 5-year term.²¹⁴ The president appoints the prime minister from the 500 members of the National Assembly, elected by popular vote to 5-year terms. The prime minister is the head of government.²¹⁵



Meeting, Presidential Palace, Hanoi, 2000
Wikimedia / United States Department of Defense

Although the government is secular, Confucian principles tend to guide its framework. The primary decision-making body is the 175-member Central Committee of the CPV, whose members are elected approximately every 5 years by the Party’s congress. This committee elects the 19-member Politburo, which is the Party’s supreme policy-making body.^{216, 217, 218}

The judicial branch consists of Vietnam’s courts. The Supreme People’s Court, the nation’s highest court, has 13 judges and a chief justice.²¹⁹ On the president’s recommendation, the chief justice is elected by the National Assembly for a renewable 5-year term.²²⁰

The other justices are appointed by the president to 5-year terms. The judicial system fails to conform to international standards; it does not operate independently but remains under the Communist Party’s influence.^{221, 222}

Media



Hanoi man reading newspaper
Flickr / Ed Yourdon CC BY NC-SA 2.0

The Communist Party has a strong hold on the media. Newspapers, television stations, and journalists risk sanctions for covering sensitive topics or for criticizing the government. While some press and media outlets report on corruption in official circles, most mainstream media outlets are fully controlled and directed by the Communist Party. In response, many of Vietnam’s 64 million internet users follow independent bloggers for their news updates. Still, the government can block access to personal blogs and social media without notice.^{223, 224} Many bloggers suffer harassment, arrest, and imprisonment

for criticizing the Communist Party.²²⁵ In mid-2018, 25 people were detained for writing media content that openly criticized the CPV or government policies. Many journalists and bloggers censor themselves to avoid being fired or arrested.²²⁶

To combat dissent, Vietnam passed a 2018 cyber law that imposes new legal requirements on internet companies. The move could jeopardize the privacy of social media users, allowing the government greater control over what its citizens do online.^{227, 228} It also created a military cybersecurity unit dubbed “Task Force 47 Cyber Unit.” The unit’s task is to counter the spread of Western ideas and any attempts to challenge CPV leadership.²²⁹

Economy

One of the world’s fastest-growing economies in the 21st century, economists tout Vietnam as an economic success story. Initiated in 1986, *doi moi* drove rapid economic growth and development. The country has evolved from being one of the world’s poorest nations to a lower middle-income one. In 2017, Vietnam had the fastest-growing middle class in Southeast Asia, which accounts for 13% of the population. The middle class is expected to reach 26% of the population by 2026.²³⁰



Solar array atop factory, Ho Chi Minh City
Wikimedia / Intel Free Press

From 1991 to 2017, the total value of Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 350% (second only to China). In 2017, its economy grew by 6.8%.²³¹ Much of the growth has been led by foreign investment in manufacturing, especially in electronics and mobile phones. Approximately 70% of Samsung’s Smartphones are made in Vietnam. Mobile phones and electronic components are leading exports, followed by textiles, clothing, rice, coffee, catfish, and shrimp.²³² Vietnam is the world’s fifth-largest rice exporter, and it has been self-sufficient in food production for the last 5 years.^{233, 234} Imports include electronic equipment, machinery, and computers.²³⁵

Services—retail sales and tourism—made up 6.9% of GDP in 2017, while the agriculture sector rose to 3.9% of GDP, mainly from fish exports.²³⁶ The state maintains full ownership of more than 700 enterprises, but the government has shown interest

in boosting private-sector participation in the economy.²³⁷

Vietnam's economic growth has been constrained by its lack of energy resources.²³⁸ Dependence on hydropower and fossil fuels has been met with an increasing need to explore and exploit new reserves. In 2018, Hanoi struck a deal with the Russian state-owned Gazprom to explore for oil and gas off the coast of Vietnam.²³⁹



Hoa Binh Hydropower Plant, near Hanoi
Wikimedia / Bùi Thủy Đào Nguyễn CC BY SA 3.0

Ethnic Groups and Language

Vietnam is home to 54 ethnic groups; the majority are Kinh, also referred to as Viet, which make up approximately 86% of the population.^{240, 241} Minority groups speak more than a dozen distinct languages including, Tay, Hmong, Thai, and Khmer. Eleven of the minority groups—Tay, Thai, Nung, Hmong, Muong, Cham, Khmer Krom, Kohor, Ede, Bahnar, and Jarai—have their own writing systems.^{242, 243}

Vietnamese, the official language, is spoken by around 90% of the population and is heavily influenced by Chinese. In Vietnamese, each word consists of one syllable, but the meaning varies depending on which of six tones is used. Northerners speak with clearly defined consonants, and standard Vietnamese is based on the Hanoi dialect. Southerners stretch their vowels, giving their speech a softer sound.²⁴⁴ Many minority communities in remote locations have little interaction with Kinh people and do not speak Vietnamese. However, a younger generation of ethnic minorities is increasingly learning to speak Vietnamese in public schools.^{245, 246}



Vietnamese woman near city of Phan Thiet
Flickr / Lucas Jans CC BY SA 2.0

Chu nom, Vietnam's original script, was written with Chinese characters. Words directly imported from Chinese were borrowed without modification. Vietnamese words were composed of two characters: one to convey the meaning and the other

to reflect the pronunciation. Chu nom was banned in 1920 by the French colonial government. It was officially replaced by a Roman script (chu quoc ngu) based on the French pronunciation of the Latin alphabet and supplemented by diacritics to mark tones and vowels. Although the adoption of chu quoc ngu increased literacy levels, it separated the people from their archival past.^{247, 248, 249}

Kinh (Vietnamese)



Young people in Hanoi park
Flickr / Project 88

The Kinh trace their origins to the Red River Delta, and their lives traditionally revolved around the cultivation of wet rice. Villages were self-sustaining; villagers rarely left the village except during times of conflict. Their southward settlement pattern created a geographic division of territory under which they appropriated land suitable for wet-rice cultivation. Tribal minorities who practiced slash-and-burn agriculture lived in the mountains. Upland areas were presumed

to harbor ghosts and the Kinh, therefore, considered the area undesirable. This changed in the 20th century when colonialism, war, and economic opportunity made highland settlement either attractive or a necessity.²⁵⁰

The Kinh speak Vietnamese and live in patriarchal families. They practice ancestor worship as well as Mahayana Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. A small group of Kinh practice Christianity. The Kinh have a wealth of folktales, proverbs, songs, and dances that preserve traditions.²⁵¹ The iconic *ao dai*, a tight-fitting silk tunic worn over trousers, is the traditional dress of the Vietnamese. It is still worn by women today, though it is less common among men.^{252, 253}

Hoa

Most Hoa (Chinese) in Vietnam are descended from Chinese settlers who came from the Guangdong Province around the 18th century, and, for this reason, most speak Cantonese. There is some controversy as to the number of Hoa in Vietnam. The 2009 census put the population at around 820,000, but other estimates are higher.²⁵⁴

Many Hoa in Vietnam are of mixed blood because most Chinese immigrants were single men who married into the local population. Others conceal their ethnic identity because of past anti-Hoa campaigns. The Hoa predominantly live in southern cities. Ho Chi Minh City has its own Chinatown (Cholon District), where Hoa are a merchant class. Older Hoa may adhere to their Chinese roots; some parents send their children to private schools that teach the Mandarin language and Chinese culture.²⁵⁵ Traditionally, Hoa men have adopted a dress similar to the Nung, Giay, Hmong, and Dao. Hoa women's traditional clothing consists of trousers, a five-paneled vest that falls to mid-thigh, and a five-panel short-sleeved shirt. These are usually only worn on special occasions.^{256, 257}



Hoa entertainer Huynh Tran Thanh
Wikimedia / USAID Vietnam

The Hoa are the backbone of commerce in Vietnam but have been scapegoats during economic downturns. Chinese immigrants participated in well-established organizations that used trust as the basis of finance.^{258, 259} Members traded on the honor of their ancestry, thus rendering outsiders ineligible for membership and making full assimilation into Vietnamese society unnecessary.²⁶⁰

In the late 1970s, Vietnam had an estimated 1.2 million ethnic Chinese; about 300,000 subsequently left the country. Chinese immigration resumed after the two countries normalized relations in 1991. Many recent arrivals have entered Vietnam legally as contract laborers, but they sometimes stay after the contract has ended. How to handle their presence poses a challenge to a Vietnamese government that needs Chinese investment.²⁶¹

Khmer Krom

The Khmer Krom live in the lower reaches of the Mekong Delta. Originally, the area was part of Cambodia. Tensions between the Khmer Krom and the majority Kinh are built on historic differences and animosities. The Khmer Krom practice Indian-influenced Theravada Buddhism, whereas Kinh Buddhists practice Mahayana Buddhism.²⁶² Tensions have arisen because of religious differences, leading Khmer Krom monks to lobby for fairer treatment in resource distribution; their Buddhist temples face constant



Khmer Krom men, Trà Vinh Province, southern Vietnam
Wikimedia / Thành viên CC BY SA 3.0

poorer than the majority Kinh, and relations are politically sensitive.²⁶⁷

surveillance by government officials and Khmer Krom monks have been detained by the government.^{263, 264}

Despite the national government's focus on providing opportunities to ethnic minorities, the Khmer Krom are disproportionately poor and student dropout is high.^{265, 266} Of the three central provinces, An Giang has a significant Khmer Krom population—90,271, or 4% of the province's population. This population in An Giang is significantly

Montagnards

Most of Vietnam's other remaining ethnic groups live in the northern mountains, down the Truong Son Range, and in the Central Highlands. Among these groups there is great diversity in languages, religions, and writing systems.²⁶⁸

The more than 30 indigenous communities in the Central Highlands are collectively referred to as Montagnard (Degar). Called Montagnards ("highlanders" or, literally, "mountain people") by the French, these central highlanders have exhibited a desire to



Montagnard schoolgirls, Central Highlands
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

preserve their own cultural identities.^{269, 270}

Montagnards were recruited during times of conflict because of their ability to survive in any terrain. Because of their support for the United States, those who fought for the RVN during the Vietnam War faced harsh consequences after the country was reunified under communist rule. More recently, the settlement of Kinh lowlanders in the Central Highlands has caused ethnic tensions and periodic violence. The Kinh have greatly expanded

coffee plantations, whereas the Montagnards rely on the forest for their livelihood. Outsiders have viewed the conflict largely as a matter of control over resources, while Hanoi has claimed religious agitators are behind the unrest.²⁷¹

Precolonial Montagnard religious beliefs centered around animist or spirit worship. Today, many Montagnards are Protestant, but their freedom of worship has been curtailed. Ethnic Montagnards face surveillance, intimidation, arbitrary arrest, and mistreatment by security forces. Authorities compelled members of independent Christian Montagnard religious groups to denounce their faith publicly. Government repression has caused hundreds of Montagnards to flee to Cambodia and Thailand.²⁷²

Hmong

The Hmong (or Mong) reside in the mountains of northwest Vietnam and in neighboring Laos, the origin of most who immigrated to the United States.²⁷³ There are 1 million Hmong in Vietnam, making up 1.5% of the population. Hmong are believed to have originated in Siberia before migrating through China, where they are known as Miao. They fled south to escape the predatory taxation of the imperial Chinese government.^{274, 275}



Hmong mother and child near Sapa
Flickr / Leocadio Sebastian

Hmong are divided into distinct tribes; the “Black Hmong” and “Flower Hmong” are the two most prominent. The attire of each Hmong tribe has unique features, such as embroidered patterns and unique headdresses, which distinguish them from one another. Common features among all the Hmong tribes include the use of indigo dye, hemp fabric, and embroidery as the main decoration for the outfits. Women typically wear a blouse, skirt, jacket, apron, and leg wraps, while men wear jackets (or a shirt and a vest), trousers, and an apron.²⁷⁶

Collectively, the Hmong are the largest tribal minority around the town of Sapa, in northern Vietnam. They traditionally have close ties to the Kinh and speak Hmong (Miao), a highly tonal language that is related to Vietnamese. Under their patriarchal society, only males own property. Hmong are primarily farmers, cultivating rice in terraced fields higher up in the mountains, and raising pigs, chicken, and cattle.²⁷⁷ They are known for their colorful textiles, intricate embroidery, and a rich oral tradition of love songs. Hmong practice ancestor worship, shamanism, and believe in household spirits, though about a third of Hmong are Christian.^{278, 279} Protests in 2011 against government land seizures and calling for greater political autonomy resulted in a violent crackdown by Vietnamese security forces.²⁸⁰

Other Northern Tribal Groups

There are more than 30 different ethnic groups in the Northern Highlands, each of which has its own distinctive culture. They include speakers of the Tai-Kadai and Vietic language groups, such as the Tay, Thai, Muong (nguoi Muong), and Nung. The Tay and the Thai are the largest groups in this region; the 1.7 million Tay represent the second-largest minority group in the country. Most Tay live along valleys and the lower slopes of the northern mountains. In parts of Ha Giang Province, they make up 90% of the population.²⁸¹ The Tay are closely related to the Nung people and are sometimes referred to as Tay-Nung.²⁸² The Tay speak one of several central Tai dialects, which are closely related to the Zhuang dialects of southern China.²⁸³ Tay are mainly wet-rice farmers. They practice a mix of Taoism and Chinese folk religion, and have a rich tradition of folklore, poetry, music, and dance. They are distinguished from other northern tribes by their traditional indigo blue or black clothing and silver hoop necklaces; they are known for their unique designs in brocade weaving.^{284, 285}



Ethnic Thai woman, rice field, northwest Vietnam
Flickr / Lon&Queta CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The closely related Thai (or Tai) groups are differentiated as Black Thai, White Thai, Red Thai, etc. The color refers to the traditional clothing worn by the women of each group. The men have adopted the Kinh clothing style. The Thai cultivate rice and speak a Tai-Kadai language. They are known for their beautifully woven garments and their houses built on stilts, which protect them from flood damage. Thai social organization is complex; each group lives in a valley-based principality called a *muong* that extends beyond the village. In contrast to Kinh traditions, Thai husbands move to the home of their wives' families until their first child is born.^{286, 287}

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 1 BBC News, "Vietnam Country Profile," 24 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-16567315>.
- 2 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Indochina Wars," 9 August 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Indochina-wars>.
- 3 World Bank in Vietnam, "Vietnam Home: Overview," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 4 Geoba.se, "The World: Population (2018): Top 100+," accessed 8 November 2018, <http://www.geoba.se/population.php?pc=world>.
- 5 Barbara Adam and Vu Vo, "About Vietnam," in *Vietnam: 100 Unusual Travel Tips and a Guide to Living and Working There* (Wandering Educators Press, 2016), loc. 134-138, Kindle.
- 6 Central Intelligence Agency, "Vietnam: People and Society: Urbanization," in *The World Factbook*, updated 28 November 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>.
- 7 PBS Frontline, "Vietnam: Looking for Home: Facts and Stats," May 2003, <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/vietnam/facts.html>.
- 8 Central Intelligence Agency, "Vietnam: People and Society: Religion," in *The World Factbook*, updated 28 November 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>.
- 9 World Bank, "The World Bank in Vietnam," updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 10 Eleanor Albert, "Evolution of Vietnam-U.S. Ties," Council on Foreign Relations, 7 March 2018, https://www.cfr.org/background/evolution-us-vietnam-ties?utm_medium=email&utm_source=dailybrief&utm_content=092118&sp_mid=57407527&sp_rid=ZWNsaXBzZV93aW5kQGNvbWVhc3QubmV0S0.
- 11 Ronald J. Cima, "Geography," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/33.htm>.
- 12 Joao S. de Queiroz, Daniel Griswold, Nguyen Duc Tu, and Patrick Hall, "Vietnam: Vietnam Tropical Forest and Biodiversity Assessment," prepared by Sun Mountain International and the Cadmus Group, Inc. for USAID, updated 23 September 2013, 37, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/Vietnam118_119FinalDraft%2015Oct2013%20%28Public%20Version%29.pdf.
- 13 Nation Master, "Geography: Area: Comparative to US Places: Countries Compared," accessed 25 January 2019, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Geography/Area/Comparative-to-US-places>.
- 14 Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America, "Vietnam: Geography," 24 October 2018, <http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/vietnam/geography>.
- 15 Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America, "Vietnam: Geography," 24 October 2018, <http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/vietnam/geography>.
- 16 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Annamese Cordillera," updated 29 July 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Annamese-Cordillera>.
- 17 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Land," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam#ref52689>.
- 18 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Fansipan: Hiking in Sapa," accessed 24 October 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/sapa/activities/fansipan/a/poi-act/1389069/357936>.
- 19 Vietnam Tourism, "Viet Nam: Country and People: Topography," accessed 26 October 2018, <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/about/items/1751>.
- 20 Ronald J. Cima, "Geography," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/33.htm>.
- 21 Vietnam Tourism, "Viet Nam: Country and People: Topography," accessed 26 October 2018, <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/about/items/1751>.
- 22 Jeffrey Hays, "Apa Area and Lao Cai Province," Facts and Details, accessed 26 October 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9j/entry-3554.html.
- 23 Susan Harb, "In Vietnam, a Walk on the High Side," *Washington Post*, 20 August 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/in-vietnam-a-walk-on-the-high-side/2011/08/12/gIQAfV4PJ_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.fbf3eadbb4b6.
- 24 Sheila Hawkins, ed., "Understanding Vietnam," in *Fodor's See It Vietnam*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fodor's Travel Publications, 2012), 8.
- 25 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Red River," updated 14 June 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Red-River-Asia>.
- 26 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Red River," updated 14 June 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Red-River-Asia>.
- 27 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Land: Drainage," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam#ref509863>.
- 28 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Geography," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/geography.htm>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 29 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Economy: Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Agriculture-forestry-and-fishing>.
- 30 Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America, "Vietnam: Geography," 24 October 2018, <http://vietnambassay-usa.org/vietnam/geography>.
- 31 Ronald J. Cima, "Geography," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/33.htm>.
- 32 World Atlas, "Vietnam Geography," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/vietnam/vnland.htm>.
- 33 Sheila Hawkins, ed., "Understanding Vietnam," in *Fodor's See It Vietnam*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fodor's Travel Publications, 2012), 8.
- 34 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Geography," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/geography.htm>.
- 35 Oscar Salemink, "The Regional Centrality of Vietnam's Central Highlands," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, 16 October 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.113>.
- 36 *VN Express International*, "3 Shot Dead, 15 Injured in Alleged Land Dispute in Central Highlands," 23 October 2016, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/3-shot-dead-15-injured-in-alleged-land-dispute-in-central-highlands-3487992.html>.
- 37 Central Intelligence Agency, "East and Southeast Vietnam: Introduction: Vietnam: Background," in *The World Factbook*, updated 17 October 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>.
- 38 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Geography," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/geography.htm>.
- 39 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Annamese Cordillera," updated 29 July 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Annamese-Cordillera>.
- 40 Oscar Salemink, "The Regional Centrality of Vietnam's Central Highlands," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, 16 October 2018, <http://asianhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277727-e-113>.
- 41 Denis D. Gray, "From Soldier's Road to Tourist Highway," *Asia Travel on NBC News*, accessed 26 October 2018, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/8718075/ns/travel-destination_travel/t/soldiers-road-tourist-highway/.
- 42 Thomas R. Yarborough, "Truck Hunting on the Ho Chi Minh Trail," *HistoryNet*, 11 June 2017 (originally published in *Vietnam Magazine*, October 2013), <http://www.historynet.com/truck-hunting-ho-chi-minh-trail.htm>.
- 43 Edward J. Anthony et al., "Linking Rapid Erosion of the Mekong River Delta to Human Activities," *Scientific Reports* 5, no. 14745 (2015): <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep14745>.
- 44 Anne Gulland, "The Amphibious Homes That Work with Water to Stay Afloat in Floods," *Telegraph*, 4 September 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/amphibious-homes-work-water-stay-afloat-floods/>.
- 45 College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois, "Environmental Changes in the Mekong Delta Spell Trouble for Farmers," 23 July 2018, <https://aces.illinois.edu/news/environmental-changes-mekong-delta-spell-trouble-farmers>.
- 46 Marc Goichot, "Why Silt Is so Important for the Mekong," *Third Pole*, 13 September 2016, <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2016/09/13/why-silt-is-so-important-for-the-mekong/>.
- 47 Daniel Workman, "Rice Exports by Country," *World's Top Exports*, 19 October 2018, <http://www.worldstopexports.com/rice-exports-country/>.
- 48 *Economist*, "Essay: The Mekong: Requiem for a River," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/essays/21689225-can-one-world-s-great-waterways-survive-its-development>.
- 49 William Smith, "Agriculture in the Central Mekong Delta: Opportunities for Donor Business Engagement," *Overseas Development Institute*, December 2013, 3, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9060.pdf>.
- 50 Stratfor Worldview, "Against China, Vietnam Stands Alone," 22 December 2016, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/against-china-vietnam-stands-alone>.
- 51 Dang Thi Ha, Sylvain Ouillon, and Giap Van Vinh, "Water and Suspended Sediment Budgets in the Lower Mekong from High-Frequency Measurements (2009-2016)," *MDPI* 10, no. 7 (26 June 2018): 19, <https://doi.org/10.3390/w10070846>.
- 52 Richard Cronin, "Mekong Delta Faces a Bleaker Future Than People Realize," *VN Express International*, 9 July 2018, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/perspectives/mekong-delta-faces-a-bleaker-future-than-people-realize-3773009.html>.
- 53 Ronald J. Cima, "Geography," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/33.htm>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 54 Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America, "Vietnam: Geography," 24 October 2018, <http://vietnambassy-usa.org/vietnam/geography>.
- 55 Vietnam Briefing, "Regional Spotlight: Vietnam's Southeast (Ho Chi Minh City)," 18 July 2013, <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/regional-spotlight-vietnam-southeast-ho-chi-minh-city.html>.
- 56 Ba Ria: Vung Tau, "Natural Conditions: Geographical Location," accessed 10 January 2019, <http://en.baria-vungtau.gov.vn/web/guest/natural-conditions>.
- 57 Samantha Jones and Julia Gu, "Vietnam's Regions and Key Economic Zones," Vietnam Briefing, 29 May 2012, <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnams-regions-key-economic-zones.html>.
- 58 Kit Gillet, "Where the Faithful Worship Among the Tourists," *New York Times*, 11 May 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/13/travel/in-vietnam-the-cao-dai-temple-mixes-religions-and-styles.html>.
- 59 Nations Encyclopedia, "Vietnam Climate," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/Vietnam-CLIMATE.html>.
- 60 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Climate," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Climate>.
- 61 Nations Encyclopedia, "Vietnam Climate," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/Vietnam-CLIMATE.html>.
- 62 Meteoblue, "Climate Hanoi," accessed 26 October 2018, https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/forecast/modelclimate/hanoi_vietnam_1581130.
- 63 Nations Encyclopedia, "Vietnam Climate," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/Vietnam-CLIMATE.html>.
- 64 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Climate," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Climate>.
- 65 World Wildlife Fund, "Mekong," accessed 6 November 2018, http://wwf.panda.org/our_work/water/rivers/mekong/.
- 66 Jeffrey W. Jacobs, Lewis Owen, and Gilbert F. White, "Mekong River," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 18 September 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mekong-River>.
- 67 Piumi Rajapaksha, "A Guide to Vietnam's Floating Markets," Culture Trip, 4 February 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/guide-vietnams-floating-markets/>.
- 68 BBC Two, "The Mekong River with Sue Perkins: Episode 1," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02bqfwb/p02bqfkz>.
- 69 Tuan Anh Le and Guido Wyseure, "Water Environmental Governance in the Mekong River Delta, Vietnam," January 2007, 2, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228425582_Water_environmental_governance_in_the_Mekong_River_Delta_Vietnam.
- 70 Ho Binh Minh, "Delta Drought Gives Glimpse into Bleak Future for Mighty Mekong," Reuters, 16 April 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-drought-mekong-idUSKCN0XE00N>.
- 71 International Rivers, "Mekong Mainstream Dams Map," 28 June 2017, <https://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/mekong-mainstream-dams-map-16481>.
- 72 East Asia Forum, "New Rule-Based Order Needed to Save the Mekong," 29 March 2016, <http://www.easiaforum.org/2016/03/29/new-rule-based-order-needed-to-save-the-mekong/>.
- 73 *Economist*, "Essay: The Mekong: Requiem for a River," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/essays/21689225-can-one-world-s-great-waterways-survive-its-development>.
- 74 Stephen Wright, "Vietnam Warns of Dire Impact from Planned Mekong Dams," Phys Org, 5 April 2016, <https://phys.org/news/2016-04-vietnam-dire-impact-mekong.html>.
- 75 Richard Finney, "Mekong River Commission Warned on Development Impacts to the River," Radio Free Asia, 4 June 2018, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/cambodia/warned-04062018165608.html>.
- 76 Stefan Lovgren, "Southeast Asia May Be Building Too Many Dams Too Fast," *National Geographic*, 23 August 2018, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/08/news-southeast-asia-building-dams-floods-climate-change/?user.testname=none>.
- 77 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Red River," updated 14 July 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Red-River-Asia>.
- 78 Enchanting Travels Travel Blog, "Traditions of Perfume River, Vietnam," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.enchantingtravels.com/travel-blog/traditions-of-the-perfume-river-vietnam/>.
- 79 Viet Nam News, "Hue to Improve Huong River," 4 September 2015, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/275359/hue-to-improve-huong-river.html>.
- 80 Hydrology and Water Resources Research Laboratory, Kyoto University, "General Description," *Viet Nam* 5, no. 11 (accessed 6 November 2018): 277, http://hywr.kuciv.kyoto-u.ac.jp/ihp/riverCatalogue/Vol_05/11_Viet_Nam-8.pdf.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 81 Isabelle Sudron, "Ho Chi Minh City v Saigon: Why Vietnam's Biggest City Has Two Names," Culture Trip, updated 6 December 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/ho-chi-minh-city-vs-saigon-whats-in-a-name/>.
- 82 Matthew Pike, "11 Ways France Influenced Vietnamese Culture," Culture Trip, updated 11 December 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 83 Nick Ross, "A Short History of Saigon," Word Vietnam, 17 July 2017, <http://wordvietnam.com/people-culture/the-big-story/a-short-history-of-saigon-2>.
- 84 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Cochinchina," updated 17 September 2007, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cochinchina>.
- 85 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Ho Chi Minh City," updated 26 April 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ho-Chi-Minh-City>.
- 86 Stratfor Worldview, "Vietnam: A Case Study in Geopolitical Analysis," 10 April 2017, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/horizons/vietnam-case-study-geopolitical-analysis>.
- 87 Global Cities, "Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnam," RMIT Research Institute, accessed 26 October 2018, <http://global-cities.info/placemarks/ho-chi-minh-city-viet-nam>.
- 88 Madhu Raghunath, Senior Urban Specialist for the World Bank, "How Ho Chi Minh City Got a Facelift: Sustainable Development Solutions Are Changing a City," *East Asia and Pacific on the Rise* (World Bank Blog), 29 October 2015, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/how-ho-chi-minh-city-got-facelift-sustainable-development-solutions-are-changing-city>.
- 89 World Population Review, "Ho Chi Minh City Population," accessed 4 January 2019, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/ho-chi-minh-city-population/>.
- 90 Global Cities, "Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnam," RMIT Research Institute, accessed 8 January 2019, <http://global-cities.info/placemarks/ho-chi-minh-city-viet-nam>.
- 91 *Saigoneer*, "Saigon's Official Population Hits 13m: Mayor," 20 August 2017, <https://saigoneer.com/saigon-news/10985-saigon-s-official-population-hits-13-million-mayor>.
- 92 Worldwide Travellers, "Ho Chi Minh City," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 10-14, Kindle.
- 93 Geoffrey Migiro, "The Oldest Capital Cities in Asia," World Atlas, updated 1 January 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-oldest-capital-cities-in-asia.html>.
- 94 Jeffrey Hays, "Hanoi: Its Charms, 1000-Year History and French Influence," Facts and Details, accessed 26 October 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9j/entry-3546.html.
- 95 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Hanoi," updated 2 May 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Hanoi>.
- 96 *New World Encyclopedia*, "Hanoi: History," accessed 26 October 2018, <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hanoi#History>.
- 97 Internet World Stats, "Vietnam," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.internetworldstats.com/asia.htm#vn>.
- 98 Matthew Pike, "11 Ways France Influenced Vietnamese Culture," Culture Trip, updated 11 December 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 99 Worldwide Travellers, "Hanoi," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 28-41, Kindle.
- 100 Susan Spano, "A Trio of French Colonial Sites in Hanoi," Smithsonian.com, 3 July 2012, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/a-trio-of-french-colonial-sites-in-hanoi-278826/>.
- 101 Georges Boudarel and Nguyen Van Ky, "A City that Remembers," in *Hanoi: City of the Rising Dragon* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 16-17.
- 102 *Frommer's*, "Hanoi: Exploring the Old Town in Hanoi," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.frommers.com/destinations/hanoi/attractions/exploring-the-old-town>.
- 103 Aruna Ghose, ed., "Vietnam Area by Area: Central Vietnam: Hanoi," in *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Vietnam and Angkor Wat* (London: DK, 2011), 153-167.
- 104 World Atlas, "Biggest Cities in Vietnam," updated 24 July 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-biggest-cities-in-vietnam.html>.
- 105 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Haiphong," updated 18 March 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Haiphong>.
- 106 History, "This Day in History: 16 April 1972: United States Resumes Bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/united-states-resumes-bombing-of-hanoi-and-haiphong>.
- 107 Jeffrey Hays, "French Indochina War (1946-54)," Facts and Details, accessed 26 October 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9a/entry-3341.html.
- 108 History, "This Day in History: 16 April 1972: United States Resumes Bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/united-states-resumes-bombing-of-hanoi-and-haiphong>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 109 Rebecca Kesby, "North Vietnam, 1972: The Christmas Bombing of Hanoi," BBC News, 24 December 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-20719382>.
- 110 Lonely Planet, "Northern Vietnam: Haiphong," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/northeast-vietnam/haiphong>.
- 111 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Haiphong," updated 18 March 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Haiphong>.
- 112 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Danang: History," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/danang/background/history/a/nar/8b638eb7-2484-4645-ae30-0834e57b123f/357869>.
- 113 World Population Review, "Population of Cities in Vietnam (2019)," accessed 25 January 2019, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/vietnam-population/cities/>.
- 114 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Da Nang," updated 12 July 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Da-Nang>.
- 115 Rob Marvin, "Vietnam's Tech Boom: A Look Inside Southeast Asia's Silicon Valley," *PC Magazine*, 3 September 2015, <https://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2490579,00.asp>.
- 116 Barbara Adam and Vu Vo, "About Vietnam," in *Vietnam: 100 Unusual Travel Tips and a Guide to Living and Working There* (Wandering Educators Press, 2016), loc. 191, Kindle.
- 117 UNESCO, "World Heritage List: Complex of Hue Monuments," accessed 26 October 2018, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/678>.
- 118 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Hue," updated 2 May 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Hue-city-Vietnam>.
- 119 Phan Thuan An, "Architecture of the Ancient Capital of Hue: Vietnam National Characteristics and Foreign Influences," trans. Nguyen Van Hue, SeaSite, <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Vietnamese/VNCulture/Hue.htm>.
- 120 U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, "Vietnam's Tet Offensive: 50 Years Later," last reviewed 15 March 2018, <https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/vietnams-tet-offensive-50-years-later>.
- 121 Worldwide Travellers, "Hue," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 53-56, Kindle.
- 122 Arthur Cotterell, "Chapter 5: Early South-East Asia From the Chinese Annexation of Vietnam to the Mongol Invasions," in *East Asia: From Chinese Predominance to the Rise of the Pacific Rim* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 78).
- 123 Ronald J. Cima, "Early History," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/3.htm>.
- 124 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Champa," 9 November 2011, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Champa-ancient-kingdom-Indochina>.
- 125 John F. Whitmore, "Vietnamese History: A Chronological Outline," Asia Educators, accessed 8 November 2018, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/vietnam_timeline.htm.
- 126 Ronald J. Cima, "Early History," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/3.htm>.
- 127 Jeffrey Hays, "Early Chinese Rule of Vietnam," Facts and Details, accessed 8 November 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9a/entry-3332.html.
- 128 Christopher Goscha, "Chapter 1: Northern Configurations: Independent Dai Viet," in *Penguin History of Modern Vietnam: A History* (London: Penguin UK, 30 June 2016).
- 129 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Trung Sisters," 1 March 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Trung-Sisters>.
- 130 Ronald J. Cima, "Early History," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/3.htm>.
- 131 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Tran Hung Dao," 1 March 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Tran-Hung-Dao>.
- 132 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Chinese Cultural Impact," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/5.htm>.
- 133 Richard Sterling, "Vietnam Area by Area," in *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Vietnam and Angkor Wat* (New York: Penguin, 1 December 2011), 160.
- 134 Center for Global Education, "Religion in Vietnam," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://asiasociety.org/education/religion-vietnam>.
- 135 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Nguyen Dynasty," 1 September 2011, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nguyen-dynasty>.
- 136 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Nguyen Dynasty," 1 September 2011, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nguyen-dynasty>.
- 137 Vietnam Law and Legal Forum, "The State and Law under the Tay Son Dynasty (1776-1802)," updated 24 February 2011, <http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/the-state-and-law-under-the-tay-son-dynasty-1776-1802-4509.html>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 138 Ronald J. Cima, "Chapter 2: Vietnam: Historical Background: The Tay Son Rebellion," in *Vietnam: Current Issues and Historical Background*, ed. V. Largo (New York: Nova Publishers, 2002), 104.
- 139 Ronald J. Cima, "History: The Tay Son Rebellion," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/13.htm>.
- 140 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Le Dynasty (1428-1788)," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/dai-viet-le.htm>.
- 141 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Under French Rule," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/15.htm>.
- 142 L. Shelton Woods, "Chapter One: Vietnam History and Geography," in *Vietnam: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 47.
- 143 Jeffrey Hays, "Arrival of Europeans in Vietnam," Facts and Details, accessed 8 November 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9a/entry-3337.html.
- 144 Charles Keyes, "Chapter 4: Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam," in *Golden Peninsula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1995), 202-203.
- 145 H. B. Shaffer, "Reconstruction in South Vietnam," *Editorial Research Reports*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1968), <https://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrrr1968041700>.
- 146 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: History: Effects of French Colonial Rule," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Effects-of-French-colonial-rule>.
- 147 Jennifer Llewellyn, Jim Southey, and Steve Thompson, "French Colonialism in Vietnam," Alpha History, accessed 8 November 2018, <https://alphahistory.com/vietnamwar/french-colonialism-in-vietnam/>.
- 148 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: 1858-1975: Colonial Period, Independence, and War," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/history-1.htm>.
- 149 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: WWII and Japan," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/hist-wwii-jap.htm>.
- 150 Jean Lacouture, "Ho Chi Minh," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 29 August 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ho-Chi-Minh>.
- 151 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Viet Minh," 15 September 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Viet-Minh>.
- 152 Stanley L. Kutler, ed., "Ho Chi Minh," *Encyclopaedia of the Vietnam War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1996), 230.
- 153 Nguyễn Thế Anh, "The Vietnamese Monarchy under French Colonial Rule 1884-1945," *Modern Asian Studies* 19, no. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 147-162, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/312324.pdf>.
- 154 Jennifer Llewellyn, Jim Southey, and Steve Thompson, "Japanese Occupation of Vietnam," Alpha History, accessed 8 November 2018, <https://alphahistory.com/vietnamwar/japanese-occupation-of-vietnam/>.
- 155 Bob Bergin, "The OSS Role in Ho Chi Minh's Rise to Political Power," *Studies in Intelligence* 62, no. 2 (June 2018), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-62-no-2/pdfs/oss-and-rise-of-ho-chi-minh.pdf>.
- 156 Claude G. Berube, "Ho Chi Minh and the OSS," HistoryNet, accessed 8 November 2018, <http://www.historynet.com/ho-chi-minh-and-the-oss.htm>.
- 157 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Viet-Minh," updated 15 September 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Viet-Minh>.
- 158 Daniel S. Levy, "Inside John McCain's Journey from Annapolis to the Hanoi Hilton: How He Became a Prisoner of War," 11 September 2018, <http://time.com/5377698/john-mccain-prisoner-of-war-vietnam/>.
- 159 Gordon I. Peterson and David C. Taylor, "A Shield and a Sword: Intelligence Support to Communications with US POWs in Vietnam," *Studies in Intelligence* 60, no. 1 (March 2016), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-60-no-1/pdfs/Peterson-Taylor-POW-Communications.pdf>.
- 160 History, "This Day in History: 2 September 1945: Vietnam Independence Proclaimed," updated 21 August 2018, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/vietnam-independence-proclaimed>.
- 161 Brett Reilly, "The True Origin of the Term 'Viet Cong'," *Diplomat*, 31 January 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-true-origin-of-the-term-viet-cong/>.
- 162 Huynh Kim Khanh, "The Vietnamese August Revolution Reinterpreted," *Journal of Asian Studies* (August 1971), 761-782, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2052986>.
- 163 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Battle of Dien Bien Phu," 30 April 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Dien-Bien-Phu>.
- 164 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Indochina Wars," updated 9 August 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Indochina-wars/ref764002>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 165 Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, "Milestones: 1953-1960: Dien Bien Phu and the Fall of French Indochina, 1954," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/dien-bien-phu>.
- 166 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Dien Bien Phu," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/24.htm>.
- 167 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Indochina Wars," updated 9 August 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Indochina-wars#ref764002>.
- 168 History, "This Day in History: 11 October 1954: Viet Minh Take Control in the North," updated 21 August 2018, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/viet-minh-take-control-in-the-north>.
- 169 Van Nguyen-Marshall, "Tools of Empire? Vietnamese Catholics in South Vietnam," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 20, no. 2 (2009): 140, <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/jcha/2009-v20-n2-jcha3903/044402ar.pdf>.
- 170 Brett Reilly, "The True Origin of the Term 'Viet Cong'," *Diplomat*, 31 January 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-true-origin-of-the-term-viet-cong/>.
- 171 Biography, "Ngo Dinh Diem," updated 1 April 2014, <https://www.biography.com/people/ngo-dinh-diem-39809>.
- 172 Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, "375: Memorandum of a Conversation, The White House," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Vietnam 1* (Washington DC, 9 May 1957, 11:13 a.m.-12:05 p.m.), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v01/d375>.
- 173 Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Fact Sheet: U.S.-Vietnam Relations," 11 December 2017, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4130.htm>.
- 174 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Second Indochina War," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/26.htm>.
- 175 Jennifer Llewellyn, Jim Southey, and Steve Thompson, "South Vietnam," Alpha History, accessed 8 November 2018, <https://alphahistory.com/vietnamwar/south-vietnam/>.
- 176 PBS, "Battlefield: Vietnam: Timeline: 1954-1964," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/timeline/>.
- 177 Ronald J. Cima, "History: The Fall of Ngo Dinh Diem," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/27.htm>.
- 178 Ronald J. Cima, "History: The Fall of Ngo Dinh Diem," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/27.htm>.
- 179 PBS, "Battlefield: Vietnam: Timeline: 1954-1964," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/timeline/>.
- 180 BBC News, "Vietnam Profile: Timeline," 22 April 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-16568035>.
- 181 Ronald H. Spector, "Vietnam War: 1954-1975," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 11 January 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War>.
- 182 Michael Ray, "Vietnam War Timeline," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/list/vietnam-war-timeline>.
- 183 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Escalation of the War," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/28.htm>.
- 184 Nick Davies, "Vietnam 40 Years on: How a Communist Victory Gave Way to Capitalist Corruption," *Guardian*, 22 April 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2015/apr/22/vietnam-40-years-on-how-communist-victory-gave-way-to-capitalist-corruption>.
- 185 Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, "Milestones: 1961-1968: U.S. Involvement in the Vietnam War: The Tet Offensive, 1968," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/tet>.
- 186 U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, "Vietnam's Tet Offensive: 50 Years Later," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/vietnams-tet-offensive-50-years-later>.
- 187 Tom Bowman, "Military Victory But Political Defeat: The Tet Offensive 50 Years Later," National Public Radio, 29 January 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/01/29/580811124/military-victory-but-political-defeat-the-tet-offensive-50-years-later>.
- 188 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Tet Offensive: Vietnam War: 1968," updated 24 September 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tet-Offensive>.
- 189 Rebecca Kesby, "North Vietnam, 1972: The Christmas Bombing of Hanoi," BBC News, 24 December 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-20719382>.
- 190 Ronald J. Cima, "History: Peace Negotiations," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/30.htm>.
- 191 Learning Network, "30 April 1975: Saigon Falls," 30 April 2012, <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/30/april-30-1975-saigon-falls/>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 192 Ronald H. Spector, "Vietnam War: The Fall of South Vietnam," 11 January 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War/The-fall-of-South-Vietnam>.
- 193 Ronald J. Cima, "History: The Final Campaign," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/31.htm>.
- 194 Gay Seidman, "Reconstruction and Revolution in Vietnam: The East Is Red," *Harvard Crimson*, 20 February 1976, <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1976/2/20/reconstruction-revolution-in-vietnam-pbwphen/>.
- 195 Intercultural Communication, DePauw University, "Vietnam: Home: History: Post 1975 and Contemporary Vietnam," Cultural Portfolio, Fall 2007, http://academic.depauw.edu/mkfinney_web/teaching/Com227/culturalPortfolios/VIETNAM/VIETNAM/history.html#post1975.
- 196 International Committee of the Red Cross, "Country Report Cambodia: ICRC Worldwide Consultation on the Rules of War," Greenberg Research, December 1999, 4, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/cambodia.pdf>.
- 197 Kevin Doyle and Phnom Penh, "Vietnam's Forgotten Cambodian War," BBC News, 14 September 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29106034>.
- 198 Barbara Crossette, "End to Cambodian Embargo Seems Near," *New York Times*, 21 December 1991, <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/21/world/end-to-cambodian-embargo-seems-near.html>.
- 199 Tetsusaburo Kimura, "Vietnam: Ten Years of Economic Struggle," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 10 (October 1986), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2644255>.
- 200 Charles Harvie, "Economic Reform and Future Prospects of the Vietnamese Economy" (working paper 96-8, University of Wollongong, Australia, 1996), 4, <https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1270&context=commwkpapers>.
- 201 Donald B. Freeman, "Doi Moi Policy and the Small-Enterprise Boom in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam," *Geographical Review* 86, no. 2 (April 1996): 178-197, <https://doi.org/10.2307/215955>.
- 202 Quan Hoang Vuong, "Vietnam's Political Economy in Transition (1986-2016)," Stratfor, 27 May 2014, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/vietnams-political-economy-transition-1986-2016>.
- 203 Marco Breu, Brian S. Salsberg, and Ha Thanh Tu, "Growing Up Fast: Vietnam Discovers the Consumer Society," *Forbes*, 23 August 2010, <https://www.forbes.com/2010/08/23/vietnam-retailing-consumerism-leadership-managing-mckinsey.html>.
- 204 Dang Kim Son et al., "Part III: Policy Reform and the Transformation of Vietnamese Agriculture," Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, accessed 8 November 2018, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/ag089e/AG089E08.htm>.
- 205 Sheridan Prasso, "Vietnam's Stock Market is Booming," *Fortune*, 12 April 2006, http://archive.fortune.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/2006/04/17/8374384/index.htm.
- 206 Matthew G. Schwarz, "Project 30: A Revolution in Vietnamese Governance?" Brookings, 14 September 2010, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/project-30-a-revolution-in-vietnamese-governance/>.
- 207 Quan Hoang Vuong, "Vietnam's Political Economy in Transition (1986-2016)," Stratfor, 27 May 2014, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/vietnams-political-economy-transition-1986-2016>.
- 208 Reuters, "Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang Dies at 61," Voice of America, 21 September 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/vietnam-president-tran-dai-quang-dies-at-61/4581157.html>.
- 209 Ralph Jennings, "Vietnam's No-Nonsense New President Takes Lead in China, US Affairs," Voice of America, 26 October 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/vietnam-s-no-nonsense-new-president-takes-lead-in-china-us-affairs/4630144.html>.
- 210 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 211 Ronald J. Cima, "The National Assembly," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/57.htm>.
- 212 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Communist Party of Vietnam," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/cpv.htm>.
- 213 Reuters, "Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang Dies at 61," Voice of America, 21 September 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/vietnam-president-tran-dai-quang-dies-at-61/4581157.html>.
- 214 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "DFAT Country Information Report: Vietnam," 21 June 2017, 8, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 215 Global Edge, "Vietnam: Government," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/vietnam/government>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 216 BBC News, "Vietnam Country Profile," 24 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-16567315>.
- 217 GlobalSecurity.org, "Vietnam: Communist Party of Vietnam," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/vietnam/cpv.htm>.
- 218 Viet Nam News, "Politburo Members," updated 29 January 2016, <https://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/281851/politburo-members.html>.
- 219 Anh Luu, "Update: Vietnam Legal Research," GlobalLex, updated by Le Thi Hanh May 2013, <http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globallex/Vietnam1.html>.
- 220 Nation Master, "Vietnam Government Stats," accessed 6 November 2018, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/profiles/Vietnam/Government>.
- 221 Oxford Business Group, "A Look at Vietnam's Legal System," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/law-land-look-country%E2%80%99s-legal-system>.
- 222 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Government and Society: Political Process," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Government-and-society#ref509906>.
- 223 BBC News, "Vietnam Country Profile," 24 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-16567315>.
- 224 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 225 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 226 British Home Office, "Country Policy and Information Note Vietnam: Opposition to the State: 2.4.19," September 2018, 9, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740184/Vietnam - Oppn to VCP - CPIN - v3.0 September 2018 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740184/Vietnam_-_Oppn_to_VCP_-_CPIN_-_v3.0_September_2018_.pdf).
- 227 Mai Nguyen and Jonathan Weber, "Vietnam Set to Tighten Clamps on Facebook and Google, Threatening Dissidents," Reuters, 18 May 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-socialmedia-insight/vietnam-set-to-tighten-clamps-on-facebook-and-google-threatening-dissidents-idUSKCN1J1CU>.
- 228 John Boudreau, "Technology: Vietnam Forces Facebook and Google to Pick Privacy or Growth," Bloomberg, 27 June 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-27/vietnam-forces-facebook-and-google-to-pick-privacy-or-growth>.
- 229 Nguyen The Phuong, "The Truth About Vietnam's New Military Cyber Unit," *Diplomat*, 10 January 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-truth-about-vietnams-new-military-cyber-unit/>.
- 230 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 231 World Bank, "The World Bank in Vietnam," updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 232 Observatory of Economic Complexity, "Vietnam," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/vnm/>.
- 233 Daniel Workman, "Rice Exports by Country," World's Top Exports, 19 October 2018, <http://www.worldstopexports.com/rice-exports-country/>.
- 234 Craft-Driven Market Research, "Vietnam Agriculture and Food Industry Report 2018," accessed 6 November 2018, <http://www.craftdrivenresearch.com/product/vietnam-agriculture-report-2018/>.
- 235 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 236 World Bank, "The World Bank in Vietnam," updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 237 Department for International Trade, United Kingdom, "Guidance: Overseas Business Risk: Vietnam," updated 15 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-vietnam/overseas-business-risk-vietnam>.
- 238 Viet Nam News, "Việt Nam to Face Power Shortage by 2030," 10 August 2018, <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/463521/viet-nam-to-face-power-shortage-by-2030.html>.
- 239 Reuters, "Russia's Gazprom Signs Agreement on Gas and Power Station in Vietnam," 6 September 2018, <https://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFL5N1VS4R7>.
- 240 Central Intelligence Agency, "People and Society: Ethnic Groups," in *The World Factbook*, updated 17 October 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 241 Nam-Kook Kim, "Ethnic Minorities and the State in Vietnam," in *Multicultural Challenges and Redefining Identity in East Asia* (Farnham, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 28 February 2014), 145.
- 242 World Atlas, "Largest Ethnic Groups in Vietnam," updated 7 June 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-vietnam.html>.
- 243 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: People: Ethnic Groups and Languages," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups#ref260879>.
- 244 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: People: Languages," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups#ref260879>.
- 245 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "DFAT Country Information Report: Vietnam," 21 June 2017, 6, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 246 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: People: Languages," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups>.
- 247 Omniglot, "Chữ-Nôm Script," accessed 6 November 2018, <https://www.omniglot.com/writing/chunom.htm>.
- 248 Tiffany Lý, "Holding on to Chữ Nôm, Việt Nam's Lost Script," LOA Broadcasting Vietnam, 21 November 2016, <https://www.loa.fm/our-stories/vietnamese-script>.
- 249 ChuNom.org, "Home: Start Learning Chữ Nôm!" accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.chunom.org/>.
- 250 Nam-Kook Kim, "Ethnic Minorities and the State in Vietnam," in *Multicultural Challenges and Redefining Identity in East Asia* (Farnham, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 28 February 2014), 145.
- 251 World Atlas, "Largest Ethnic Groups in Vietnam," updated 7 June 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-vietnam.html>.
- 252 DOY News, "Ao Dai: What You Need to Know about the Vietnamese Traditional Dress," 20 December 2014, <https://www.doynews.com/article/ao-dai-what-you-need-know-about-vietnamese-traditional-dress>.
- 253 Duong Thi Kim Duc and Mingxin Bao, "Aesthetic Sense of the Vietnamese through Three Renovations of the Women's Ao Dai in the 20th Century," *Asian Culture and History* 4, no. 2 (July 2012), <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.877.7443&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- 254 Ramses Amer, "Examining the Demographic Changes of the Ethnic Chinese in Vietnam Since 1975," *Malaysian Journal of Chinese Studies* 2, no. 1 (2013): 2-3, https://www.newera.edu.my/files/mces/MalaysianJournal/Malaysia%20Journal%20Vol%202_1.pdf.
- 255 Minority Rights.org, "Vietnam: Chinese (Hoa)," updated March 2018, <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/chinese-hoa/>.
- 256 Jeffrey Hays, "Hoa Chinese Culture," Facts and Details, accessed 26 October 2018, <http://factsanddetails.com/asian/cat66/sub418/entry-4308.html#chapter-2>.
- 257 Vietnam Culture, "The Hoa Ethnic Group," accessed 8 November 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/hoa-ethnic-group.aspx>.
- 258 Karl Miller, "From Humanitarian to Economic: The Changing Face of Vietnamese Migration," Migration Policy Institute, 29 April 2015, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/humanitarian-economic-changing-face-vietnamese-migration>.
- 259 Countries and their Cultures, "Chinese in Southeast Asia: Orientation," accessed 8 November 2018, <https://www.everyculture.com/East-Southeast-Asia/Chinese-in-Southeast-Asia-Orientation.html>.
- 260 Minority Groups International, "Vietnam: Chinese (Hoa)," updated March 2018, <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/chinese-hoa/>.
- 261 Ramses Amer, "Examining the Demographic Changes of the Ethnic Chinese in Vietnam Since 1975," *Malaysian Journal of Chinese Studies* 2, no. 1 (2013): 2-3, https://www.newera.edu.my/files/mces/MalaysianJournal/Malaysia%20Journal%20Vol%202_1.pdf.
- 262 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Languages," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups>.
- 263 Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, "Khmer-Krom," 30 January 2018, <https://unpo.org/members/7887>.
- 264 Human Rights Watch, "Vietnam," January 2018, 4, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/vietnam_1.pdf.
- 265 Unrepresented Nations and People's Organization, "Khmer-Krom," 30 January 2018, <https://unpo.org/members/7887>.
- 266 Minority Rights Group International, "Vietnam: Khmer-Krom," updated March 2018, <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/khmer/>.

Endnotes for Chapter 1: Profile

- 267 William Smith, "Agriculture in the Central Mekong Delta: Opportunities for Donor Business Engagement," Overseas Development Institute, December 2013, 2, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9060.pdf>.
- 268 Minority Rights Group International, "Vietnam," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://minorityrights.org/country/vietnam/>.
- 269 Minority Rights Group International, "Vietnam," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://minorityrights.org/country/vietnam/>.
- 270 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Languages," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups>.
- 271 British Home Office, "Country Policy and Information Note Vietnam: Ethnic and Religious Groups," 20 March 2018, 20-21, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/695864/Vietnam_-_Ethnic_and_Religious_groups_-_CPIN_v2.0_ex.pdf.
- 272 Human Rights Watch, "Vietnam," January 2018, 4, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/vietnam_1.pdf.
- 273 British Home Office, "Country Policy and Information Note Vietnam: Ethnic and Religious Groups" 20 March 2018, 22, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/695864/Vietnam_-_Ethnic_and_Religious_groups_-_CPIN_v2.0_ex.pdf.
- 274 Minnesota Historical Society, "Hmong Timeline," accessed 8 November 2018, <http://www.mnhs.org/hmong/hmong-timeline>.
- 275 Seb Rumsby, "How Hmong Christians Navigate the Border Tensions between China and Vietnam," Conversation, 28 March 2018, <http://theconversation.com/how-hmong-christians-navigate-the-border-tensions-between-china-and-vietnam-86800>.
- 276 Matthew Pike, "The History of Vietnam's Hmong Community," Culture Trip, 30 April 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/the-history-of-vietnams-hmong-community/>.
- 277 World Atlas, "Largest Ethnic Groups in Vietnam," updated 7 June 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-vietnam.html>. 278 Seb Rumsby, "How Hmong Christians Navigate the Border Tensions between China and Vietnam," Conversation, 28 March 2018, <http://theconversation.com/how-hmong-christians-navigate-the-border-tensions-between-china-and-vietnam-86800>.
- 279 Nicholas Tapp, "Hmong," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11 September 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hmong>.
- 280 Stratfor Worldview, "Hmong Protests in Vietnam," 6 May 2011, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/hmong-protests-vietnam>.
- 281 Vinh Phong, "Tay Ethnic Culture Preserved in Xuan Giang Commune," Voice of Vietnam, 18 October 2018, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/village-life/tay-ethnic-culture-preserved-in-xuan-giang-commune-690978.vov>.
- 282 Asia Highlights, "The People of Vietnam," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://www.asiahighlights.com/vietnam/people.htm>.
- 283 Ethnologue, "Tày," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/tyz>.
- 284 Northern Vietnam, "Ethnic Groups and Minorities in Vietnam," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://north-vietnam.com/ethnic-minorities-vietnam/>.
- 285 Lan Anh, "Tay's Culture and Belief," Voice of Vietnam, 5 January 2015, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/colorful-vietnamvietnams-54-ethnic-groups/tays-culture-and-belief-300962.vov>.
- 286 Minority Rights.org, "Vietnam: Highlanders: Profile," accessed 10 January 2019, <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/highland-minorities/>.
- 287 Lan Anh, "The Thai Ethnic Group in Vietnam," Voice of Vietnam, 7 October 2013, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/colorful-vietnamvietnams-54-ethnic-groups/the-thai-ethnic-group-in-vietnam-185979.vov>.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 1 | Profile

Assessment

1. Kinh, or ethnic Vietnamese, are the largest ethnic group in Vietnam.
2. Today, the Vietnamese language is written in Chinese characters.
3. The climate in Vietnam varies only slightly throughout the country.
4. The French-appointed Indochinese government sanctioned the presence of Japanese troops in Vietnam during World War II.
5. The Vietnamese government implemented *doi moi* economic reforms in 1975, at the time of national reunification.

Assessment Answers: 1. True; 2. True; 3. False; 4. False; 5. False



Thien Hau Buddhist Temple, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / bvi4092s

Chapter 2 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Religion

Introduction

While communist Vietnam is officially secular, with 80% of Vietnamese self-identifying as belonging to no religion, many Vietnamese regularly visit temples or churches and offer prayers to their ancestors. Though only 15% of the population identify as Buddhist, according to Vietnam's Committee for Religious Affairs, over half the population follow Mahayana Buddhism. Buddhism in Vietnam has blended over the centuries with Taoism and Confucianism to form Tam Giao (three teachings). This fusion of religions is practiced today by the majority ethnic Kinh.^{288, 289, 290}

Vietnamese hold beliefs from many different cultures and traditions. Christians make up 8% of the population. Vietnam is home to Southeast Asia's third-largest Catholic population, with 6 million adherents; Protestantism was introduced in the late 19th century, and there are roughly 1 million Protestants in Vietnam.^{291, 292}

Significant indigenous religions include Hoa Hao (1.5%) and Cao Dai (1%).²⁹³ Animism (the belief that spirits inhabit nature) and folk beliefs (which have blended with Taoism) also play a major role in the lives of the Vietnamese.^{294, 295} Followers of Islam (mostly ethnic Cham who are predominantly Sunni), Baha'i, and Hinduism comprise less than 2% of the population.^{296, 297} Vietnamese public servants are not allowed to claim any religious affiliation.²⁹⁸



Cao Dai ceremony, Great Divine Temple, Tay Ninh city
Flickr / Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

Overview of Major Religions

Buddhism

Of the three branches of Buddhism, two are practiced in Vietnam: Mahayana and Theravada (Hinayana). Mahayana Buddhism, the Chinese variant, was introduced in Vietnam in the second century BCE. Theravada, the Indian variant, was introduced in the second century AD. After the 10th century, Mahayana Buddhism developed quickly in Vietnam, becoming the national religion under the Ly-Tran Dynasty.²⁹⁹ It is practiced by the majority Kinh, whereas Theravada Buddhism is confined mostly to the Khmer Krom-dominated southern Mekong Delta region.^{300, 301}



Woman prays in the Chùa Tam Thai Buddhist Temple, Da Nang
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Gautama Buddha is the root of the difference between Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism: Theravada adherents believe that Gautama was the only enlightened one,

whereas the Mahayana school teaches that Siddhartha Gautama was one of many who were enlightened. The Mahayana school offers laypeople the prospect of attaining nirvana, whereas Theravadins believe that only ordained monks can achieve nirvana. Thus, the distinction between the monastic community (sangha) and society is much less pronounced in Vietnam than in countries where Theravada Buddhism dominates.^{302, 303}



Golden Buddha, Dalat city
Flickr / Prince Roy

The Pure Land (Tinh Do) school of Mahayana Buddhism, which emphasizes prayer and faith over rigorous textual study or meditation, is extremely popular in Vietnam.^{304, 305} As a result, few Vietnamese outside the sangha are versed in Buddhism's elaborate cosmology. Most Vietnamese go to a temple to pray for simple things, such as having a successful career, a male child, or a healthy family.³⁰⁶

Catholicism

In the 16th century, when French Catholic missionaries sought to spread their faith in Vietnam, imperial court officials fretted that a monotheistic religion would create discord in a religiously plural society. Though Catholicism made inroads, partly because of Vietnamese openness to all forms of spirituality, it never threatened the dominance of Tam Giao—the blending of Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.³⁰⁷



Catholic church, Kon Tum, Central Highlands
Wikimedia / Rdavout CC BY-SA 3.0

In 1659, Pope Alexander II established two provisional administrations in Vietnam, and the first Vietnamese priests were ordained 9 years later. The missionaries spread their faith despite Catholicism's rejection of ancestor worship. Such outward expressions of native spirituality were at odds with Church doctrine. Catholicism differed from Tam Giao in other ways: its cohesive organizational structure, liturgy, and accumulated wealth, which is visible in its often magnificent places of worship.³⁰⁸

After the country was partitioned in 1954, Catholics found their faith associated with imperialism and thus faced discrimination in the North. Of the approximately 810,000 northern migrants who chose to move south after partition, over 75% were Catholic.³⁰⁹ Today, 7% of Vietnam's population identifies as Catholic; in Ho Chi Minh City, where Catholics have traditionally enjoyed the highest amount of freedom, 12% of residents are Catholic.^{310, 311} In 2015, authorities permitted the Catholic Church to open its first institute of higher education since 1975 in Ho Chi Minh City.³¹² But reports of discrimination, harassment, and imprisonment of Vietnamese Catholics continue in Vietnam.^{313, 314}



Notre Dame Cathedral, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Eustaquio Santimano CC BY NC-SA 2.0

Holidays like Easter and Christmas, while not nearly as widely celebrated as they are in the West, have their own Vietnamese traditions. At home, Christian families may have an altar to Jesus near their ancestor shrine.³¹⁵

Cao Dai

Cao Dai is a synthesis of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Roman Catholicism. The religion was founded in the 1920s by Ngo Van Chieu, a civil servant of the French colonial administration. He is said to have received messages from a spirit referred to by the Taoist name Duc Cao Dai, or “High Tower” (so named to avoid imposing human characteristics on the Supreme Being). After 3 years of study and prayer, he shared his spiritual revelations with others. At the end of 1926, Duc Cao Dai purportedly instructed a small group of mediums to form a new religion. Of the mediums, Le Van Trung was appointed to serve as acting pope (Giao Tong).^{316, 317}



Great Divine Temple, Tay Ninh city
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Cao Dai's structure is based on that of the Catholic Church, with a defined ecclesiastical hierarchy. Adherents, 90% of whom hail from the Mekong Delta, believe that all religions are one and they worship a variety of Vietnamese and foreign deities. In the

religion's ornate Great Divine Temple in Tay Ninh, northwest of Ho Chi Minh City, Jesus Christ, Lao-Zi, Gautama Buddha, and Confucius share altar space. Under the *doi moi* economic reforms, the temple has again become an active place of worship.^{318, 319}

Hoa Hao

The Hoa Hao Buddhist sect was founded in 1939 by Huynh Phu So in the Mekong Delta, where Theravada Buddhism commanded a following among the ethnic Khmer. Huynh was a charismatic individual whose followers attributed his survival of a deathly illness to special powers. He produced four volumes titled *Sam giang thi van toan bo* (*Complete Works of Literary Oracles*), which were written in vernacular Vietnamese and easily accessible to farmers with limited formal education. Hoa Hao village, the ancestral home of Huynh Phu So, is referred to as Thanh Dia (Holy Land) by adherents. It attracts pilgrimages from the estimated 3 million followers who expect him to return to earth.^{320, 321, 322}

The French colonial government looked upon the Hoa Hao as a cult and attempted to imprison Huynh. In 1947 he was killed by the Viet Minh, the resistance group that prevented the restoration of French colonial authority after World War II. After the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1975, Hoa Hao was not recognized as an official religion, making any worship associated with it was illegal. In 1999, one Hoa Hao group was recognized by the government. Other Hoa groups continue to suffer from repression.^{323, 324}

Taoism



Quan Thanh Taoist Temple, Hanoi
Flickr / Richard Mortel

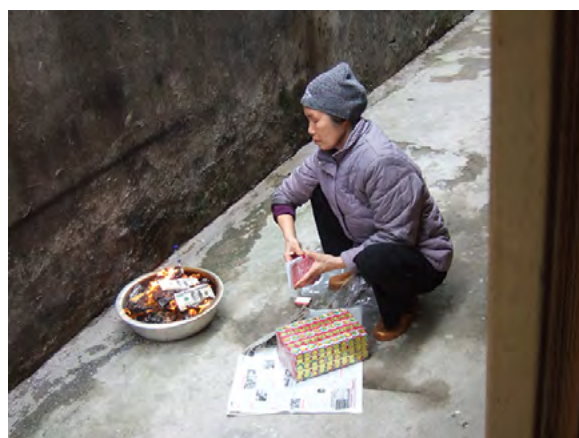
Taoism originated in China and is based on the philosophy of Lao-Zi, a reputed contemporary of Confucius during the sixth century BCE. Practitioners of the Taoist religion believe that harmony is achieved by finding one's place in the natural world (the opposite forces of yin and yang) rather than constructing an artificial world (which disturbs the five elements of metal, wood, earth, water, and fire).³²⁵

According to Taoists, the Emperor of Jade (Ngoc Hoang) presides over a world in which divinities and spirits are reincarnated forces of nature. Taoism encourages reliance on divination, or seeking the guidance of supernatural sources, to help adherents decide when to initiate major life changes without disturbing nature.^{326, 327}

Taoism is no longer practiced in Vietnam. Instead, it has become the linking mechanism for Buddhism, Confucianism, animism, and ancestor worship. Countless images of Taoist gods are in temples and pagodas throughout the country. Many homes use the family altar to worship the Kitchen God, the name for the three Taoist deities that monitor a family's conduct. Many of Vietnam's festivals, including Tet, have Taoist traditions.³²⁸

Folk Religion

"Vietnam's true religion," observed Léopold Cadière, a French Catholic priest who spent 30 years in Vietnam during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "is the cult of spirits. The religion has no history because it dates from the origins of the race."³²⁹ These spirits (*than*) can be represented in nature or objects. They may be protectors of specific places or people. It is believed that *than* have the power to affect a person positively or negatively, depending on how they are worshipped.³³⁰



Hanoi woman burns effigial U.S. currency for her ancestors
Wikimedia / Clemensmarabu CC BY-SA 3.0

The faithful, hoping for good fortune or deliverance from misfortune, will burn paper oblations depicting money, motorbikes, and other proxies for the spirit to use. Fortune tellers (*thay*) often direct such rituals, which are held in the home, at temples, or at the site of a particular misfortune.^{331, 332, 333}

After independence, the North Vietnamese government considered the strength of such folk beliefs as an impediment to the creation of a socialist society. It mounted anti-superstition campaigns through the mid-1980s, on the grounds that such beliefs have no scientific basis and encouraged fatalism.³³⁴

Yet these beliefs have proved difficult to eradicate. Subsequent attempts by the government to distinguish between superstition and "legitimate folk belief" have run up against the reality that animistic religious beliefs held by the majority have

incorporated strands of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. In daily life, this means many Vietnamese adhere to the Confucian emphasis of filial piety, practice Taoist divination rituals, and make regular visits to Buddhist pagodas.^{335, 336}

Fortune-telling, astrology, and geomancy are an accepted part of everyday life. Ingredients for traditional medicine and foods are designated as “hot” or “cool,” and the principle of harmony and balance underpins health care. Visitors to Vietnam may note the presence of small, mirrored, octagonal discs fixed above the door of most houses and small shops. The disks, with yin-yang and other symbols, guard the house by barring wandering spirits.³³⁷



Ancestral altar in Vietnamese home
Flickr / David Bacon

Religion and the Modern State

The Vietnamese constitution provides for freedom of religion, although the CPV maintains a strong atheistic stance against religion. Current law allows government control over religious practices and includes provisions that allow restrictions on religious freedom in the interest of “national security and social unity.”³³⁸

After consolidating power in 1975, the CPV placed tight restrictions on public worship. Popular rituals involving spirit mediums were banned for promoting superstitions. Since *doi moi*, the government has relaxed its prohibitions, though all religious groups must register and operate under officially sanctioned oversight organizations. While many individuals and religious communities exercise their religion or beliefs freely and openly, those recognized by the government fare better than unrecognized groups. Severe religious freedom violations continue, especially against ethnic minority communities in rural areas.^{339, 340}



Incense burning, Temple of Literature, Hanoi
Flickr / Brian Jeffery Beggerly

According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), in 2017, peaceful activists, dissidents, and bloggers, including persons of faith, were harassed, arrested, and imprisoned for practicing their religion or advocating for religious freedom.³⁴¹ As a result, the USCIRF designated Vietnam a “Country of Particular Concern,” under the International Religious Freedom Act in 2018. It is one of 16 countries that fall under this Tier 1 (highest) designation and has been so since 2002.³⁴²



Catholic church, Hoi An, Central Coast
Wikimedia / ansiee

Hanoi is aware that religious groups have a history of protesting government policy. A long-running dispute between the CPV and the Catholic Church over parish land ownership prompted a priest to protest government repression by hanging banners on church steeples. Of particular concern to Hanoi are the Protestant congregations that have proliferated among hill-tribe minority communities, specifically the Montagnards in the Central Highlands.

Vietnam’s government sees the acts of proselytizing and religious conversion as a demonstration of political opposition and as an expression of loyalty toward the United States, which enlisted the assistance of the Montagnards during the war. Members of unregistered “private” house churches have been targeted for arrest.³⁴³

The government is suspicious of Buddhist activism, keeping a tight rein on the clerical hierarchy (sangha). Monks are required to be part of the Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha, rather than the outlawed Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) that was established after Thich Quang Duc’s self-immolation in 1963.³⁴⁴ The government has a long history of harassing and detaining UBCV monks and nuns and raiding their temples. UBCV leader Thich Quang Do, 79, has been in detention or house arrest since 2003.^{345, 346}

Religion in Daily Life

Patrilineal ancestor worship (*hieu*) is an important ritual in Vietnam.³⁴⁷ Many Buddhists believe in reincarnation. Ancestors may linger between life and death before their accumulated merit is assessed and they are reborn. Prayers said on their behalf may assist them in achieving a faster rebirth into a better life.³⁴⁸



Family altar, northern Vietnam
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Ancestral altars, where incense is burned and offerings are made, are found in almost all Vietnamese homes, as well as those of ethnic Chinese (Hoa). This has been attributed to the influence of Confucianism and its emphasis on filial piety to the living and the dead. Vietnamese commonly believe that people are indebted to deceased blood relatives and that they can be contacted and honored. In this way, spirits or ghosts (*than*) often represent ancestors. The

purpose of ancestor veneration (*tho cung ong ba*) is to ensure the continued well-being of the departed as well as their favorable disposition toward the living, whose lives they influence. Thus, many Vietnamese practice ancestor worship, no matter their religious orientation.^{349, 350}

Daily, family members place food morsels, fruit, and tiny cups of tea in front of tablets that bear the names of the past four generations and photographs of the deceased. Today, these customs and beliefs have eroded as a consequence of increased migration for better opportunities under the *doi moi* economic reforms. Young Vietnamese may feel that their ancestors have limited influence on their everyday lives.^{351, 352, 353}

Religious Holidays and Festivals

The Birth of Buddha

Known internationally as Vesak and in Vietnam as Le Phat Dan, this public holiday falls on a full moon in either April or May. It commemorates the birth of Buddha from a lotus flower, as well as his enlightenment and death. While Vietnamese only began celebrating it in the early 20th century, it has since become the main annual Buddhist celebration in Vietnam.³⁵⁴ In 1999, the United Nations recognized Vesak as an international holiday.³⁵⁵



Buddhist Temple, Ho Chi Minh City
Wikimedia / Vincent Hudry CC BY-SA 2.0

In Vietnam, Vesak is marked with street and boat parades; colorful flags and bright lanterns line streets and rivers, and pink lotus flowers, which represent devotion to Buddha, adorn buildings and homes. Lit candles are set on floating lotus flowers and sent out into waterways around the country. Fruit and other offerings are placed at the foot of shrines. In temples, monks and worshipers offer incense, participate in the Buddha-bathing ceremony (water is poured over the shoulders of a Buddha statue), and release doves or fish and balloons.³⁵⁶

In many cities, including Ho Chi Minh, Hue, and Hoi An, parades are led by monks and gifts are given to the poor and needy. Complexes including Chua Bai Dinh near Ninh Binh and Ho Chi Minh City's Jade Emperor Pagoda host lavish celebrations.³⁵⁷

Ghost Festival

Vietnam celebrates the month-long Ghost Festival (Vu Lan) during the seventh month of the lunar calendar, typically in August. On this month's full moon, many Vietnamese believe the veil between the spirit world and living things is lifted, and that wandering souls return to their former homes. To appease the ghosts, Vietnamese make offerings of food and burn paper effigies of houses, servants, and other daily items for spirits to use in the afterlife.^{358, 359}

The holiday was inspired when one of Buddha's 10 disciples imagined his deceased mother suffering in the Buddhist equivalent of hell, where she had nothing to eat but fire. He asked Buddha's guidance on how to help his mother. Buddha advised him to gather others to pray for her. Their prayers proved so powerful that she and everyone consigned to hell (an unavoidable fate for those who die violently) were released for the day and free to roam.³⁶⁰



Hanoi woman burns effigial valuables
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Following Buddha's advice, Vietnamese express gratitude toward their parents (especially mothers) during the holiday and help their ancestors' lost souls find their way back to earth. As such, Vu Lan has become an unofficial Mother's Day.³⁶¹ Presents and flowers are given to mothers to show appreciation and gratitude. People visit pagodas and temples to honor spirits through offerings of food, wine, and votive

objects such as fake paper money, burning incense, and releasing birds and fish.³⁶² Those with living mothers adorn their clothing with something red, such as a piece of red cloth or a red flower, and those with deceased mothers affix something white.³⁶³

Christmas



Christmas tree at hotel, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

While not a national holiday, Christmas (*Giang Sinh*) is celebrated throughout Vietnam, particularly by the country's sizeable Catholic community. December 24th is a day of festivities, and the 25th is now a government-approved (observed) public holiday in Vietnam.³⁶⁴ The French introduced Christmas to Vietnam. After unification in 1975, celebrating Christian holidays was seen as a relic of an imperialist era. But *doi moi* economic reforms increased personal freedom, and holiday traditions were reestablished as part of popular culture, with a Vietnamese twist. For example, the Bethlehem stars hung in homes closely resemble Vietnamese New Year's (Tet) decorations. In contrast to the West, Christmas in Vietnam is a time for going out on the town with friends. Nonreligious activities such as exchanging cards, gift giving, and pictures with Santa have become widespread among the urban middle class.³⁶⁵ On Christmas Eve, called *réveillon* after the French tradition, a chocolate Yule log cake, or *Bûche de Noël*, is eaten for dessert.³⁶⁶ Thousands attend midnight mass in the cities of Phat Diem and Ho Chi Minh, though many come to watch nativity plays and to listen to Christmas music, rather than to worship.³⁶⁷

Buildings of Worship

Pagodas

In English, the term “temple” is a more general term for any building where people go to worship. Vietnamese distinguish between temples (*den*) and pagodas (*chua*). A pagoda refers to a Buddhist temple, and it often features a tiered tower with multiple eaves symbolic of the lotus. Originally, the pagoda's purpose was to house relics and sacred writings.³⁶⁸ Today, it is the base of activities and propagation of Buddhism in Vietnam, a place where Buddhist monks and nuns gather, live, practice, and teach.^{369, 370}

Mahayana pagodas make lavish use of dragon (*long*) imagery, as opposed to the snakes (*naga*) found in Theravada pagodas. In front, there is often a statue of Quan Am, the bodhisattva (*bo tat*) of compassion, standing on a lotus leaf. (A *bo tat* is a Buddhist concept referring to any being who devotes their life to easing the suffering of others.)³⁷¹ The grounds may be adorned with gardens and a bell tower. Sacred ponds containing live or sculpted turtles dot the property.^{372, 373}



Trang An Landscape Complex
Flickr / Loi Nguyen Duc

Exterior temple walls may also be decorated with a Buddhist symbol that resembles a swastika but is an ancient Buddhist symbol of good fortune and prosperity (*van*).³⁷⁴

There are an estimated 20,000 pagodas in Vietnam. The One Pillar Pagoda in Hanoi, often used as a symbol of the country, is a shrine to Quan Am.³⁷⁵ Thien Mu Pagoda, built in 1601, is a historic temple complex in the city of Hue that features a seven-story tower. A UNESCO World Heritage site, its pagoda is the tallest in the country.^{376, 377} The Jade Emperor Pagoda in Ho Chi Minh City is one of the most important pagodas in Vietnam. Built by Cantonese immigrants in 1909 in honor of the Jade Emperor (King of Heaven or Ngoc Hoang), it has numerous statues of divinities and heroes from Buddhist and Taoist lore.³⁷⁸

Visitors entering Buddhist pagodas should remove their shoes; it is considered impolite to point feet at people or statues of the Buddha. Permission should be asked before taking photographs in places of worship. Noise should be restricted, and meat and alcoholic drinks are forbidden. Buddhists pray with their hands joined and open, in the shape of a lotus.^{379, 380}

May I enter the pagoda?		
Visitor:	toy kor dew-uk fep vow choo-a Khong?	May I enter the pagoda?
Local:	vang, kor	Yes.

Exchange 1

Must I take off my shoes inside the pagoda?		
Visitor:	toy faay kuh-ee zaay zar Khee dee vow choo-a Khong?	Must I take off my shoes inside the pagoda?
Local:	vang, kor	Yes.

Exchange 2

Temples

Temples (*den*) are built to venerate a saint, national hero, historical figure, or a divine figure from Vietnamese folk or Taoist legend. Inside the temple, one or more statues depict the figure to which the temple is dedicated, often with documents about that person. Documents may be books, handwritten works, or inscribed stones. In some provinces, a temple is also used as a communal house where men in the village gather to discuss important matters. In this case, the temple is considered a *dinh*—a shared space for the whole village. Restrictions in temples are the same as those in pagodas, though visitors may offer meat and alcoholic drinks, among others, as offerings.³⁸¹



Cao Dai Temple, Tay Ninh city, southern Vietnam
Flickr / Jody McIntyre CC BY-SA 2.0

Cao Dai Temple (outside of Ho Chi Minh City) honors Jesus Christ, Muhammad, Buddha, and Confucius, in line with the Cao Dai faith. The temple's design is similar to a Christian Cathedral, featuring side aisles and an altar. The Divine Eye (representing God), located above the front portico, has the yin-yang symbol in its pupil.³⁸² The Temple of Literature in Hanoi, built in 1070 during the reign of the Ly Thanh Tong emperor, is dedicated to doctors who passed the royal exams. Quan Cong Temple in Hoi An venerates General Quan Van Truong, who is famous in Vietnam for his justice, loyalty, and integrity in the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 BCE).³⁸³

Do I need to cover my head?		
Visitor:	toy kun faay cher dow Khong?	Do I need to cover my head?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 3

When do you pray?		
Visitor:	Khee now chee kow nguen?	When do you pray?
Local:	choong toy kow nguen vow boo-oy chuh-a	We pray at noon.

Exchange 4

Catholic Churches



Christ the King Cathedral, Nha Trang, Central Vietnam
 Wikimedia / Hoangvantoanajc CC BY-SA 3.0

There are 26 Catholic dioceses, 3 archdioceses, and more than 2,600 priests and 2,200 parishes in Vietnam.³⁸⁴ The neo-Romanesque Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City is an urban landmark, and Hanoi's St. Joseph's Cathedral, built in 1886, is at the center of the northern diocese. Other cathedrals, particularly those in rural areas, incorporate Buddhist elements such as carved stone pillars and pagoda-style curved roofs. Rural

worshippers often include Buddhist practices as well, burning incense and making offerings of fruit, flowers, and candy to Catholic saints.³⁸⁵

Endnotes for Chapter 2: Religion

- 288 Cultural Portfolio Project for Intercultural Communication, "Vietnam: Home: Religion," DePauw University, Fall 2007, http://academic.depauw.edu/mkfinney_web/teaching/Com227/culturalPortfolios/VIETNAM/VIETNAM/religion.html.
- 289 Jim Sullivan and James Sullivan, "History and Culture: Beliefs," in *National Geographic Traveler: Vietnam* (Hong Kong: National Geographic Books, 2006), 32.
- 290 Jane S. Werner, "Chapter 11: Vietnamese Religious Society," in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Religions*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 109-114.
- 291 *Economist*, "Christmas in Vietnam: Ho Ho Ho," 24 December 2010, <https://www.economist.com/banyan/2010/12/24/ho-ho-ho>.
- 292 Central Intelligence Agency, "Vietnam: People and Society: Religion," in *The World Factbook*, updated 28 November 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vn.html>.
- 293 U. S. Department of State, "Vietnam 2017 International Religious Freedom Report," accessed 30 November 2018, 2, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281116.pdf>.
- 294 Kirsten W. Endres, "Performing the Devine: Mediums, Markets, in Urban Vietnam," Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, University of Copenhagen, 2011, 9-26, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:867426/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- 295 Cultural Portfolio Project for Intercultural Communication, "Vietnam: Home: Religion," DePauw University, Fall 2007, http://academic.depauw.edu/mkfinney_web/teaching/Com227/culturalPortfolios/VIETNAM/VIETNAM/religion.html.
- 296 Adam Bray, "The Cham: Descendants of Ancient Rulers of South China Sea Watch Maritime Dispute from Sidelines," *National Geographic*, 18 June 2014, <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/06/140616-south-china-sea-vietnam-china-cambodia-champa/>.
- 297 U. S. Department of State, "Vietnam 2017 International Religious Freedom Report," accessed 30 November 2018, 2, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281116.pdf>.
- 298 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam," 21 June 2017, 6, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 299 Barbara O'Brien, "History of Buddhism in Vietnam," ThoughtCo., 28 September 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/buddhism-in-vietnam-450145>.
- 300 Elise Anne DeVido, "Buddhism in Vietnam," Oxford Bibliographies, last updated 23 March 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780195393521-0015>.
- 301 Huynh Kim Lan, "The Origin of Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam" (paper, 10th National Conference on Buddhist Studies), accessed 30 November 2018, <http://dr.lib.sjp.ac.lk/bitstream/handle/123456789/1678/The%20Origin%20of%20Therawada%20Buddhism%20un%20Vietnam.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.
- 302 Harvard Divinity School, "Religion: Buddhism: Mahayana: The Great Vehicle," accessed 30 November 2018, <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/religions/buddhism/mahayana-great-vehicle>.
- 303 Harvard Divinity School, "Religion: Buddhism: Theravada: The Way of the Elders," accessed 30 November 2018, <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/religions/buddhism/theravada-way-elders>.
- 304 Religion Facts, "Pure Land Buddhism," 19 November 2016, <http://www.religionfacts.com/pure-land-buddhism>.
- 305 Barbara O'Brien, "History of Buddhism in Vietnam," ThoughtCo., 28 September 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/buddhism-in-vietnam-450145>.
- 306 Nguyen Thi Hien, "A Study of Integration of Buddhism and Vietnamese Folk Beliefs (A Case Study of Thang Nghiem Buddhist Temple)," *Vietnam Social Sciences* 176, no. 6 (2016): 80, <http://www.vjol.info/index.php/VSS/article/viewFile/27995/23804>.
- 307 Ronald J. Cima, "History: The Nguyen Dynasty and Expanding French Influence" (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/14.htm>.
- 308 Jeffrey Hays, "Catholics, Protestants and Christians in Vietnam: Catholicism in Vietnam," Facts and Details, accessed 30 November 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9d/entry-3378.html.
- 309 Van Nguyen-Marshall, "Tools of Empire? Vietnamese Catholics in South Vietnam," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 20, no. 2 (2009): 140, <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/jcha/2009-v20-n2-jcha3903/044402ar.pdf>.
- 310 World Population Review, "Ho Chi Minh City Population: 2018," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/ho-chi-minh-city-population/>.
- 311 Catholic World Report, "Catholic Vietnam: Growing Despite Communist Oppression," 5 December 2016, <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2016/12/05/catholic-vietnam-growing-despite-communist-oppression/>.

Endnotes for Chapter 2: Religion

- 312 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2016 Report on International Religious Freedom," 15 August 2017, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2016/eap/268780.htm>.
- 313 U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, "Vietnam: Annual Report 2018," accessed 30 November 2018, 3, https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/Tier1_VIETNAM.pdf.
- 314 UCAnews.com, "For Vietnamese Catholics, a Delicate Balance," 14 October 2015, <https://www.ucanews.com/news/for-vietnamese-catholics-a-delicate-balance/74412>.
- 315 Matthew Pike, "11 Ways France Influenced Vietnamese Culture," Culture Trip, 11 December 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 316 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Cao Dai," updated 12 February 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cao-Dai>.
- 317 Victor L. Oliver, "The Development of Caodai Sectarianism," in *Caodai Spiritism: A Study of Religion in Vietnamese Society* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 1997), 98.
- 318 Kit Gilletmay, "Where the Faithful Worship Among the Tourists," *New York Times*, 11 May 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/13/travel/in-vietnam-the-cao-dai-temple-mixes-religions-and-styles.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=38414F1F6AA836C8A96003CE0E24D815&gwt=pay>.
- 319 Asia Society, "Religion in Vietnam: A World of Gods and Spirits," accessed 30 November 2018, <https://asiasociety.org/education/religion-vietnam>.
- 320 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Hoa Hao," accessed 18 June 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hoa-Hao-Vietnamese-religious-movement>.
- 321 Hoahao.org, "History: Characteristics of Hoa Hao Buddhism," 28 February 2005, <https://hoahao.org/a2414/4-characteristics-of-hoa-hao-buddhism>.
- 322 Viet Vision Travel, "Doctrine, Regulations, Rituals and Organization of Hoa Hao Buddhism," accessed 8 January 2019, <https://www.vietvisiontravel.com/post/doctrine-regulations-rituals-and-orgarnization-of/>.
- 323 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2016 Report on International Religious Freedom," 15 August 2017, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2016/eap/268780.htm>.
- 324 Radio Free Asia, "Hoa Hao Buddhists under House Arrest Amid Religious Anniversary," 6 December 2017, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/buddhists-06122017130846.html>.
- 325 Vietnam Beauty, "Taoism: A Part of the Tam Giao (Three Religions) of Vietnam," 20 September 2008, <http://www.vietnam-beauty.com/vietnamese-culture/vietnam-religion/17-vietnam-religion/106-taoism-a-part-of-the-tam-giao-three-religions-of-vietnam.html>.
- 326 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Religion: Taoism," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-religion>.
- 327 BBC, "Religions: Taoism," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/taoism/>.
- 328 Vietnam Culture, "Taoism in Vietnam," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-108-16/Taoism.aspx>.
- 329 Anh Q. Tran, "Inculturation, Mission, and Dialogue in Vietnam: The Conference of Representatives of Four Religions," in *Beyond Conversion and Syncretism: Indigenous Encounters with Missionary Christianity, 1800-2000*, ed. David Lindenfeld and Miles Richardson (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 168.
- 330 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshipping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshipping-ancestors>.
- 331 James Sullivan, "History and Culture: Beliefs," in *National Geographic Traveler: Vietnam* (Washington DC: National Geographic Books, 2006), 32.
- 332 Chris Lê, "A Fortune Teller Tells Her Secrets," *Loa Broadcasting Vietnam*, 12 August 2016, <https://www.loa.fm/our-stories/fortune-telling>.
- 333 Tao Jun and Dong Hua, "Feature: Love Business: Partnerless Women in Vietnam Seek Help from Fortune-Tellers," *XinhuaNet*, 8 July 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-08/07/c_136506486.htm.
- 334 Edyta Roszko, "Negotiation over Religious Space in Vietnam," *The Focus: Religion and Global Empire* 29, no. 54 (Summer 2010): 1-2, https://ijas.asia/sites/default/files/IIAS_NL54_2829.pdf.
- 335 U. S. Department of State, "Vietnam 2017 International Religious Freedom Report," accessed 30 November 2018, 3, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281116.pdf>.
- 336 Edyta Roszko, "Negotiation over Religious Space in Vietnam," *The Focus: Religion and Global Empire* 29, no. 54 (Summer 2010): 1-2, https://ijas.asia/sites/default/files/IIAS_NL54_2829.pdf.
- 337 Vietnam Culture, "Taoism in Vietnam," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-108-16/Taoism.aspx>.

Endnotes for Chapter 2: Religion

- 338 U. S. Department of State, "Vietnam 2017 International Religious Freedom Report," accessed 30 November 2018, 3, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281116.pdf>.
- 339 Home Office of the United Kingdom, "Country Policy and Information Note Vietnam: Ethnic and Religious Groups," March 2018, 25-26, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/695864/Vietnam_-_Ethnic_and_Religious_groups_-_CPIN_v2.0_ex.pdf.
- 340 Seb Rumsby, "Vietnam Wrestles With Christianity," *Diplomat*, 13 November 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/vietnam-wrestles-with-christianity/>.
- 341 World Watch Monitor, "Vietnam Frees Catholic Blogger but Upholds 20-Year Sentence for Another Activist," 22 October 2018, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/coe/vietnam-frees-catholic-blogger-but-upholds-20-year-sentence-for-another-activist/>.
- 342 U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, "Vietnam: Annual Report 2018," accessed 30 November 2018, https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/Tier1_VIETNAM.pdf.
- 343 U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, "Vietnam: Annual Report 2018," accessed 30 November 2018, https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/Tier1_VIETNAM.pdf.
- 344 *Economist*, "Higher Powers," 26 September 2015, <https://www.economist.com/asia/2015/09/26/higher-powers>.
- 345 Radio Free Asia, "Leader of Banned Vietnam Buddhist Sect Expelled from Thanh Minh Zen Monastery," 10 August 2018, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/buddhist-expelled-10082018145608.html>.
- 346 Barbara O'Brien, "History of Buddhism in Vietnam," ThoughtCo., 28 September 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/buddhism-in-vietnam-450145>.
- 347 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshiping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshiping-ancestors>.
- 348 Minh Nguyen, "Ancestor Worship in Vietnam," Vietnam Track, 22 October 2017, <https://vietnamtrack.com/ancestor-worship-in-vietnam/>.
- 349 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Religion: Taoism," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-religion>.
- 350 Mark W. McLeod, Nguyen Thi Dieu, and Thi Dieu Nguyen, "Thought and Religion," in *Culture and Customs of Vietnam* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 45-47.
- 351 Mark W. McLeod, Nguyen Thi Dieu, Thi Dieu Nguyen, "Thought and Religion," in *Culture and Customs of Vietnam* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 45-47.
- 352 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshiping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshiping-ancestors>.
- 353 Minh Nguyen, "Ancestor Worship in Vietnam," Vietnam Track, 22 October 2017, <https://vietnamtrack.com/ancestor-worship-in-vietnam/>.
- 354 Alexander Soucy, "Chapter 9: Contemporary Vietnamese Buddhism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Buddhism*, ed. Michael Jerryson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 187.
- 355 United Nations, "Vesak Day: 30 April," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/events/vesakday/>.
- 356 Nhân Dân, "Vesak Celebrations Mark Lord Buddha's Birthday throughout Vietnam," 5 October 2017, <http://en.nhandan.com.vn/society/item/5190802-vesak-celebrations-mark-lord-buddha%E2%80%99s-birthday-throughout-vietnam.html>.
- 357 Sam Roth, "Vesak: Celebrating Buddha's Birthday in Vietnam," Culture Trip, updated 25 May 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/vesak-celebrating-buddhas-birthday-in-vietnam/>.
- 358 *Financial Times*, "Vu Lan Festival Spirits' Hats," accessed 19 December 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/7cb6f3d2-576e-3fd5-86f3-51445796eea2>.
- 359 Mark Rowe, "Chapter 35: Contemporary Buddhism and Death," in *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Buddhism*, ed. Michael Jerryson (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2016).
- 360 Tien Lê Publisher, "The Origins of Vu Lan Festival," accessed 30 November 2018, http://tienlepublisher.net/ENG_Buddhism/The%20Origins%20of%20Vu%20Lan%20Festival/Origins%20of%20Vu%20Lan%20Festival.html.
- 361 Larry DeVries, Don Baker, and Dan Overmyer, "Vietnamese Buddhist Organizations," in *Asian Religions in British Columbia* (Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press, 1 January 2011), 153.
- 362 Viet Nam News, "Ghost Festival to be Recognized," updated 1 September 2015, <https://vietnamnews.vn/life-style/275251/ghost-festival-to-be-recognised.html>.
- 363 Aroundvn, "Vu Lan Ceremony: A Beautiful Culture of Vietnamese People," 25 August 2013, <http://www.aroundvn.com/2013/08/vu-lan-ceremony-beautiful-culture-of>.

Endnotes for Chapter 2: Religion

- 364 Time and Date.com, "Holidays in Vietnam in 2018," accessed 30 November 2018, <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/vietnam/>.
- 365 *Economist*, "Christmas in Vietnam: Ho Ho Ho," 24 December 2010, <https://www.economist.com/banyan/2010/12/24/ho-ho-ho>.
- 366 Thu-Huong Ha, "France's Most Popular Christmas Cake Lives on in the Bakeries of Vietnam," Quartz, 17 December 2017, <https://qz.com/838503/buche-de-noel-the-colonial-legacy-of-frances-most-popular-christmas-cake/>.
- 367 Lien Hoang, "Religion Aside, Christmas Gains Popularity in Communist Vietnam," Voice of America, 21 December 2014, <https://www.voanews.com/a/religion-aside-christmas-gains-popularity-in-communist-vietnam/2566206.html>.
- 368 New World Encyclopedia, "Pagoda," updated 14 March 2015, <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pagoda>.
- 369 Tai Thu Nguyen, "Buddhism's Tendency Towards World Acceptance," in *The History of Buddhism in Vietnam* (Council for Research in Values and Philosophy: Washington DC, 2008), 263-264.
- 370 To Tuan, "Pagoda Bells in Vietnamese Buddhist Culture," Voice of Vietnam, 22 March 2013, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/culture/pagoda-bells-in-vietnamese-buddhist-culture-143613.vov>.
- 371 David Luekens, "Quan Am, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, in Vietnam," *Travel Fish* (blog), accessed 21 November 2018, https://www.travelfish.org/beginners_detail/vietnam/9.
- 372 To Tuan, "Sacred Animals in Vietnamese Culture and Architecture," Voice of Vietnam, 22 March 2013, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/culture/sacred-animals-in-vietnamese-culture-and-architecture-166542.vov>.
- 373 Annabel Gallop, "Mythical Creatures in Vietnamese Culture," *Asian and African Studies Blog*, British Library, 21 April 2016, <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2016/04/mythical-creatures-in-vietnamese-culture.html>.
- 374 Chinese Buddhism Encyclopedia, "Swastika," updated 4 April 2016, <http://www.chinabuddhismencyclopedia.com/en/index.php/Swastika>.
- 375 David Luekens, "Quan Am, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, in Vietnam," *Travel Fish* (blog), accessed 30 November 2018, https://www.travelfish.org/beginners_detail/vietnam/9.
- 376 UNESCO, "Complex of the Celestial Lady (Thien Mu)," accessed 30 November 2018, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/322/>.
- 377 Michael Aquino, "Thien Mu Pagoda: The Pagoda of the Heavenly Lady," Trip Savvy, updated 7 February 2018, <https://www.tripsavvy.com/pagoda-of-the-heavenly-lady-thien-mu-pagoda-1629329>.
- 378 Lonely Planet, "Jade Emperor Pagoda," accessed 21 November 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/ho-chi-minh-city/attractions/jade-emperor-pagoda/a/poi-sig/403176/357884>.
- 379 Incense Travel, "Different Between Temples and Pagodas in Vietnam," 9 December 2016, <https://www.incensetravel.com/2016/12/different-between-temples-and-pagodas-in-vietnam>.
- 380 Socialist Republic of Vietnam, "Home: Beliefs and Religions," accessed 30 November 2018, <http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/culture/beliefs-religions>.
- 381 Incense Travel, "Different Between Temples and Pagodas in Vietnam," 9 December 2016, <https://www.incensetravel.com/2016/12/different-between-temples-and-pagodas-in-vietnam>.
- 382 Viet Fun Travel, "Cao Dai Temple in Tay Ninh Province," 22 December 2016, <https://vietfuntravel.com/blog/cao-dai-temple.html>.
- 383 Viet Fun Travel, "Top 5 Famous Temples in Vietnam," 10 May 2017, <https://vietfuntravel.com/blog/top-famous-temples-in-vietnam.html>.
- 384 Catholic World Report, "Catholic Vietnam: Growing Despite Communist Oppression," 5 December 2016, <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2016/12/05/catholic-vietnam-growing-despite-communist-oppression/>.
- 385 Vietnam Online, "Roman Catholicism in Vietnam," accessed 21 November 2018, <https://www.vietnamonline.com/culture/roman-catholicism-in-vietnam.html>.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 2 | Religion

Assessment

1. Catholicism is one of the three belief systems of Tam Giao.
2. The Cao Dai religion combines elements of Catholicism with Buddhism.
3. In Vietnam, pagodas (*chua*) are built to worship saints, historic figures, or divine figures from Taoist legend.
4. Taoism emphasizes living in harmony with nature.
5. Ancestor worship remains an important ritual in Vietnam.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True



Mother and son dress up in traditional robes, Throne Room, Imperial City, Hue
Flickr / Nguyen Hung Vu

Chapter 3 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Traditions

Introduction

The indigenous culture of Vietnam, the cultures of China and other countries in the region, and Western culture all combine to produce Vietnam's unique national character. The Vietnamese people adopted foreign practices that enriched their own culture. Most prominently, China ruled Vietnam for 1,000 years and Chinese culture seeped into Vietnamese culture. As a result, though Vietnam shares the same Southeast Asian cultural origins as Thailand, Laos, Burma, and Indonesia, today, Vietnamese culture bears more Chinese characteristics. Chinese influence can be seen in traditions such as ancestor worship, the Chinese zodiac, and celebrations like Tet, the lunar new year.^{386, 387}

Honor and Values



Flower stall, Hanoi
Flickr / Jerome Yewdalll

a complex system of addressing and interacting with people respectfully depending on their relationship to the speaker.^{389, 390}

Vietnamese values are based on the principles of Buddhism and Confucianism; harmony, honor, duty, respect, education, and family (living or dead, past, present and future) are revered.³⁸⁸ To achieve harmony, Vietnamese try to observe moderation in communication and daily life. Vietnamese consider it a duty to conduct their lives so as not to bring shame to themselves or their family. Respect is conveyed through conduct and language. Vietnamese has



Women exchange greetings, Lao Cai Province
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

A few cultural norms influence behavior across the general population. The first is the concept of face. Present in most Asian cultures, face affects a person's reputation and dignity. By complimenting, showing respect, or doing something to increase another's self-esteem, you give them dignity. Similarly, people can lose face by being criticized or behaving in a socially inappropriate way. Therefore, individuals generally act to protect their self-worth and the perception of peers.

People speak indirectly and politely because a person's speech reflects their virtue.³⁹¹

To a Westerner, the Vietnamese may seem to have a fatalistic attitude. This is influenced by the Buddhist belief in karma and rebirth: a person's life cycle is predetermined by their actions, good or bad, in a previous life. Thus, difficult situations are often believed to be predetermined destiny.^{392, 393}

Khiem (modesty) or *khiem ton* (modesty and self-restraint), from Confucian beliefs, is also central to Vietnamese life.³⁹⁴ Vietnamese people often show a great deal of humility by self-humbling, downplaying emotion, and communicating indirectly.

This disposition is thought to maintain more harmony. While the Vietnamese may speak indirectly, they are also observed as being especially honest.³⁹⁵

Communication



Vietnamese woman, Hanoi
Flickr / Andrew Emerson

Vietnamese often appear reserved and nonassertive by Western standards. Because Confucianism is deeply embedded in the country, self-discipline is a sign of modesty, proper behavior, and a good upbringing. Courtesy and respect for both elders and authority figures are important. Loud arguments in public are rare, and it is considered extremely impolite for people to display anger or raise their voice.³⁹⁶ Such behavior is viewed as direct criticism and it will cause both people to

lose face. Instead, Vietnamese may give evasive responses to questions, or look away and smile to avoid a negative answer. It may be difficult for foreigners to know if their actions are inappropriate since unpleasant subjects are avoided. Many Vietnamese rely instead on nonverbal communication, such as bowing, avoiding direct eye contact in certain situations, and smiling.^{397, 398}

Greetings



U.S. Def. Sec. J. Mattis and Vietnamese Minister of Nat. Def.
Ngo Xuan Lich U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Vietnam

Vietnam is a largely conservative society, and residents are more reserved than Westerners. Physical contact in public, particularly between men and women and between individuals who are not close friends, is not a common practice. But physical contact between members of the same sex, such as holding hands, is a sign of friendship. Hugging is reserved for relatives only.³⁹⁹

Traditionally, Vietnamese greeted each other by pressing their hands together in front of the chest and bowing slightly. Today, many residents do not greet in this manner, though it is still appreciated.⁴⁰⁰ With

the increasing amount of foreign influence, shaking hands when greeting someone in a formal or business context is now the norm; people who know each other very well shake using both hands. Women do not shake hands.⁴⁰¹ In casual greetings, many Vietnamese say “*Xin chao*” (Hello) instead of shaking hands. When exchanging business cards, proper etiquette is to present yours with both hands. To receive someone’s card, hold it with both hands and examine it before putting it away.^{402, 403}

Good morning!		
Visitor:	chow ko!	Good morning!
Local:	chow chee!	Good morning!

Exchange 5

“*Xin chao*” can be used at any time of day. It can also be used to say good-bye. What varies (and matters) is the vocabulary used to address the other party respectfully. Three major factors determine the appropriate degree of respect: “age, social status, and social relations (defined as family, acquaintances, or professional).”⁴⁰⁴

Good evening!		
Visitor:	chow ko!	Good evening!
Local:	chow chee!	Good evening!

Exchange 6



Filipino Pres. Rodrigo Duterte and Vietnamese Pres. Tran Dai Quang bow to honor guard, Hanoi *Wikimedia / PCOO EDP*

Older people should be greeted first.⁴⁰⁵ Address Vietnamese coworkers and people in authority by their given names, with the appropriate term of address.⁴⁰⁶ Determining the correct term of respect, however, may require questions that Vietnamese consider invasive when asked by Westerners (such as a foreign guest’s age). In the simplest terms, the pronoun *ong* is used for an older man, for example, “*Xin chao ong!*” or “*Chao ong Minh!*” (“Hello Mr. Minh!).” *Ba* is used to address

an older woman, for example, “*Xin chao ba!*” or “*Chao ba Ha!*” (Hello Mrs. Ha!).^{407, 408} In a respectful, formal situation, the word *kinh* (respect) is added. So if Mr. Minh was the president of a company, or in a very formal situation, the greeting would be “*Xin*

kihñ chao ong Minh.” *Anh* would be used for either a contemporary or a younger male, and *co* for a female.⁴⁰⁹ If a person is the same age or younger, it may be acceptable to call a person by the given name without adding a pronoun.^{410, 411}

How are you?		
Visitor:	ko khweya Khong?	How are you?
Local:	Khweya, zut Khweya	Fine, very well.

Exchange 7

To express respect to a nonfamily member, Vietnamese will say *thua* (please) before the person’s first name or honorific. Thus, “Mr. Hoi Anh Nguyen” becomes “*Thua Hoi*” or, more likely, “*Thua Ong Hoi.*” Names alone are only used by kin or close friends. Even children typically address their siblings by rank rather than name. Vietnamese attach great importance to establishing personal relationships with professional associates. Asking questions about another person’s family is not considered invasive and will invariably precede any business-related discussion.⁴¹²

How is your family?		
Visitor:	zah ding ko tey now?	How is your family?
Local:	zah ding toy Khweya, kam ern chee	They are / My family is doing fine, thank you.

Exchange 8

Dress Codes

The Vietnamese are a modest people, and it is only in larger cities that the country’s conservative dress codes are more relaxed. Many young Vietnamese men and women have adopted Western fashion, though northern Vietnam remains more modest than in the south, where in cities it is common to wear dresses, jeans, or shorts.^{413, 414}

Despite the heat, female visitors should avoid sleeveless or low-neck tops and short skirts, particularly when visiting



Women outside upscale shopping mall, Hanoi
Flickr / xiquinhosilva

places of worship or small villages. In both cases, visitors of both genders should avoid shorts. In general, the rule is to wear shirts covering the shoulder, and trousers, skirts, or shorts covering or to the knees. Many Vietnamese girls go swimming with their clothes on.^{415, 416}

How should I dress?		
Visitor:	toy nen muk zee?	How should I dress?
Local:	muk kuan aw rong vur var chea kar ngwu-ee	Wear loose-fitting clothes that cover your body.

Exchange 9

Females who work outside wear dark-colored pants and conical hats (*non la*) woven from palm leaves, and typically cover all exposed skin.⁴¹⁷ Pale skin has traditionally been associated with feminine beauty in Asia, including Vietnam, where it signifies higher social class. Those with darker complexions are assumed to spend their days toiling under the hot sun. Before setting out on a motorcycle, a woman from any background may cover her face below the eyes with a bandana tied in bandit-style behind her head. This is because pale white skin is considered more beautiful.^{418, 419} Fashionably dressed urban women may protect themselves from the sun's rays with an umbrella. Recent awareness of skin cancer has encouraged this trend.⁴²⁰



Bicycle ride past upscale store, Hanoi
Flickr / Edgardo W. Olivera

Is this clothing acceptable to wear?		
Visitor:	kuan aw naay muk dew-uk Khong?	Is this clothing acceptable to wear?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 10

Traditional Dress

The national women's dress is the *ao dai*, a two-piece outfit consisting of wide-legged pants worn under a high-necked, long-sleeved, fitted tunic. The tunic falls to the



Woman wearing traditional ao dai, Ho Chi Minh City Wikimedia / Joe Le Merou

knee and side slits below the waist allow the garment panels to flow. Girls wear white *ao dai* to symbolize their purity.⁴²¹ Young adult females can wear pastel tunics with white trousers. Only married women wear darker colored fabrics or white tunics with black pants.^{422, 423}

The *ao dai* was considered bourgeois attire by the socialist government since it signaled the wearer did not engage in manual labor. After being banned it made a comeback in the 1990s, particularly in the South.⁴²⁴

On formal occasions, Vietnamese men traditionally donned a full-length tunic imported from China and complemented by a turban. Color-coding revealed a man's social status. Ordinary men could wear black, brown, or white. Yellow was reserved for the Emperor. Purple and red were reserved for court officials of stature, while blue indicated the man was a lower-ranking official.⁴²⁵ In addition, the embroidered symbols differed. This suit is no longer part of daily attire or even worn on special occasions. It is only seen in traditional dance or music performances.⁴²⁶

Hospitality



Visitors dining with Vietnamese couple Flickr / Yun Huang Yong

If a Vietnamese says, “*An com*” (literally, “Let’s eat rice”), it is an invitation to lunch or dinner.⁴²⁷ Vietnamese typically entertain visitors in lavish style, despite the hardship it may impose on the family budget. If needed, they may borrow things from neighbors to make a guest’s stay more pleasant. It is best to express gratitude for the effort rather than saying that they should not have gone to the trouble and expense.⁴²⁸ Shoes should be removed upon entering a home. Wealthier households and urbanites will have indoor

sandals for guests. All Vietnamese will offer visitors a cup of tea or coffee, whether or not they were expected, to make visitors feel welcome. Drinking it, or at least taking a sip, expresses gratitude. To not do so risks making the host lose face.

I appreciate your hospitality.

Visitor:	toy trun qwee su hur Khak koo-a ko	I appreciate your hospitality.
Local:	Khong kor chee	It is nothing.

Exchange 11

Guests should wait to be shown where to sit at the dining table. Seats are allocated to different people based on social standing, significance to the family, and age. The oldest person is seated first, and guests should wait respectfully for the oldest person to eat. A traditional Vietnamese family meal is usually shared, with each diner having a small bowl of rice in front of them. Various dishes are placed in the center of the table and everyone helps themselves by transferring food to their own bowls with communal chopsticks or serving spoons. Dishes are passed using both hands.⁴²⁹

Dishes are selected carefully. For example, bitter melon soup (*canh kho qua*) is considered reconciliation food. It is served in lieu of asking for forgiveness or when the host has not seen the visitor for a long time. Visitors should try a little of everything. When pausing from eating, place the chopsticks across the food bowl, not in it. Drinks are not usually served until after a meal.⁴³⁰ When full, politely decline more food by covering the bowl with your hand.^{431, 432}



Pho, a traditional Vietnamese soup
Flickr / Peter Garnhum CC BY-NC 2.0

The food tastes so good.

Visitor:	mun an naay kwar ngorn	The food tastes so good.
Local:	seen kam ern	Thank you.

Exchange 12

What is the name of this dish?

Visitor:	day lar mon zee?	What is the name of this dish?
Local:	day lar char zor	These are egg rolls.

Exchange 13

Gift Giving

Grounded in Buddhist philosophy, Vietnamese believe that the giver receives more benefits than the recipient. A person's karma is enhanced by generosity; it is common to bring gifts when invited to a person's home. Gifts are usually set aside and opened after the guest has left. Appropriate gifts are fruit and flowers or chocolate for the host's children. Gifts that are hard to buy in Vietnam are always well received. Do not give handkerchiefs, yellow flowers, chrysanthemums, or anything black as a gift. These can be interpreted as bad omens.⁴³³ Colors carry symbolic meaning: anything red, which represents happiness and good fortune, is a good choice. If several gifts are brought, there should be an even number of them. Odd numbers are considered bad luck. Typically, the recipients will initially refuse the gift. The giver should insist they accept it.⁴³⁴



Woman selling flowers, Hanoi
Flickr / Simone Anderegg CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

This gift is for you.		
Visitor:	kwar naay chor ko	This gift is for you.
Local:	toy Khong tee nun kwar naay	I cannot accept this gift.

Exchange 14

Gender Roles and Relationships

Women have played prominent roles throughout Vietnamese history. The most significant heroines are the Trung sisters who led the first successful resistance effort against the Chinese in the year 40 CE. Several years later, the Chinese launched a successful counterattack, which prompted the sisters to commit suicide rather than resume life under foreign domination. Their bravery and sacrifice are commemorated on the sixth day of the second month of the lunar year. In addition, Trung Sisters Day is observed as part of International Women's Day in Vietnam.^{435, 436, 437} In the 20th century, women were part of the resistance effort against the French and later in what the Vietnamese refer to as the "American War."^{438, 439, 440}

While the socialist government is officially committed to gender equality and emphasizes women's productive utility to the nation, patriarchal norms continue to



Hmong women selling fruit, Sapa
Flickr / Leocadio Sebastian

guide individual behavior, particularly for rural women. Their primary role is that of dutiful wife and mother of a male child. *Doi moi* liberalization has provided opportunities to earn money that typically require residents to leave the village, at least for the day.⁴⁴¹ In the outside world, women are expected to adhere to traditional expectations for virtuous female conduct in contrast to men for whom premarital sex and affairs are permissible.⁴⁴²



Girls in ao dai school uniforms, southwestern Vietnam
Flickr / Lon&Queta CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In recent years, gender gaps in Vietnam have narrowed. In 2015, households headed by women were less likely to be poor than those headed by men, and there were more female students attending high school and college than male students. Additionally, women's participation in the labor force is closing in on that of men (73.2% and 83.5%, respectively). Nevertheless, some gaps persist. While more women are engaged in wage work,

this is often in foreign-owned export-oriented factories.⁴⁴³ Such jobs entail hours of labor under sometimes unsafe conditions. Women also remain underrepresented in leadership roles: 31-33% of women are business owners or hold senior management positions, and only 26.7% of parliamentary seats are held by women.^{444, 445, 446} In addition, the higher rate of males born in the country indicates the selective abortion of female fetuses.⁴⁴⁷

Cuisine

Vietnamese cuisine is diverse and vibrant. Outside cultures have had a strong influence—from the Chinese and Khmer dynasties, to the short-lived Japanese occupation and, in particular, the French colonial rulers.⁴⁴⁸ Vietnamese food balances sweet and sour flavors, crunchy and silky textures, cooked and uncooked, fried and steamed dishes, soups and salads, all with a focus on fresh ingredients.^{449, 450, 451}

Cuisine varies according to geographic region. Chinese flavors have shaped the food of the North, which utilizes less meat and is often stir-fried with soy and flavored with fish or prawn sauce. The national staple, pho, a fragrant rice noodle soup, was created in northern Vietnam during French colonization. Beef, which was a staple of the French diet, was imported and later incorporated into the soup. Pho is served nationwide, with many regional variations. Vietnam's central coastline is considered the country's epicurean hotspot. Here, the city of Hue's legacy of royalty has impacted central Vietnamese food, which is colorfully prepared with a broad variety of spices and meats. Dishes are presented creatively in a variety of small portions. The "white rose" of Hoi An, *bahn xeo* (savory filled pancakes), is a local specialty.⁴⁵² Southern Vietnamese dishes draw more from Khmer and Thai influences, and its hotter climate means more emphasis on salads and grilled meats. Southern Vietnamese sweeten dishes with sugar and coconut milk and use chili peppers to add spice.^{453, 454}



Bowl of pho with flat noodles, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Prince Roy

There are two universal themes in Vietnamese cuisine: rice (*com*) and fish sauce (*nuoc mam*). Rice, served sticky or fried, is the staple food item; it appears with breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert as noodles, porridge, paper wrappers, puffed snacks, and wine. Steamed rice accompanies vegetable and meat dishes—usually fish, chicken, or pork—and then seasoned with the ubiquitous Vietnamese fish sauce. Fish sauce is used in marinades, salad dressings, soup broths, and dips. The most prized fish sauce has been fermented for a year in wooden barrels and comes from Phu Quoc, an island that lies off the southern coast of Vietnam in the Gulf of Thailand.⁴⁵⁵



Banh beo (waterfern cakes) with fish sauce, Da Nang
Wikimedia / Christopher Crouzet CC BY-SA 4.0

Spring rolls, wrapped in paper-thin rice flour pancakes, come in two forms: fresh (*goi cuon*), also known as "summer rolls" and deep fried (*cha gio*), a preferred food on special occasions such as Tet and family festivities.⁴⁵⁶ Both are popular snacks eaten

with the national condiment, *nuoc cham*.⁴⁵⁷ *Nuoc cham* is a fish sauce diluted with a little lime juice, sugar, garlic, and chilies.⁴⁵⁸

French Influence



Traditional banh mi sandwich
Flickr / vtoanstar CC BY-SA 2.0

Much of what is considered distinctly Vietnamese cuisine has French influences. Many staple foods are French dishes, such as omelets, baguettes, and croissants, modified with local ingredients. While bread is not common in the rest of East Asia, many Vietnamese eat banh mi sandwiches for breakfast. The baguettes, made with rice flour instead of wheat, are filled with sliced pickled daikon, cucumbers, cilantro, pâté, chilies, mayonnaise, and meat fillings or tofu.⁴⁵⁹ Banh mi can be found

in street stalls, restaurants, and French-style bakeries throughout Vietnam.⁴⁶⁰ Other foods and ingredients—such as asparagus, cauliflower, pâté, potatoes, and coffee—were also introduced during the French colonial period.⁴⁶¹

While Vietnamese still share their Chinese neighbors' affinity for tea, coffee is the daily fuel, and an integral part of life. Coffee is not just part of Vietnamese culture, it is also important to its economy: Vietnam is the second-largest exporter of coffee.⁴⁶² Instead of fresh or steamed milk, Vietnamese coffee is usually served cold and sweetened with a large portion of condensed milk (*ca phe sua da*).^{463, 464, 465}

The Arts

Literature

Vietnam has a rich literary tradition. The sources are both indigenous tales that were passed down orally before being rendered into written form, and the Chinese formal written tradition, which the Vietnamese adopted. Ghosts and spirits figure prominently in Vietnamese stories.⁴⁶⁶ Protagonists often consult with dead ancestors and relatives when they confront moral dilemmas. The use of the dead enables writers to work around censorship restrictions when dealing with sensitive topics. In this way they provide an alternative to the officially sanctioned versions of prominent events

such as revolutionary memoirs (*hoi ky cach mang*). This is a literary form introduced by the communist government after it came to power, which was intended to shape a collective memory instead of private individual accounts.⁴⁶⁷



Vietnamese texts from the 15th-18th centuries, Hanoi
Wikimedia / Daderot

“The Tale of Kieu” (“Truyen Kieu”), a 3,253-line poem based on a Chinese story, is regarded as Vietnam’s literary masterpiece. It is the story of a beautiful young woman named Vuong Thuy Kieu who was born into a noble family in the latter half of the 18th century and raised in a household of privilege. She had already given her heart to a young man. But disaster interrupted their plans to marry when her father and her brother were imprisoned. In order to free them,

she had no choice but to sell herself. For Vietnamese, Kieu’s descent into prostitution to save her kin reflects the betrayal of principle under duress and submission to the forces of circumstance. The tale is part of the educational curriculum of Vietnam and retains a special place in the exile community.⁴⁶⁸

Music



Musical group with a dan nguyet (two-string lute), north-east Vietnam Flickr / Brendon CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Vietnam has a rich culture of song and instrumentation. The Vietnamese propensity for singing, even spontaneously on occasion, could be connected to the tonal inflections of their language. The distinctive feature of traditional Vietnamese music is the lack of harmony. Instead, musicians create complicated rhythms to accompany and enrich the melodies. Don ca tai tu music and song, for example, evoke peoples’ lives and

work in the Mekong Delta region.⁴⁶⁹ Aspiring musicians are first taught to respect *phuong*, *hoa*, *la* (true, straight, flowers). They learn to play a piece perfectly in its original form before adding their own “flowers” to make a creative contribution in a bouquet-style public presentation. Stringed instruments such as the 16-stringed zither figure prominently in traditional music, along with various flute-type instruments,

which can either be played solo or as accompaniment. Don ca tai tu music and song, like Northern Vietnam's Ca tru singing, Quan họ Bac Ninh folk songs, and Vi and Giam songs (sung without instrumental accompaniment), have been inscribed in UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.^{470, 471, 472}

Water Puppets

Mua roi nuoc (literally, “puppets that dance on water”) is a unique folk art that appeared during the 11th century CE in the fertile Red River Delta and surrounding rice-growing areas. To mark the end of the rice harvest and other important occasions that were often part of religious festivals, villagers began to stage water puppet performances in communal ponds.^{473, 474}

The puppets, which range in height from 30 to 100 cm (12 to 40 in) and weigh up to 5 kg (11 lbs), are manipulated by poles held by puppeteers standing behind a curtain, waist deep in water.⁴⁷⁵ Hand carved from fig wood, each puppet is coated with five layers of lacquer paint to protect it from the water. Facial and body art emphasizes the puppet's features and enables the audience to see it clearly. Rudders at the base of the puppet allow it to move and spin as the puppeteer moves the puppet through the water.^{476, 477}

A typical show consists of a series of skits depicting daily agrarian activities often with a comic touch, such as a fisherman who cannot catch the fish, as well as historical events and folklore. Traditional tales have been updated to impart the value of safeguarding the nation's architectural and religious heritage given the amount of money cultural relics can fetch in the marketplace. As part of the Tet celebrations, a festival of puppetry is held at the Thay Pagoda, west of Hanoi, in February.^{478, 479}

Sports

Vovinam

Vovinam is an indigenous form of martial arts still popular with youth. Of relatively recent origin, vovinam fuses elements of traditional Vietnamese and other martial arts from around the world. It was created in 1938 by the Vietnamese partisan Loc Nguyen, who chafed under French authority and studied other types of martial arts to develop a variant that uses physical strength and mental stamina in a unique style. It combines hard karate moves with softer techniques of kung fu origin. Practitioners make use of taekwondo kicks as well as judo moves; weapons are optional. Loc

Nguyen hoped Vietnamese youth would study vovinam to develop indomitable spirits and strong bodies to defend their homeland. Carried elsewhere by émigrés, vovinam competitions occur wherever there is a sizeable Vietnamese community.^{480, 481} In the 1950s, the sport was forced underground by the French who wanted to suppress nationalist sentiment. It reemerged in the 1970s, and eventually became a global movement. Today, there are vovinam federations around the world.⁴⁸²



Vovinam demonstration, France
Wikimedia / Marie-Lan Nguyen

Dragon Boat Racing

Dragon boat racing is believed to have started 2,500 years ago in China.⁴⁸³ The Vietnamese, including a number of minorities such as the Khmer Krom, also have a long tradition of dragon boat racing and they compete in regional racing annually.⁴⁸⁴ The challenge lies not in honing the paddling technique of individual rowers but the ability to synchronize the strokes of 20 to 80 paddlers, particularly if the oars are of different length. Additionally, one person mans the steering oar in the rear and a drummer provides the paddlers with the proper rhythmic cadence. It is known as *ba traø* rowing in Vietnam, where it developed as a way to express thanks to the various gods thought responsible for the good harvest.⁴⁸⁵ As part of the annual Dragon Boat Racing festival (late May/early June), Vietnamese traditionally prepare and eat *bak chang*—banana- or bamboo-leaf-wrapped dumplings filled with pork, wood-ear mushrooms, and rice flour.^{486, 487}



Dragons, symbolic creatures in the folklore and mythology of Vietnam, Hue Flickr / Paul Arps

Buffalo Fighting

The water buffalo is a traditional symbol of Vietnam. The ancient water buffalo fighting festival is attached to a Water God worshipping ceremony and the *hien sinh* (sacrifice)

custom.^{488, 489} The festival can attract thousands of spectators. Bulls with potential do not work the fields. Instead, they are put through several months of training in advance of the competition, which is held in the town of Do Son in September. Locals may pick their favorite buffalo before the fight, and some even pray the night before to wish their chosen buffalo good luck.⁴⁹⁰

After some ceremony and a procession, the buffalos, with red ribbons tied around their horns and red cloths over their bodies (which are removed before the fight), are led into the fighting arena by men also clad in red to drumbeat accompaniment. After the first signal, the bulls are moved within 20 m (65 ft) of each other. They are allowed to rush at each other when the second signal is heard, after which they lock horns until one emerges dominant.



Water buffalo, northwestern Vietnam
Wikimedia / Truth'soutthere CC BY-SA 3.0

He is then paired with another competitor. Usually, the winning bull is one that successfully evades all opponents.⁴⁹¹ All buffalos are slaughtered at the end of the festival. In recent years, the tradition has met with controversy, both over concerns for the safety of handlers as well as the rights of the animals.^{492, 493}

Nonreligious Celebrations

Lunar New Year

Tet Nguyen Dan (“Tet”), the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, is the country’s most celebrated holiday. Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Da Nang celebrate the new year with parades, concerts, and large firework displays.⁴⁹⁴ Tet comes from the word *tiet*, the knot between segments of bamboo stalk that represents the idea of transition.⁴⁹⁵ Although observances extend for 15 days between late January and mid-February, workers are typically accorded a 9-day holiday.⁴⁹⁶ Vietnamese flood railways, highways, and airways to get home and scrub the family altar, clean the graves of ancestors, settle old debts, and prepare traditional holiday foods. Each home typically acquires a kumquat tree (*tac*) and peach blossoms (symbols of luck and good fortune) to adorn a thoroughly cleaned house.⁴⁹⁷ Enough food must be purchased to feed the family before the stores close. The signature Tet dish, a sticky rice cake (*banh chung*), was invented by an ancient monarch to welcome spring. The rice cakes must be soaked in water for one or two nights to achieve the desired gelatinous and chewy texture.⁴⁹⁸

Will you be celebrating the Lunar New Year?		
Visitor:	ko ser arn teet viet-nam faay Khong?	Will you be celebrating the Lunar New Year?
Local:	vang!	Yes!

Exchange 15

Vietnamese believe that Tet marks the time when the Kitchen God reports on their family to the Jade Emperor, the supreme lord of Taoism. At midnight on New Year's Eve (Gia Thua), when winter and spring meet, families mark the transition by offering incense prayers before their ancestral altars, recounting the outgoing year's rites of passage, and asking for a prosperous new year. They also pay tribute to their ancestors. Special food offerings are placed on the altar because the ancestors are believed to return and spend the holiday with their living descendants.^{499, 500}



Woman buying li xi (red envelopes for money) during Tet, Nhan Trang Flickr / Khánh Hmoong CC BY-NC 2.0

In the morning, the normally bustling streets are deserted because virtually everyone stays at home. The first visitor of the new year is supposed to be an omen of the family's fortunes for the coming year. Not wanting to leave that to chance, the Vietnamese arrange for a healthy and successful acquaintance to call on them that morning. The day is mostly a family day on which children are congratulated and given red envelopes (*li xi*) containing money in recognition of being one year older. (By tradition, birthdays are not celebrated, and Tet is a nationwide birthday party). Each subsequent day of the new year celebration has special rituals attached.⁵⁰¹ Traditional greetings during Tet involve wishing each other good fortune or a new addition to the family. These include “*Chuc mung nam moi!*” (Happy New Year!) and “*Cung chuc tan xuan!*” (Many wishes for the new spring!)^{502, 503}

Tomb-Sweeping Day

Tomb-Sweeping Day, known as Thanh Minh in Vietnamese (or Qing Ming in China, where it originated), is observed in early April. At one time in Vietnam, it was a ritual performed at court by the emperor in homage to his ancestors, with his subjects following his example. From this evolved a holiday when families pay

homage to their ancestors by making pilgrimages to their graves with offerings of food, flowers, cakes, votive paper, and incense.⁵⁰⁴

It provides families with an opportunity to reunite and picnic at the site of the tomb—where, in turn, they expect to be buried. Families demonstrate their duty to the deceased by bringing current family news and inviting them to join the Tet holiday the next year.^{505, 506}

Reunification Day

The 30th of April commemorates when the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) captured Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) on 30 April 1975. It was the immediate catalyst for Vietnamese reunification in 1976. The celebration (Ngày Thống Nhất) is also known as Victory Day or Liberation Day. It may include military parades and a reenactment of the NVA entering Saigon and marching to the Presidential Palace, the former Republic of Vietnam's (RVN) seat of government.⁵⁰⁷ This site is now known as the Reunification Palace and is open for tours in sections that have preserved rooms.^{508, 509}



Photo from Victory Day, 1975, held in front of the current presidential gates Flickr / Khánh Hmoong CC BY-NC 2.0

The Hanoi government considers this holiday important for its legitimacy. It is a solemn occasion for the Vietnamese to reflect on the sacrifices of those who made victory possible.⁵¹⁰ Because most of today's Vietnamese were born after 1975 and may have little memory of life before the economic reforms, schools educate students about the recent past. According to the national narrative, there was no civil war; rather, the RVN was a puppet regime of the United States that was justly toppled.^{511, 512}

Ho Chi Minh's Birthday

Ho Chi Minh's birthday is celebrated on 19 May. A ranking member of the government lays a wreath at his mausoleum, and people reflect on his life. It is also customary for outstanding citizens to have their contributions to national development acknowledged at their workplace.⁵¹³ While technically a secular holiday, the annual event has taken

on spiritual dimensions, as the former leader achieves the status of a hero-god in Vietnam.⁵¹⁴

Although the country has moved away from communism, Ho Chi Minh is revered for his sacrifices on behalf of the nation's war for independence. The modest home where he worked in Hanoi draws visitors throughout the year. "Uncle Ho," as he is affectionately referred to even in the state-owned media, wanted his ashes spread in the three regions of Vietnam.⁵¹⁵

This wish was not honored; instead, an austere mausoleum was built in Hanoi's Ba Dinh Square. It is open to the public and, for part of the year, displays his embalmed body under glass.⁵¹⁶



Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, Hanoi
Flickr / jules:g CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

National Day

National Day brings large parades and events across Vietnam on September 2. This date commemorates two important anniversaries—the Vietnamese declaration of independence from French colonial rule on 2 September 1945 by Ho Chi Minh, who died 24 years later on 2 September 1969.⁵¹⁷ Because of Ho Chi Minh's popularity, the official celebration typically emphasizes his contributions to national independence. The celebration in Hanoi, including a fireworks display, takes place on Ba Dinh Square in front of Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum. People also gather around Hoan Kiem Lake to watch the boat races.⁵¹⁸ Some southern Vietnamese may harbor resentment toward those of the North, a result of events during the war. They may show allegiance to the flag of South Vietnam (a yellow flag with three red stripes) on this day, otherwise being in possession of this flag can have serious implications, including jail time.^{519, 520}

Mid-Autumn Festival

The Mid-Autumn Festival (Tet Trung Thu) occurs on a harvest moon in late September or early October, close to the fall equinox. Mooncakes (*banh trung thu*), filled with red bean and lotus paste, are available everywhere for people to purchase, exchange, and eat.⁵²¹

Festivities in Vietnam are noteworthy for emphasis on children. For Tet Trung Thu, children traditionally wore masks made of paper-mâché, but now these may be



Vietnamese children celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival
Wikimedia / Thành viên

store-bought, pop-culture likenesses, such as Superman models intended for Halloween. The purpose of the mask is to scare off Ra Hu, a tiger-like demon said to have attempted to eat the moon during the period of celestial creation—thus creating the moon’s phases.^{522, 523} Because Ra Hu might be tempted to return to eat the moon, which appears larger on this holiday than at any other time of year, children remain vigilant. After dark, their efforts are aided by lanterns.^{524, 525}

Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** take off your shoes before entering a home or temple.
- **Do** dress simply and leave expensive jewelry at home to avoid flaunting your wealth in public.
- **Do** show deference toward the elderly by bowing your head slightly in their presence.
- **Do** use both hands when passing an object to someone.
- **Do** receive and give business cards with both hands and examine those you receive before putting them away.
- **Do** ask before photographing people or their children.
- **Do** take at least a sip of tea when it is offered in a home or at a reception.
- **Don't** compare Vietnam to China.
- **Don't** joke about Ho Chi Minh, who is considered the father of the country.
- **Don't** beckon anyone with a single forefinger with the palm facing up. This gesture has offensive and threatening connotations. Instead, turn your palm downward and sweep all four fingers toward you in unison.

- **Don't** lose your temper in public. This is viewed as a loss of face for all involved.
- **Don't** put your hands in your pockets or on your hips while talking because it is considered disrespectful body language.
- **Don't** let the soles of your feet point at people or sacred objects, including Buddhas and family ancestral altars.
- **Don't** rest chopsticks upright in a bowl. Vietnamese believe this resembles incense burned to commemorate the dead.
- **Don't** touch or pat a person, including a child, on the head, which is considered to be the most sacred part of a person's body. Doing so is considered rude.
- **Don't** use the Western gesture for "okay" to express that something is good; it means "poor quality" in Vietnam.

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 386 Barbara Adam and Vu Vo, "Cultural Reminders," in *Vietnam: 100 Unusual Travel Tips and a Guide to Living and Working There* (Wandering Educators Press, 2016), loc. 142-147, Kindle.
- 387 Iain Stewart et al., "Welcome to Vietnam," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 148, Kindle.
- 388 Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, "The Vietnamese Values System: A Blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values," *International Education Studies* 9, no. 12 (Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2016): 34, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v9n12p32>.
- 389 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo) accessed 7 December 2018, 1-2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 390 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Etiquette," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-etiquette#vietnamese-culture-etiquette>.
- 391 Matthew Pike, "11 Things You Should Know About Vietnamese Culture," Culture Trip, updated 20 March 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-things-you-should-know-about-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 392 Don C. Locke and Deryl F. Bailey, "Vietnamese in the United States: Religious Practices," in *Increasing Multicultural Understanding* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 17 September 2013), 213-214.
- 393 Gabriele Ruiu, "Is Fatalism a Cultural Belief? An Empirical Analysis on the Origin of Fatalistic Tendencies," (paper, no. 41705, Munich Personal RePEc Archive, Department of Economics and Law University of Cassino and Southern Lazio, Cassino, Italy, 16 July 2012), 8-9, <https://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/41705/1/mpira.pdf>.
- 394 T. H. N. Pham, "Confucian Values as Challenges for Communication in Intercultural Workplace Contexts: Evidence from Motivational Concerns in Vietnamese Politeness Behavior: 2.1 Speech-Virtue Correspondence," in *Intercultural Communication in Asia: Education, Language and Values*, ed. Andy Curtis and Roland Sussex (Heidelberg, Germany: Springer, 10 April 2018), 77-78.
- 395 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Core Concepts," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-core-concepts>.
- 396 Qld Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile" (Brisbane: Diversicare, March 2009), 7, <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.
- 397 KulturStudier, "An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts," updated September 2018, 1, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 398 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo) accessed 7 December 2018, 1-2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 399 KulturStudier, "An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts," updated September 2018, 1, <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.
- 400 Worldwide Travellers, "Traditions and People," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 6, Kindle.
- 401 Qld Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile" (Brisbane: Diversicare, March 2009), <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.
- 402 Global Affairs Canada, "Vietnam," updated 19 September 2018, https://www.international.gc.ca/cil-cai/country_insights-apercus_pays/ci-ic_vn.aspx?lang=eng#cn-2.
- 403 KulturStudier, "An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts," updated September 2018, 3, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 404 Vietnamese 247, "Greeting: Learn How to Say Hello in Vietnamese," 30 April 2017, <http://vietnamese247.com/greeting-learn-how-to-say-hello-in-vietnamese/>.
- 405 KulturStudier, "An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts," updated September 2018, 3, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 406 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Etiquette," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-etiquette#vietnamese-culture-etiquette>.
- 407 Vietnamese 247, "Greeting: Learn How to Say Hello in Vietnamese," 30 April 2017, <http://vietnamese247.com/greeting-learn-how-to-say-hello-in-vietnamese/>.
- 408 Omniglot, "Useful Vietnamese Phrases," accessed 9 January 2019, <https://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/vietnamese.php>.
- 409 Dana Healy, "Chapter 1: Everyday Conversation," in *Complete Vietnamese Beginner to Intermediate Book and Audio Course: Learn to Read, Write, Speak and Understand a New Language with Teach Yourself* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 30 March 2012).

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 410 Global Affairs Canada, “Vietnam,” updated 19 September 2018, https://www.international.gc.ca/cil-cai/country_insights-aperçus_pays/ci-ic_vn.aspx?lang=eng#cn-4.
- 411 Brendon Griffin and Georgia Stephens, eds., “Chapter 5: Contexts: Vietnamese,” in *The Rough Guide to Vietnam* 9th ed. (Rough Guides Ltd, March 2018), Kindle.
- 412 Qld Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, “Vietnamese Cultural Profile” (Brisbane: Diversicare, March 2009), 7, <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.
- 413 Vietnam Online, “Dress Code in Vietnam,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.vietnamonline.com/living/dress-code-in-vietnam.html>.
- 414 Move to Vietnam, “Dress Code in Vietnam: What to Wear, When, and What Not to Wear,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://movetovietnam.com/dress-code-in-vietnam-how-to-dress-properly/>.
- 415 KulturStudier, “An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don’ts,” updated September 2018, 5, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 416 Worldwide Travellers, “Traditions and People,” in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 64, Kindle.
- 417 Katie Kalmusky, “A Guide to Traditional Women’s Fashion in Vietnam,” Culture Trip, updated 16 April 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/a-guide-to-traditional-womens-fashion-in-vietnam/>.
- 418 Nhung Nguyen, “‘Street Ninjas’ Battle Sexism and the Sun in Vietnam,” *VN Express International*, accessed 10 December 2018, <https://e.vnexpress.net/projects/street-ninjas-battle-sexism-and-the-sun-in-vietnam-3651101/index.html>.
- 419 John Pendergrass, “Chapter 19: Da Nang from a Bicycle,” in *Racing Back to Vietnam: A Journey in War and Peace* (New York: Hatherleigh Press, 24 October 2017).
- 420 Khanh Tran, “The Evolution of Vietnamese Beauty Through Old Ads,” *Saigoneer*, 3 June 2018, <https://saigoneer.com/saigon-culture/13282-the-evolution-of-vietnamese-beauty-through-old-ads>.
- 421 Vietnam Culture, “Vietnamese Clothing: Ao Dai,” accessed 10 December 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-44-10/Ao-Dai.aspx>.
- 422 Matthew Pike, “11 Things You Should Know About Vietnamese Culture,” Culture Trip, updated 20 March 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 423 Duong Thi Kim Duc and Mingxin Bao, “Aesthetic Sense of the Vietnamese through Three Renovations of the Women’s Ao Dai in the 20th Century,” *Asian Culture and History* 4, no. 2 (July 2012), <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ach.v4n2p99>.
- 424 Vietcetera, “The 2000 Year History of the Vietnamese Ao Dai,” 22 December 2017, <http://vietcetera.com/the-2000-year-history-of-the-vietnamese-ao-dai/>.
- 425 Jeffrey Jones, “U.S. Army Special Forces Language Visual Training Materials: Vietnamese” (U.S. Army, accessed 10 December 2018), 12.
- 426 Katie Kalmusky, “A Guide to Traditional Men’s Fashion in Vietnam,” Culture Trip, 24 April 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/a-guide-to-traditional-mens-fashion-in-vietnam/>.
- 427 Iain Stewart et al., “Eat and Drink Like a Local,” in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 1057-1058, Kindle.
- 428 Offroad Vietnam Motorbike Adventures, “Hospitality: Different Customs in Vietnam,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://offroadvietnam.com/vietnam-info/customs-and-rites/hospitality>.
- 429 Barbara Adam, “Dining,” in *Vietnam: 100 Unusual Travel Tips and a Guide to Living and Working There* (Kalamazoo, MI: Wandering Educators Press), Kindle.
- 430 Nina Evason, “Vietnamese Culture: Etiquette,” Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-etiquette#vietnamese-culture-etiquette>.
- 431 KulturStudier, “An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don’ts,” updated September 2018, 7, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 432 eDiplomat, “Vietnam: The People,” accessed 10 December 2018, http://www.ediplomat.com/np/cultural_etiquette/ce_vn.htm.
- 433 Nina Evason, “Vietnamese Culture: Etiquette: Manners in Vietnam,” Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-etiquette#vietnamese-culture-etiquette>.
- 434 KulturStudier, “An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don’ts,” updated September 2018, 2, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 435 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Trung Sisters,” updated 1 March 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Trung-Sisters>.
- 436 Ronald J. Cima, “Early History,” in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/3.htm>.

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 437 Christopher Goscha, "Chapter 1: Northern Configurations: Independent Dai Viet," in *The Penguin History of Modern Vietnam: A History* (London: Penguin UK, 30 June 2016).
- 438 William S. Turley, "Women in the Communist Revolution in Vietnam," *Asian Survey* 12, no. 9 (University of California Press Journals, 1972): 793-805, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2642829>.
- 439 Elizabeth D. Herman, "The Women Who Fought for Hanoi," *New York Times*, 6 June 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/opinion/vietnam-war-women-soldiers.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=3156BF26C243B1714915E368B31A6C8D&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion>.
- 440 Rosanna Ryan, "From Hidden Resistance to Peace Talks: Women in the Vietnam War," ABC RN Australia, 4 November 2015, <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/from-hidden-resistance-to-peace-talks-women-in-the-vietnam-war/6907610>.
- 441 Nguyen Hoang Anh, "A Review of Women's Entrepreneurship in Vietnam Taking into Account Socio-Cultural Norms and the Institutional Ecosystem" (paper, no. 11, Foreign Trade University, Vietnam, August 2016), 2-3, https://www.wti.org/media/filer_public/a8/e9/a8e9c249-dc43-4fc9-a546-599d8db38e28/working_paper_no_11_2016_nguyen_hoang_anh.pdf.
- 442 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Family," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-family#vietnamese-culture-family>.
- 443 World Bank, "World Bank in Vietnam: Overview," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 444 UNDP, "Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update: Briefing Note for Countries on the 2018 Statistical Update: Viet Nam," accessed 10 December 2018, 5 http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/VNM.pdf.
- 445 Lien Hoang, "Business Network Aims to Boost Women Leaders in Vietnam," Voice of America, 14 October 2014, <https://www.voanews.com/a/vietnam-network-aims-to-boost-women-leaders/2483552.html>.
- 446 Mastercard, "Overview of Key Findings: 2.1 Benchmark: Women Business Owners," in *Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs (MIWE) 2018*, accessed 10 December 2018, 19, https://newsroom.mastercard.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/MIWE_2018_Final_Report.pdf.
- 447 World Bank, "Chapter 2: Gender, Poverty and Well Being: Progress, Reversals and Barriers," in *Vietnam Country Gender Assessment*, accessed 10 December 2018, 22, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/894421468321306582/pdf/655010WP0P12270sessionment-0Eng-0Final.pdf>.
- 448 SBS, "About Vietnamese Food," updated 6 May 2015, <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2008/07/01/about-vietnamese-food>.
- 449 Iain Stewart et al., "Eat and Drink Like a Local," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 172, Kindle.
- 450 Vietnam Culture, "Vietnamese Food," accessed 10 December 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/vietnamese-food.aspx>.
- 451 SBS, "About Vietnamese Food," updated 6 May 2015, <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2008/07/01/about-vietnamese-food>.
- 452 Iain Stewart et al., "Eat and Drink Like a Local," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 172, Kindle.
- 453 Hanoi Free Tour Guides Organization, "Vietnamese Cuisine: From Variations and Influences to Cultural Reflection," accessed 10 December 2018, <http://hanoifreetourguides.com/vietnamese-cuisine-variations-influences-cultural-reflection/>.
- 454 SBS, "About Vietnamese Food," updated 6 May 2015, <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2008/07/01/about-vietnamese-food>.
- 455 Isabelle Sudron, "Top 10 Traditional Vietnamese Dishes You Need to Try," Culture Trip, updated 18 January 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/top-10-traditional-vietnamese-dishes-you-need-to-try/>.
- 456 Vietnam Online, "Vietnamese Spring Rolls," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.vietnamonline.com/entry/vietnamese-fried-spring-rolls.html>.
- 457 Vietnam Culture, "Vietnamese Food," accessed 10 December 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/vietnamese-food.aspx>.
- 458 Erin Zimmer, "A Basic Introduction to Vietnamese Food," Serious Eats, accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.seriouseats.com/2013/01/a-basic-introduction-to-vietnamese-food.html>.
- 459 SBS, "About Vietnamese Food," updated 6 May 2015, <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2008/07/01/about-vietnamese-food>.
- 460 Isabelle Sudron, "Top 10 Traditional Vietnamese Dishes You Need to Try," Culture Trip, updated 18 January 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/top-10-traditional-vietnamese-dishes-you-need-to-try/>.
- 461 Emily Monaco, "The French Influence on Vietnamese Cuisine," Epicure and Culture, 16 December 2015, <https://epicureandculture.com/vietnamese-cuisine-french-influence/>.

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 462 Matthew Pike, “11 Things You Should Know About Vietnamese Culture,” Culture Trip, updated 20 March 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 463 Erin Zimmer, “A Basic Introduction to Vietnamese Food,” Serious Eats, accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.seriouseats.com/2013/01/a-basic-introduction-to-vietnamese-food.html>.
- 464 Emily Monaco, “The French Influence on Vietnamese Cuisine,” Epicure and Culture, 16 December 2015, <https://epicureandculture.com/vietnamese-cuisine-french-influence/>.
- 465 Iain Stewart et al., “Eat and Drink Like a Local,” in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 1120, Kindle.
- 466 Heonik Kwon, “Introduction,” in *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), http://assets.cambridge.org/97805218/80619/excerpt/9780521880619_excerpt.htm.
- 467 Peter Zinoman, “Chapter 1: Reading Revolutionary Prison Memoirs,” in *Country of Memory: Remaking the Past in Late Socialist Vietnam*, ed. Hue-Tam Ta Ho (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 21.
- 468 Andrew Pham, “Chapter 35: Harlot Heroine,” *Catfish and Mandala: A Two-Wheeled Voyage through the Landscape and Memory of Vietnam* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998), 282.
- 469 Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, “Art of Đờn Ca Tài Tử Music and Song in Southern Viet Nam,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/art-of-on-ca-tai-tu-music-and-song-in-southern-viet-nam-00733>.
- 470 Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, “Quan Hũ Bắc Ninh Folk Songs,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/quan-ho-bac-ninh-folk-songs-00183>.
- 471 Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, “Ca Trù Singing,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/ca-tru-singing-00309>.
- 472 Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, “Vĩ and Giặm Folk Songs of Nghệ Tĩnh,” accessed 10 December 2018, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/vi-and-giam-folk-songs-of-nghe-tinh-01008>.
- 473 Joseph Buttinger et al., “Vietnam: Cultural Life: Theatre,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Health-and-welfare#ref260885>.
- 474 Sarisa Prateepchuang, Supunee Leauboonshoo, and Truong Ngoc Thang, “The Musical Heritage of Water Puppet Performances in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam,” *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse* 15 (15 November 2016): 95-112, <http://dx.doi.org/10.21315/ws2016.15.4>.
- 475 Steven K. Bailey, “Water Puppetry in Vietnam: Better Than the Muppets,” *Things Asian*, 1 November 1998, <http://www.thingsasian.com/stories-photos/1239>.
- 476 Joseph Buttinger et al., “Vietnam: Cultural Life: Theatre,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Health-and-welfare#ref260885>.
- 477 David Goran, “Vietnamese Water Puppetry Is a Unique Variation on the Ancient Asian Puppet Tradition That Dates Back as Far as the 11th Century,” *Vintage News*, 19 August 2016, <https://www.thevintagenews.com/2016/08/19/priority-16/>.
- 478 David Goran, “Vietnamese Water Puppetry Is a Unique Variation on the Ancient Asian Puppet Tradition That Dates Back as Far as the 11th Century,” *Vintage News*, 19 August 2016, <https://www.thevintagenews.com/2016/08/19/priority-16/>.
- 479 Sarisa Prateepchuang, Supunee Leauboonshoo, and Truong Ngoc Thang, “The Musical Heritage of Water Puppet Performances in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam,” *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse* 15 (15 November 2016): 95-112, <http://dx.doi.org/10.21315/ws2016.15.4>.
- 480 Matthew Knight and Natasha Maguder, “Nguyen Van Chieu: Vietnam’s Martial Arts Missionary,” *CNN*, 26 November 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/26/sport/human-to-hero-nguyen-van-chieu-vovinam-martial-art-vietnam/index.html>.
- 481 European Vovinam Viet Vo Dao Federation, “About Vietnam,” accessed 10 December 2018, <http://www.vovinam-evvf.eu/evvf/vietnam/>.
- 482 Jenny Vaughan, “Kicking Gaming Addiction with Vietnam’s Martial Art,” *ABS/CBN News*, 11 February 2018, <https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/02/11/18/kicking-gaming-addiction-with-vietnams-martial-art>.
- 483 Ryan Kilpatrick, “The Dragon Boat Festival Has Nothing to do With Dragons: Here are Four Things to Know,” *Time*, 30 May 2017, <http://time.com/4797048/dragon-boat-festival-duanwu-tuen-ng/>.
- 484 Voice of Vietnam, “Dragon Boat Race in the Waters of Do Son,” updated 20 February 2018, <https://english.vov.vn/culture/dragon-boat-race-in-the-waters-of-do-son-368986.vov#p1>.
- 485 Kelly Boyer Sagert, “Canoeing and Kayaking: Dragon Boat Racing,” in *Encyclopedia of Extreme Sports* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 30 December 2008), 36.
- 486 Dan Q. Dao, “The Saveur Field Guide to Vietnamese Street Food Dishes,” *Saveur*, 6 July 2018, <https://www.saveur.com/guide-to-vietnamese-street-food#page-4>.

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 487 Zheng Songwu, "Dragon Boat Festival: Different Ways to Celebrate in Asia," CGTN, 18 July 2018, https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d514f32416a4d78457a6333566d54/share_p.html.
- 488 World Atlas, "Vietnamese Symbols," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/vietnam/vnsymbols.htm>.
- 489 Piumi Rajapaksha, "Water Buffalo: 11 Facts About Vietnam's National Animal," Culture Trip, 3 January 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/water-buffalo-11-facts-about-vietnams-national-animal/>.
- 490 iExplore, "The Do Son Buffalo Fighting Festival: A Uniquely Vietnamese Festival," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.iexplore.com/destinations/vietnam/do-son-buffalo-fighting-festival-unmatched-vietnamese-experience>.
- 491 iExplore, "The Do Son Buffalo Fighting Festival: A Uniquely Vietnamese Festival," accessed 9 January 2019, <https://www.iexplore.com/destinations/vietnam/do-son-buffalo-fighting-festival-unmatched-vietnamese-experience>.
- 492 Associated Press, "Vietnam's Controversial Water Buffalo Fighting Festival Is Back," *USA Today*, 28 September 2017, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/09/28/vietnams-controversial-water-buffalo-fighting-festival-back/712230001/>.
- 493 Thu Vân, "Time to Lock Horns with a Cruel 'Tradition'," Viet Nam News, updated 5 July 2017, <https://vietnamnews.vn/talk-around-town/379526/time-to-lock-horns-with-a-cruel-tradition.html>.
- 494 Vietnam Tourism, "Vietnamese Tet and Traditional Activities," 23 January 2016, <https://www.vietnamtourism.org.vn/attractions/culture/festivals/vietnamese-tet-and-traditional-activities.html>.
- 495 James Sullivan, "History and Culture: Beliefs" in *National Geographic Traveler: Vietnam* (Washington DC: National Geographic Books, 2006), 33.
- 496 Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnam Weighs Record-Long Lunar New Year Break," 19 October 2016, <https://english.vov.vn/society/vietnam-weighs-recordlong-lunar-new-year-break-334172.vov>.
- 497 Vietnam Center and Archive, University of Texas, "Let's Celebrate Tết," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits/tet/>.
- 498 Asia Highlights, "Festivals in Vietnam," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.asiahighlights.com/vietnam/festivals-and-events.htm>.
- 499 Huynh Ngoc Trang, "The Kitchen Gods Return to the Heavens," *Vietnam Heritage Magazine* 4, no. 1 (January-February 2014), <http://www.vietnamheritage.com.vn/pages/en/18114112441833-The-Kitchen-Gods-return-to-the-heavens.html>.
- 500 James Sullivan, "History and Culture: Beliefs" in *National Geographic Traveler: Vietnam* (Washington DC: National Geographic Books, 2006), 35.
- 501 James Sullivan, "History and Culture: Beliefs" in *National Geographic Traveler: Vietnam* (Washington DC: National Geographic Books, 2006), 33-35.
- 502 Vietnam Center and Archive, University of Texas, "Let's Celebrate Tết," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits/tet/>.
- 503 EHG News, "A New Year: A New Beginning," 20 January 2018, <http://ehgnews.com/2018/01/a-new-year-a-new-beginning/>.
- 504 XinhuaNet, "Feature: Tomb-Sweeping Festival's Traditions Passed from Generation to Next in Vietnam," 4 March 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-04/03/c_136180592.htm.
- 505 Vietnam Travel, "Thanh Minh (Day of the Dead)," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.vietnam-travel.org/explore/culture/thanh-minh-day-of-the-dead.html>.
- 506 Mengjie, ed., "Feature: Vietnam Honors Chinese Martyrs, Nurtures Bilateral Friendship on Tomb Sweeping Day," XinhuaNet, 4 April 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-04/04/c_137088797.htm.
- 507 Bob Oakes, "For Vietnamese, April 30 Is a Day of Many Meanings," WBUR News, 30 April 2015 <https://www.wbur.org/news/2015/04/30/vietnam-april-30-meaning>.
- 508 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City: Attractions: Reunification Palace," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/ho-chi-minh-city/attractions/reunification-palace/a/poi-sig/403140/357884>.
- 509 Keith Mundy, "Independence Palace, a Monument to the Vietnam War," *Post Magazine*, 25 April 2015, <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1774166/independence-palace-monument-vietnam-war>.
- 510 *Irish Times*, "Vietnam Marks 40th Anniversary of the End of War," updated 30 April 2015, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/asia-pacific/vietnam-marks-40th-anniversary-of-the-end-of-war-1.2195180>.
- 511 Thomas Maresca, "40 Years Later, Vietnam Still Deeply Divided over War," *USA Today*, updated 30 April 2015, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/04/28/fall-of-saigon-vietnam-40-years-later/26447943/>.
- 512 Jeffrey J. Clarke, "Advice and Support: The Final Years: The U.S. Army in Vietnam," Center of Military History, U.S. Army (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1988), 174, https://history.army.mil/banner_images/focus/dr_clarke_ret_comm/the_final_years.pdf.

Endnotes for Chapter 3: Traditions

- 513 VietnamNet, "Tribute Paid to President Ho Chi Minh on Birth Anniversary," 18 May 2018, <https://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/government/200870/tribute-paid-to-president-ho-chi-minh-on-birth-anniversary.html>.
- 514 DK Travel, "Vietnam through the Year," in *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Vietnam and Angkor Wat* (New York: DK Eyewitness Travel, 17 January 2017), 35.
- 515 Viv Marsh, "Uncle Ho's Legacy Lives on in Vietnam," BBC News, 7 June 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18328455>.
- 516 Worldwide Travellers, "Traditions and People," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 32-33, Kindle.
- 517 Iain Stewart et al., "Survival Guide: Public Holidays," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 2156, Kindle.
- 518 World Travel Guide, "Hanoi Events," accessed 10 December 2018, <https://www.worldtravelguide.net/guides/asia/vietnam/hanoi/city-events/>.
- 519 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Core Concepts," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-core-concepts>.
- 520 James Pearson, "Vietnam Jails Four for Flying Flag of 'Saigon Regime'," 24 January 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-dissident-flag/vietnam-jails-four-for-flying-flag-of-saigon-regime-idUSKBN1FD1HV>.
- 521 Tran Cam An, "Mid-Autumn Festival in Vietnam," Accent Learning, accessed 10 December 2018, <http://www.accent.ac.nz/elto/articles/mid-autumn-festival-vietnam>.
- 522 Bobby King, "Mid-Autumn Children's Festival, Vietnam," ThingsAsian, 29 September 2009, <http://thingsasian.com/story/mid-autumn-childrens-festival-vietnam>.
- 523 Bui Hang and Dieu Linh, "Making Paper Masks for Mid-Autumn Festival," Voice of Vietnam, 20 September 2015, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/saturday-report/making-paper-masks-for-midautumn-festival-369556.vov>.
- 524 Chris Dwyer, "Why You Should Visit Hanoi for Mid-Autumn Festival," *Independent*, 21 September 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/asia/hanoi-mid-autumn-festival-vietnam-tet-trung-thu-harvest-a8546801.html>.
- 525 Minh Nguyen, "How Vietnamese Celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival?" Vietnam Track, 10 May 2017, <https://vietnamtrack.com/vietnamese-celebrate-mid-autumn-festival/>.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 3 | Traditions

Assessment

1. Singing is a popular pastime in Vietnam.
2. The greeting “*Xin chao*” is only used in the evening.
3. Ho Chi Minh is referred to as “Uncle Ho” by the Vietnamese.
4. Fried catfish is Vietnam’s signature dish.
5. The Trung sisters are celebrated for their resistance to the French.

Assessment Answers: 1. True; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. False



Hanoi skyline
Flickr / geekoftheweek CC BY-NC 2.0

Chapter 4 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Urban Life

Introduction

With urbanization in Vietnam growing at 3.4% per year, the United Nations projects that half the population will live in cities by 2040. Currently, one in three people in Vietnam lives in a city. Ho Chi Minh City, for example, has an urban density comparable to Tokyo. Streets are clogged with lines of vehicles and motorbikes, some with multiple passengers, speeding in and out of the available space. Such rapid urbanization is placing an increasing burden on cities and municipalities. Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, and many smaller cities struggle to deliver basic city services and safe drinking water, construct needed public transportation systems, improve waste management systems, and ensure food safety. ^{526, 527}

The gap between the wealthiest 20% of the Vietnamese population and the rest has been widening for more than a decade. In 2014, there were 210 individuals worth more than \$30 million in Vietnam; their combined wealth was equivalent to 12% of Vietnam's GDP.⁵²⁸ Cities display the country's most extreme income disparities. Hanoi, the national capital, and Ho Chi Minh City, the commercial center, have been the primary recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI) under the *doi moi* economic reforms. As a result, residents of these two major cities enjoy a higher standard of living than people elsewhere. The downtown centers of both cities have been transformed by new construction.^{529, 530, 531}



Ben Thanh Market entrance, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / pelican CC BY-SA 2.0

Vietnam's middle class includes government employees (one-third of the national workforce), and entrepreneurs who typically have close relations with government officials in a position to provide concessions that are often crucial to profitability. Many other residents are self-employed in the urban informal service economy, particularly those who left the countryside in search of job opportunities. Unable to afford rental housing, many working poor and homeless in Ho Chi Minh City have created squatter settlements along canals. These dwellings lack access to clean water and are susceptible to flooding because of poor drainage.⁵³² Periodic municipal government "civilization" (*van minh*) campaigns often target the poor, who are perceived as degrading the city's image.⁵³³



Student using cell phone, Hanoi
Flickr / Ed Yourdon CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Telecommunications

The vast majority of Vietnamese have cell phones (91%), which can be bought from almost any street vendor. Text messaging is the preferred form of communication for the younger generation.^{534, 535} Five mobile phone companies operate in Vietnam: VNPT-Vinaphone, Mobiphone, Viettel, Vietnammobile, and Gtel.⁵³⁶

What is your telephone number?		
Visitor:	deeyen tway koo-a ko so may?	What is your telephone number?
Local:	soo deeyin twaay koo-a toy laar bar muee tarm muee mot Khong haay muee mot	My phone number is 3811-0211.

Exchange 16

In 2018, there were 50 million internet users in Vietnam or a little over half the population.^{537, 538} After 4G technology became available in Vietnam in 2015, rapid adoption of 4G-enabled smartphones has made internet access more convenient.⁵³⁹ Vietnam's biggest mobile carrier, Viettel, will start testing a 5G mobile network in 2019.⁵⁴⁰

May I use your phone?		
Visitor:	toy zoong deeyin twaay koo-a ko dew-uk Khong?	May I use your phone?
Local:	dew-uk	Sure.

Exchange 17

Industry

Vietnam's domestic industry consists of two types of businesses: state-owned enterprises and post-*doi moi* enterprises. State-owned enterprises developed under a planned economy. Few are financially viable, so they are reliant on subsidies from specific government bureaus. Post-*doi moi* enterprises have captured industries like electronics and telecommunications, which have become booming industries for Vietnam.⁵⁴¹

In 2017, the country was the world's ninth-largest electronics exporter.⁵⁴² Worldwide, 1 in 10 smartphones is produced in Vietnam. Mobile phones are the country's number one export, bringing in more than \$45 billion in 2017. Machinery, steel, and textiles are also important industries, and Vietnam is quickly becoming one of the world's largest exporters of garments, shoes, and textiles.^{543, 544, 545}



Textile workers
Wikimedia / Peter van der Sluijs CC BY-SA 3.0

To meet the demands of increased manufacturing and trade plus a growing population, high-rise office buildings and apartment complexes have been constructed in urban centers. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's economic powerhouse, accounts for close to 20% of the country's GDP and 28% of its industrial output. Other major industrial centers are the port city of Da Nang, Bien Hoa, and the northern port city of Haiphong.⁵⁴⁶

Haiphong was once a dangerous waterway—heavily mined and bombed during the Vietnam War. Now, Haiphong is the heart of Vietnam's economic boom. Already an important shallow-water port, it opened a deep-water port in 2018 to accommodate container ships. The city is also home to the country's first automobile company, VinFast.⁵⁴⁷

Traffic and Transportation

The country's roads have been improved considerably since the Vietnam War, and 84% of its national roads are paved. But these constitute only a small portion of Vietnam's overall road network, most of which remains unpaved and in poor condition.^{548, 549} Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death and emergency evacuation of foreigners in Vietnam.⁵⁵⁰ Though vehicle ownership is rising quickly, car ownership is still low, and road traffic is dominated by motorcycles.⁵⁵¹

Before the 20th century, sea transport was the primary means of connecting the northern and southern parts of the country. For many, boat travel is faster and cheaper than land routes because there is an estuary approximately every 25 km (15 mi) of coastline.^{552, 553}

Rapid passenger growth has strained Vietnam's existing transportation network, and many highways and airports are severely congested. The government has planned ambitious highway and aviation projects, including construction of thousands of kilometers of new highway by 2020.⁵⁵⁴



Ho Chi Minh City moped traffic
Flickr / hermitsmoores CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Merchants on the Mekong River, southern Vietnam
Flickr / -JvL-

Vietnam has a well-developed domestic flight network that uses airfields built for military aircraft during the years of conflict. Demand for air travel is growing. In 2015, 63 million passengers flew in and out of Vietnamese airports; 18 million were international travelers.⁵⁵⁵ Though all airports attract travelers, Tan Son Nhat Airport in Ho Chi Minh City is the busiest. As of July 2016, there were 70 international routes connecting Vietnam to 26 countries and territories. There are several domestic airlines—Vietnam Airlines, VietJet Air, Jetstar Pacific Airlines, and Bamboo Airways, which began operation in 2018.⁵⁵⁶

Which road leads to the airport?		
Visitor:	dew-urn now zun den sun baay?	Which road leads to the airport?
Local:	dew-urn hew-urng dong	The road heading east.

Exchange 18

On arriving at the airport in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, visitors should choose ground transportation carefully. Some travelers have reported being robbed by drivers who greeted them upon arrival with a sign showing the traveler’s name. Use only established airport taxi companies or vehicles provided by hotels. Know the address of the hotel you are staying at and nearby landmarks. If there is an incident, write down the name of the taxi company and the license plate number so it can be reported to local authorities.⁵⁵⁷

Where can I get a cab?		
Visitor:	toy kor theeh dorn tak-see uh dow?	Where can I get a cab?
Local:	uh darng keeya keeya	Over there.

Exchange 19

Trains and Buses

Vietnam’s rail network was built under French colonial rule. Each line is a single track except near the Chinese border, where it becomes a double track as the train approaches the border town of Lao Cai. The southern rail terminus is still officially named the Saigon Station. Service between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City is on the “Reunification Express,” but the name misrepresents the speed of service as the trip takes 30-plus hours.^{558, 559} There is no way to buy a combination pass ticket. Stopping over along the way requires the purchase of a new ticket. There are more than 100 stops on the over 1,000-mile (1,610-km) line, but most “express” trains only stop at

about 20. Since there is just one track, trains must pull off regularly to let trains from the opposite direction pass.^{560, 561}

Is there a train station nearby?		
Visitor:	kor gar sair luwa uh gun daay Khong?	Is there a train station nearby?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 20

Rail service is complemented by an extensive network of inexpensive, long-distance bus services. The vintage De Soto buses are quite utilitarian. Newer models may come equipped with 24-hour entertainment, such as a DVD player and karaoke microphones for all passengers to use.⁵⁶² Note, however, that long-distance buses do not meet U.S. safety standards. Buses and trucks are often overloaded and travel at high speeds with little regard to other modes of road transportation.⁵⁶³



Train platform, Lao Cai, northwestern Vietnam
Flickr / suanie CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Will the bus be here soon?		
Visitor:	sair byut sarp den daay faay Khong?	Will the bus be here soon?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 21

Getting around within a City

Cyclos (three-wheeled bicycle taxis, or pedicabs)—long since replaced by bicycles and motorbikes—can still be hired in tourist areas. Called *pousse-pousse* in French colonial times (literally, “push-push”), the driver sits and peddles behind the passengers.^{564, 565, 566}

Owning a motorbike or scooter is a necessity for urban residents because of the limited public transportation options. While helmets are required by law, many fail to meet national safety standards. Motorbike taxis (*xe om*; literally, “hugging a motorbike”), are available on practically every street corner and have replaced the traditional bicycle. Although theoretically cheaper than regular taxis, *xe om* lack a meter, which

can make them more expensive for those unfamiliar with the informal fare structure.⁵⁶⁷ Because *xe om* are unregulated and offer little protection, the U.S. State Department strongly discourages their use.⁵⁶⁸

Pedestrians should always look carefully in both directions before crossing Vietnam’s chaotic urban streets. Caution is advised even when using a crosswalk with a green “walk” light illuminated or when crossing what is believed to be a one-way street.⁵⁶⁹ Vietnamese often drive against traffic. When walking on sidewalks, be mindful of scooters behind you. Vietnamese commonly drive their scooters on sidewalks.^{570, 571}



Pedicab with passenger, Hanoi
Wikimedia / Nam-ho Park

Renting a Vehicle

Driving in Vietnam is not comparable to driving in other countries: it is chaotic and dangerous. Awareness of basic traffic safety etiquette is low and driving under the influence is common and rarely prosecuted. The sheer volume of vehicles is intimidating to most international visitors, and traffic accidents are the leading cause of death in Vietnam. It is possible to rent a car or even a small motorbike or scooter in Vietnam. But visitors who stay less than 3 months and do not speak Vietnamese must hire a driver.⁵⁷²

Can you take me there?		
Visitor:	ko doo-ah toy den dor dew-uk Khong?	Can you take me there?
Local:	vang, toy doo-ah ko dee ngaay	Yes, I will take you there right away.

Exchange 22

International driving permits and U.S. drivers’ licenses are not valid in Vietnam. Foreigners who intend to operate a vehicle must obtain a Vietnamese license.⁵⁷³ There are serious risks associated with driving without a Vietnamese license endorsed for the appropriate vehicle, be it a car, motorbike, or scooter, including fines, prosecution, or imprisonment. Additionally, drivers can be held liable for injuries to a victim in an accident. Foreign nationals deemed responsible for an accident by the police will be barred from leaving the country until compensation has been paid to the victims or their

families. To obtain a Vietnamese driver's license, visitors should contact the Provincial Public Transportation Service of the Vietnamese Department of Communications and Transport.^{574, 575}

Where can I rent a car?		
Visitor:	toy kor theh thoo-eh sair oto uh dow?	Where can I rent a car?
Local:	uh jorng tarng fo	Downtown.

Exchange 23

Is there a mechanic nearby?		
Visitor:	kor thur maay uh gun day Khong?	Is there a mechanic nearby?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 24

Gas stations are easy to find along major thoroughfares, as well as on the water for boat traffic. It is advisable to patronize stations that have new pumps with digital readouts, to verify how much gas has actually been put into the tank.

Is there a gas station nearby?		
Visitor:	kor tram sang uh gun daay Khong?	Is there a gas station nearby?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 25

Health Care

Vietnam's government has made a concerted effort to raise basic health care standards over the last three decades. This has led to improved life expectancy and lower mortality rates. The government provides access to basic health care in urban and rural areas, and health insurance coverage reached 82% of the population in 2016.^{576, 577} Those without insurance are vulnerable to the financial consequences of a serious illness.⁵⁷⁸

In the last decade, the government has partly privatized its health-care system as a step toward providing better care. As a result, Vietnam meets 73% of the population's health-care needs. In 2016, there were 1,346 hospitals in Vietnam, which included 1,161 public hospitals and 185 private hospitals.⁵⁷⁹ But overcrowding,

shortage of medical staff, and obsolete equipment for surgery and intensive care units are challenges. Vietnamese who can afford it travel abroad for high-quality medical services.^{580, 581}

Is there a hospital nearby?		
Visitor:	kor beng veeyin uh gun daay Khong?	Is there a hospital nearby?
Local:	kor, uh joong tarm tarng fo	Yes, in the center of town.

Exchange 26

Average life expectancy reached 76 years of age in 2016.^{582, 583} Vietnamese men, however, have a relatively high prevalence of smoking and alcohol consumption, which contributes to lower life expectancy than Vietnamese women. Maternal mortality has decreased dramatically since 1990. For every 100,000 live births, 54 women died from pregnancy-related causes in 2015, compared to 223 in 1990.^{584, 585} In the same period, infant mortality declined from 44 deaths per 1,000 live births to 15 (by comparison, it is 6 in the United States).⁵⁸⁶ Women still suffer from communicable diseases, especially reproductive tract problems and HIV/AIDS.⁵⁸⁷



Navy Lt. Cmd. S. Stroup performing surgery, Vinh
United States Department of Defense

Do you know what is wrong?		
Visitor:	ko beeyet kaay zee saay Khong?	Do you know what is wrong?
Local:	kor ah	Yes. (polite)

Exchange 27

Access to better sanitation has improved people's overall health. In 2016, 77% of the rural population had access to sanitation facilities, and 70% had access to clean water. In urban areas, access to these services is over 95%.⁵⁸⁸

Education

Education is valued more than material wealth and success in Vietnam. An uneducated, rich person is considered inferior to an educated person who is poor. In the traditional

Vietnamese social system, the scholar is at the top of the social hierarchy.⁵⁸⁹ Almost all Vietnamese consider a good education the best avenue to success for their children. Many will sell what they have to pay for the best schools and tutoring.⁵⁹⁰ Vietnam's government has made a concerted effort to raise basic education and health care standards over the last three decades. This has led to improved adult literacy in rural and urban areas.⁵⁹¹ The literacy rate of Vietnamese between 15 and 24 years old was 98% in 2015.^{592, 593}



French bilingual school, southern Vietnam
Wikimedia / Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

Education in Vietnam is compulsory, universal, and tuition-free through primary school (age 11). Secondary schooling (high school) is not free. Most Vietnamese students have lessons from Monday through Saturday but for only half the day.^{594, 595} Additionally, families who can afford it pay for organized forms of supplementary study (*di hoc them*) within the formal education system (where teachers offer private tutoring) and outside of it (in the form of so-called

cram schools).^{596, 597} The number of students going on to college is increasing: in 2015, 28% of Vietnamese studied at the college level.⁵⁹⁸ At the same time, higher education opportunities are limited and regionally oriented.⁵⁹⁹ Most students in Hanoi choose a college in the capital, while those in the South select schools close to home. With 1 million students graduating from high school annually and places for fewer than 20% in existing programs, increasingly families send their children abroad to study. In 2016, 63,703 students studied in places such as China, India, and the United States.^{600, 601}

State figures indicate that 15.5% of students aged 5-18 leave school early. School fees for textbooks, uniforms, and school maintenance services put education out of reach for many families. While ethnic-minority students are exempt from paying school fees under a government subsidy program, authorities do not always enforce the fee-waiver. Access to facilities is also a problem for ethnic minority children; many students are required to walk more than 10 km (6 mi) to reach the closest school.⁶⁰²

Restaurants and Dining Out

Café culture in Vietnam is vibrant—from opulent terraces to sidewalks littered with people chatting around fold-out aluminum tables. In the South especially, there are

cafés everywhere. Meals are leisurely affairs, with many shared dishes served all at once. A typical meal may include a light soup with vegetables, rice, grilled or steamed meats, a vegetable dish, fresh fruit and salad, all placed on the table at once.⁶⁰³ Instead of cookies or cakes for dessert, a meal will usually finish with hot tea and a platter of local fruit. Banana, mango, dragon fruit (*thanh long*), pineapple, papaya, rambutan (a red fruit with a spiny rind), and lychee are some favorites.⁶⁰⁴



Café, Hanoi
Wikimedia / Shoestring

May I have a glass of water?

Visitor:	chor toy mot lee nu-uk dew-uk Khong?	May I have a glass of water?
Local:	vang, kor ngaay	Yes, right away.

Exchange 28

Vietnam's legacy of French colonial heritage and American influence creates a cuisine with some offerings that are familiar to Western palates. It is easy in urban areas to find restaurants that serve Western-style breakfasts featuring fried eggs and French bread. *Banh mi* are available throughout the day.^{605, 606}

Are you still serving breakfast?

Visitor:	ko varn korn fook voo deeyim tarm faay Khong?	Are you still serving breakfast?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 29

I'd like a bowl of hot soup.

Visitor:	toy moon moot bat soop nong	I'd like a bowl of hot soup.
Local:	vang	Sure.

Exchange 30

Most restaurants, particularly smaller private ones, will not list prices on their menus. It is advisable to ask for the prices before ordering, to avoid getting a padded bill after you have eaten and are not in a position to contest the charges. Be careful of restaurants that list prices in USD. When it is time for payment, payment may be asked for in Vietnamese dong with an unreasonably expensive exchange rate.⁶⁰⁷

Do you have dessert?		
Visitor:	ko kor morn jarng meeyen Khong?	Do you have dessert?
Local:	kor, choong toy kor hwa quah: chueh, suwai, vah duar	Yes, we have fruit: banana, mango, and pineapple.

Exchange 31

Can I have my total bill, please?		
Visitor:	seen ten tat kar teeyin arn koo-a toy?	Can I have my total bill, please?
Local:	vang, zeer neeyin zoy	Yes, of course.

Exchange 32

For Vietnamese, splitting payment of the bill is a foreign concept. The person who organizes and invites the others customarily pays for everyone. Alternative arrangements will also be unfamiliar to restaurant staff and may require advance explanation.⁶⁰⁸ Tipping is not expected; you may leave 5-10% in an upscale restaurant, or if you are very satisfied. Locals do not tip.^{609, 610}

Can you put this all on one bill?		
Visitor:	ko tink tut kar vaw mot hwa dirn dew-uk Khong?	Can you put this all on one bill?
Local:	dew-uk	Okay.

Exchange 33

In Vietnam, keeping food and drink on hand for visitors is a widely shared social value. This extends to business meetings when tea is served. Lavish restaurant meals may be included, and afterward, the attendees may sing karaoke in an establishment that offers private rooms for small groups.⁶¹¹

I would like some coffee or tea.		
Visitor:	toy moon kar-fee haay nu-uk cher	I would like some coffee or tea.
Local:	vang	Sure.

Exchange 34

Where is your restroom?		
Visitor:	nar vee sink uh dow?	Where is your restroom?
Local:	nar vee sink uh ben jaay koo-a ko, uh darng keeya keeya	That room to your left, over there.

Exchange 35

Vietnamese have a term for snacking (*an qua*) that literally means “eating a gift in the form of a savory morsel.” Grab-and-go snacks (*an chôi*) are widely available from street vendors. Popular convenience snacks include *banh trang nuong*, grilled rice paper filled with onions, pork, and other ingredients.⁶¹² Foods made exclusively from fresh ingredients pose a substantially lower health risk than foods prepared elsewhere that may have sat in the hot sun.⁶¹³

What type of meat is this?		
Visitor:	day lar teet zee?	What type of meat is this?
Local:	teet lun	Pork.

Exchange 36

Marketplace

Street markets are an intrinsic part of Vietnamese culture. Because of the country’s diverse history and the different cultures found in each region, local markets have their own set of distinct characteristics. In larger cities, markets are open and crowded with visitors late into the night. Locals on scooters may stop to window shop. In the Mekong Delta, floating markets are popular. Vendors operate on the river, with goods and services displayed on boats. When at the market, locals greet, haggle, and talk to one another, as the market is not only a place for shopping but also one where locals go to socialize.⁶¹⁴

Retail commerce in Vietnam is overwhelmingly dominated by female merchants, and most shoppers are women. In the Confucian mindset, trade was relegated to the

realm of immoral activities to be conducted outside the village gate. Sellers were seen as inherently dishonest because they had to convince buyers to pay more for an item than it cost. Therefore, selling was not seen as a suitable line of work for men. Haggling over the price of essential goods fell to female members of the family.⁶¹⁵

Do you sell embroidered tablecloths and napkins?		
Visitor:	ko kor barn bo Kharn bahn vah kharn arn tay-oo Khong?	Do you sell embroidered tablecloths and napkins?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 37

May I examine this close up?		
Visitor:	toy sem kee kaay naay dew-uk Khong?	May I examine this close up?
Local:	dew-uk	Sure.

Exchange 38

Bargaining is a way of life in Vietnam. Before bargaining, make sure to confirm the currency. Vietnamese typically hold up fingers to get around the language barrier. One finger can mean either 1 USD or a 10,000 dong banknote (approximately 50 cents in USD). Some visitors have assumed they were bargaining in dong only to learn it was dollars—after the price had been agreed on and the merchant considered the deal complete.⁶¹⁶



Street market, Long Xuyen, southwestern Vietnam
Flickr / Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

With this much money, can I buy an <i>ao ba ba</i> ?		
Visitor:	vu-ee so teeyen naay toy moo-a dew-uk mot kaay ow bar bar Khong?	With this much money, can I buy an <i>ao ba ba</i> ?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 39

Do you accept U.S. currency?		
Visitor:	ko kor nun dolar Mee Khong?	Do you accept U.S. currency?
Local:	Khong, choong toy chee nun teeyin vyet naam	No, we only accept Vietnamese dongs.

Exchange 40

Always maintain a friendly demeanor and only enter into protracted negotiations if you genuinely wish to purchase the item. Touching something will indicate to the vendor that you are interested in buying it. It is important to carry small bills, since merchants may not be able to give change for a bill larger than a 20,000 dong (approximately 1 USD).⁶¹⁷

Can you give me change for this?		
Visitor:	ko doee teeyen cho toy dew-uk Khong	Can you give me change for this?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 41

There are countless markets in Ho Chi Minh City, but the most famous is the Ben Thanh Market, one of the city's historic landmarks. When visitors inquire about shopping, they are usually taken to this market, which includes a food court. An Dong market is the city's biggest market; its four floors are crowded with a maze of colorful stalls, the majority smaller than 1.5 m (5 ft) in width. Shopping at these markets can be overwhelming as they are chaotic and typically have a vast selection of items: souvenirs, accessories, and clothing, as well as electronic and household appliances. In the case of apparel, shoppers can often buy fabric from merchants in one part of the market and take it to a tailor located in another.^{618, 619}



Ben Thanh Market, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Michael CC BY-NC 2.0

Is the market nearby?		
Visitor:	kor chur uh gun daay Khong?	Is the market nearby?
Local:	kor, uh darng keeya, ben faay	Yes, over there on the right.

Exchange 42

Do you have any more of these?		
Visitor:	ko korn kaay naay nuwa Khong?	Do you have any more of these?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 43

How much longer will you be here?		
Visitor:	ko sair uh daay bow lo nuwa?	How much longer will you be here?
Local:	bar teeying doong ho nuwa	Three more hours.

Exchange 44

Beggars and Hawkers

Street trade is an essential part of city life in Vietnam. It is difficult to step outside in any city without eliciting interest from street vendors. Merchants plying everything from transportation to fruit and freshly baked bread, which women in Hanoi carry in baskets on their heads, are too numerous to avoid completely.⁶²⁰ Periodically, city administrators in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City will crack down on sidewalk vendors and the encroachment by shops into public space.⁶²¹

Please, buy something from me.		
Local:	seen moo-a harng koo-a toy	Please, buy something from me.
Visitor:	seen loy, toy Khong korn teeyin	Sorry, I have no money left.

Exchange 45

In addition, there are beggars and hawkers. The former include those with visible war-related injuries, such as amputees. The latter are typically male adolescents who present government-issued cards stating they are orphans—in reality, street kids—who are allowed to hawk postcards and other souvenir paraphernalia at whatever price buyers are willing to pay. Do not engage them in negotiation if you do not wish to make the purchase, because they may become aggressive if you decide you do not want the item.⁶²²

There are fewer beggars on Vietnam's streets today than there were 20 years ago. City governments will typically move anyone reported as begging into a shelter, and if they are not from Vietnam, deport them.⁶²³

Give me money.		
Local:	chor toy teeyin	Give me money.
Visitor:	toy Khong kor teeyin	I don't have any.

Exchange 46

Street Crime and Safety

Visitors to Vietnamese cities, especially Ho Chi Minh City, report encounters with motorcycle purse-snatching gangs, in which the passenger grabs the belongings of pedestrians while the driver weaves in and out of traffic. A similar tactic is used to steal from passengers riding in cyclos or on the back of motorcycles: thieves will sometimes use a sharp weapon such as a knife to cut bag straps. Those out shopping are particularly at risk since it can be presumed they have cash on hand. Metropolitan authorities periodically crack down because such tales deter international tourists from visiting. Reasonable precautions should suffice to prevent becoming a victim of crime. Do not carry unnecessary items that might give thieves the idea that a bag contains something of value. Keep a secure hold on your possessions at all times when out in public. Be aware of your surroundings when withdrawing money from an ATM.^{624, 625} In 2017, the Safe Cities Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit ranked Ho Chi Minh City the third least-safe city in the world, after Caracas and Karachi.^{626, 627}



Fruit vendor, Hanoi
Flickr / Terry Feuerborn CC BY-NC 2.0



Mopeds at the flower market, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Terry Feuerborn CC BY-NC 2.0

Endnotes for Chapter 4: Urban Life

- 526 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Demography," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 5, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 527 Export.gov, International Trade Administration, "Vietnam: Information and Communication Technologies," updated 12 July 2018, <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Vietnam-Information-Technology>.
- 528 Matthew Pike, "Vietnam's Wealth Growth Is the Fastest on Earth," *Culture Trip*, 9 February 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/vietnams-wealth-growth-fastest-earth/>.
- 529 Thanh Bui and Katsushi S. Imai, "Determinants of Rural: Urban Inequality in Vietnam: Detailed Decomposition Analyses Based on Unconditional Quantile Regressions" (discussion paper series, RIEB Kobe University, Kobe, Japan, revised 22 April 2018), 2, <https://www.ifad.org/documents/36783902/40280999/Katsushi+Imai%2C+Senior+Lecturer+%28Associate+Professor%29+Univ+Manchester.pdf/75cae7d6-717e-4625-8b77-1733f39a0d28>.
- 530 OXFAM, "Even It Up: How to Tackle Inequality in Vietnam," OXFAM Briefing Paper, 12 January 2017, 7-8, https://vietnam.oxfam.org/sites/vietnam.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/Vietnam%20Inequality%20Report_ENG.pdf.
- 531 Minh Son, "How Did Vietnam's Four Richest People Earn Their Billions?" *VN Express International*, 8 March 2018, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/how-did-vietnam-s-four-richest-people-earn-their-billions-3720176.html>.
- 532 OXFAM, "Even it up: How to Tackle Inequality in Vietnam," OXFAM Briefing Paper, 12 January 2017, 7-8, https://vietnam.oxfam.org/sites/vietnam.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/Vietnam%20Inequality%20Report_ENG.pdf.
- 533 *Viet Nam News*, "HCMC to Move Homeless to Shelters, Provide Jobs," 25 December 2014, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/264482/hcmc-to-move-homeless-to-shelters-provide-jobs.html>.
- 534 World Bank, "Vietnam: Mobile Cellular Subscript (per 100 People)," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.CEL.SETS.P2?locations=VN>.
- 535 Export.gov, International Trade Administration, "Vietnam: Information and Communication Technologies," updated 12 July 2018, <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Vietnam-Information-Technology>.
- 536 TeleGeography: Authoritative Telecom Data, "Vietnam Plans to Test 5G Next Year," 21 November 2018, <https://www.telegeography.com/products/commsupdate/articles/2018/11/21/vietnam-plans-to-test-5g-next-year/>.
- 537 *Viet Nam News*, "Smartphone Users Cover 84% of VN Population," 29 November 2017, <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/418482/smartphone-users-cover-84-of-vn-population.html>.
- 538 OXFAM, "Even it up: How to Tackle Inequality in Vietnam," OXFAM Briefing Paper, 12 January 2017, 7-8, <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Vietnam-Information-Technology>.
- 539 Pete Bell, "Hanoi Rocks: Vietnam Gets Nationwide 4G Network," *TeleGeography* (blog), 10 May 2017, <https://blog.telegeography.com/vietnam-gets-nationwide-4g-lte-network-viettel>.
- 540 Tomoya Onishi, "Vietnam's Viettel to Roll out 5G Service in 2021," *Nikkei Asian Review*, 5 December 2018, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Companies/Vietnam-s-Viettel-to-roll-out-5G-service-in-2021>.
- 541 Will Greene, "Electronics Manufacturers Bet Big on Vietnam," *Forbes*, 25 July 2014, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/teconomy/2014/07/25/electronics-manufacturers-bet-big-on-vietnam/>.
- 542 World's Richest Countries, "Top Electronics Exporters 2017," accessed 13 December 2018, http://www.worldsrichestcountries.com/top_electronics_exporters.html.
- 543 Sebastian Eckardt, Deepak Mishra, and Viet Tuan Dinh, "Vietnam's Manufacturing Miracle: Lessons for Developing Countries," Brookings, 17 April 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/04/17/vietnams-manufacturing-miracle-lessons-for-developing-countries/>.
- 544 David Nakamura, "Buoyed by U.S. Firms, Vietnam Emerges as an Asian Manufacturing Powerhouse," *Washington Post*, 21 May 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/buoyed-by-us-firms-vietnam-emerges-as-an-asian-manufacturing-powerhouse/2016/05/21/6f117876-1b6a-11e6-b6e0-c53b7ef63b45_story.html?utm_term=.e88eec3cb33e.
- 545 Lester Gunnion, "Vietnam: Economy Continues Robust Growth in 2018," Deloitte Insights, 31 July 2018, <https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/economy/asia-pacific/vietnam-economic-outlook.htm>.
- 546 Joseph Kipro, "The Biggest Industries in Vietnam," *World Atlas*, 19 June 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-biggest-cities-in-vietnam.html>.
- 547 Paul A. Eisenstein, "Vietnam's First Automaker is Quickly Getting Ready to Debut a Sedan and A SUV," *CNBC*, 10 September 2018, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/09/10/is-fast-fast-enough-for-vinfast-vietnams-first-automaker.html>.
- 548 Karla Koopmann and Camilla Trigona, "Viet Nam Road Network," Logistics Capacity Assessment, updated 31 May 2018, <https://dlca.logcluster.org/display/public/DLCA/2.3+Viet+Nam+Road+Network;jsessionid=EBAB0B7F6256D6FE7F5E3487724A646>.
- 549 Jica Reports, "Final Report: Summary: Overview of Vietnam's Transport Sector," *Vietnam National Transport Strategy Study*, accessed 13 December 2018, 3-1, http://open_jicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/11596749_02.pdf.

Endnotes for Chapter 4: Urban Life

- 550 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 551 Karla Koopmann and Camilla Trigona, "Viet Nam Railway Assessment," Logistics Capacity Assessment, updated 31 May 2018, <https://dlca.logcluster.org/display/public/DLCA/2.3+Viet+Nam+Road+Network;jsessionid=818FC825A71FEEF4A5277C16039377F6>.
- 552 Luis C. Blancas and M. Baher El-Hifnawi, "Chapter 2: Demand for Waterborne and Multimodal Transport," in *Facilitating Trade through Competitive, Low-Carbon Transport* (Washington, DC: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank, 2014), 13, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/800501468320727668/pdf/830300PUB0978100Box379862B00PUBLIC0.pdf>.
- 553 Nguyen Viet Thanh, "Overview of Estuary Research and Waterway Engineering in Vietnam" (paper, Conference: Proceedings of 2013 IAHR World Congress, Chengdu, China, September 2013), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304675526_Overview_of_Estuary_Research_and_Waterway_Engineering_in_Vietnam.
- 554 Oxford Business Group, "Transport: Vietnam's Focus on Transport Infrastructure Aims to Enhance Efficiency of Moving Goods and Travellers," in *The Report: Vietnam 2017*, accessed 13 December 2018, <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/easy-flow-focus-transportation-infrastructure-aims-enhance-efficiency-moving-goods-and-travellers>.
- 555 Oxford Business Group, "Transport: Vietnam's Focus on Transport Infrastructure Aims to Enhance Efficiency of Moving Goods and Travellers," in *The Report: Vietnam 2017*, accessed 13 December 2018, <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/easy-flow-focus-transportation-infrastructure-aims-enhance-efficiency-moving-goods-and-travellers>.
- 556 Nguyen Kieu Giang, "New Airline Set to Join Vietnam's Congested Skies," Bloomberg, 31 July 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-31/new-airline-set-to-join-vietnam-s-congested-skies-and-airports>.
- 557 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 558 Matthew Pike, "A Guide to Riding Vietnam's Reunification Express Train," Culture Trip, updated 29 November 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/a-guide-to-riding-vietnams-reunification-express-train/>.
- 559 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Train," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/transport/getting-around/train>.
- 560 Heidi Fuller-Love, "Vietnam by the Night Train: Ho Chi Minh to Hanoi," Rough Guides, updated 23 September 2018, <https://www.roughguides.com/article/vietnam-by-the-night-train-ho-chi-minh-to-hanoi/>.
- 561 Vietnam Railway System, "Train Fares for All Trains Departing from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://vietnam-railway.com/train/route/train-from-hanoi-to-ho-chi-minh-city>.
- 562 Worldwide Travellers, "5 Major Cities Worth a Visit," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 64, Kindle.
- 563 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 564 Susan Spano, "A Trio of French Colonial Sites in Hanoi," Smithsonian.com, 3 July 2012, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/a-trio-of-french-colonial-sites-in-hanoi-278826/>.
- 565 Matthew Pike, "11 Ways France Influenced Vietnamese Culture," Culture Trip, updated 11 December 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/11-ways-france-influenced-vietnamese-culture/>.
- 566 Worldwide Travellers, "An Introduction to Vietnam," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 28, Kindle.
- 567 Dana Filek-Gibson, "Taking a Xe Om in Vietnam," Moon (blog), 28 November 2015, <https://moon.com/2015/11/xe-om-motorbike-taxi-vietnam/>.
- 568 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 569 Nina Karnikowski, "Vietnam Travel Tips: How to Cross the Street in Ho Chi Minh City," Traveller, 27 January 2017, <http://www.traveller.com.au/road-worrier-how-to-cross-the-street-in-vietnam-gtxh9u>.
- 570 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 571 Iain Stewart et al., "Need to Know," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 140-141, Kindle.
- 572 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.

Endnotes for Chapter 4: Urban Life

- 573 City Pass Guide, “Renting a Car in Vietnam,” updated 10 December 2018, <https://www.citypassguide.com/en/travel/ho-chi-minh-city/activities/blog/renting-a-car-in-vietnam>.
- 574 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Vietnam: Travel Advisory,” 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 575 British Government, “Foreign Travel Advice: Vietnam: Safety and Security,” accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/vietnam/safety-and-security>.
- 576 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, “Economic Overview,” *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 5-7, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 577 Chi K. Hoang, Peter Hill, and Huong T. Nguyen, “Universal Health Insurance Coverage in Vietnam: A Stakeholder Analysis From Policy Proposal (1989) to Implementation (2014),” *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* 24 (March/April 2018): 552-559, <https://doi.org/10.1097/PHH.0000000000000729>.
- 578 World Health Organization, “Media Release: Who Calls for Action to Achieve Health for All in Viet Nam,” 7 April 2018, <http://www.wpro.who.int/vietnam/mediacentre/releases/2018/WorldHealthDay2018/en/>.
- 579 World Bank, “The World Bank in Vietnam,” updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 580 Export.gov, International Trade Administration, “Vietnam: Healthcare,” updated 12 July 2018, <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Vietnam-Healthcare>.
- 581 Hoang Van Minh et al., “Women’s Health and Health Care in Vietnam,” *Health Care for Women International* 39, no. 4 (5 April 2018): 364-367, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1460143>.
- 582 Hoang Van Minh et al., “Women’s Health and Health Care in Vietnam,” *Health Care for Women International* 39, no. 4 (5 April 2018): 364-367, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1460143>.
- 583 UNDP, “Human Development Indices and Indicators: Briefing Note for Countries in the 2018 Statistical Update: Vietnam,” accessed 13 December 2018, 5, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/VNM.pdf.
- 584 Hoang Van Minh et al., “Women’s Health and Health Care in Vietnam,” *Health Care for Women International* 39, no. 4 (5 April 2018): 364-367, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1460143>.
- 585 UNDP, “Human Development Indices and Indicators: Briefing Note for Countries in the 2018 Statistical Update: Vietnam,” accessed 13 December 2018, 5, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/VNM.pdf.
- 586 Geoba.se, “The World: Infant Mortality Rate (2018),” accessed 13 December 2018, <http://www.geoba.se/population.php?pc=world&type=019&year=2018&st=country&asde=d&page=1>.
- 587 Hoang Van Minh et al., “Women’s Health and Health Care in Vietnam,” *Health Care for Women International* 39, no. 4 (5 April 2018): 364-367, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1460143>.
- 588 World Bank, “The World Bank in Vietnam,” updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 589 Marsha E. Shapiro, “Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam,” *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo), accessed 7 December 2018, 1-2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 590 Dien Luong, “In Vietnam, Good Parenting Equals a Straight-A Kid, Plus an American Degree,” *VN Express International*, 25 June 2017, <https://e.vnexpress.net/projects/in-vietnam-good-parenting-equals-a-straight-a-kid-plus-an-american-degree-3604276/index.html>.
- 591 World Bank, “The World Bank in Vietnam,” updated 5 October 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview>.
- 592 Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, “Key Issues Affecting Youth in Viet Nam,” accessed 10 January 2019, <http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/youth-issues-in-vietnam.htm>.
- 593 Stefan Trines, “Education in Vietnam,” *World Education News and Reviews*, accessed 10 January 2019, <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/11/education-in-vietnam>.
- 594 Ayusa.org, “Vietnamese Student Life,” accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.ayusa.org/sites/default/files/VIETNAMESE%20STUDENT%20LIFE.pdf>.
- 595 Just Landed, “The Vietnamese Education System: Structure and Reforms,” accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.justlanded.com/english/Vietnam/Vietnam-Guide/Education/The-Vietnamese-education-system>.

Endnotes for Chapter 4: Urban Life

- 596 Hai-Anh H. Dang, "Private Tutoring in Vietnam A Review of Current Issues and Its Major Correlates" (policy research working paper 6618, Poverty and Inequality Team, World Bank Development Research Group, September 2013), 2, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/241061468328828236/pdf/WPS6618.pdf>.
- 597 Jeng Liu, "Does Cram Schooling Matter? Who Goes to Cram Schools? Evidence from Taiwan," *International Journal of Educational Development* 32, no. 1 (2012): 46-52, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2011.01.014>.
- 598 Rebecca Lee, "Higher Education in Vietnam Shows Steady Improvement," *Borgen Project* (blog), 10 March 2018, <https://borgenproject.org/higher-education-in-vietnam/>.
- 599 Just Landed, "Higher Education in Vietnam: Universities and Degrees," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.justlanded.com/english/Vietnam/Vietnam-Guide/Education/Higher-education-in-Vietnam>.
- 600 U.S. Embassy and Consulate, "Vietnamese Students in the United States Increase for 16th Straight Year," 14 November 2017, <https://vn.usembassy.gov/vietnamese-students-united-states-increase-16th-straight-year/>.
- 601 World Education Services, "Education in Vietnam," 8 November 2017, <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/11/education-in-vietnam>.
- 602 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Economic Overview," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 7, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 603 SBS, "About Vietnamese Food," updated 6 May 2015, <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2008/07/01/about-vietnamese-food>.
- 604 Erin Zimmer, "A Basic Introduction to Vietnamese Food," *Serious Eats*, accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.seriouseats.com/2013/01/a-basic-introduction-to-vietnamese-food.html>.
- 605 Isabelle Sudron, "Top 10 Traditional Vietnamese Dishes You Need to Try," *Culture Trip*, updated 18 January 2017, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/top-10-traditional-vietnamese-dishes-you-need-to-try/>.
- 606 Emily Monaco, "The French Influence on Vietnamese Cuisine," *Epicure and Culture*, 16 December 2015, <https://epicureandculture.com/vietnamese-cuisine-french-influence/>.
- 607 TravelScams, "31 Most Common Scams in Vietnam," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://travelscams.org/asia/common-tourist-scams-vietnam/>.
- 608 Travel Sense Asia, "Vietnamese Dining Etiquette: Best Things to Know," accessed 13 December 2018, <http://www.travelsense.asia/vietnamese-dining-etiquette/>.
- 609 Iain Stewart et al., "Eat and Drink Like a Local," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 463, Kindle.
- 610 KulturStudier, "An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don'ts," updated September 2018, 7, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.
- 611 Travel Sense Asia, "Vietnamese Dining Etiquette: Best Things to Know," accessed 13 December 2018, <http://www.travelsense.asia/vietnamese-dining-etiquette/>.
- 612 Neil Simpson, "17 Street-Food Snacks You Have to Try in Vietnam," *Suitcase Magazine*, 18 January 2018, <https://suitcasemag.com/travel/explore/vietnam-street-food/>.
- 613 Risyiana Muthia, "Vietnam: 48 Hours in Hanoi: The Best Vietnamese Street Food to Eat for Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner," *South China Morning Post*, updated 21 June 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/travel-leisure/article/2151617/48-hours-hanoi-best-vietnamese-street-food-eat-breakfast>.
- 614 Phan Len, "4 Best Types of Vietnam Local Markets You Should Visit," *Local Insider* (blog), 1 November 2017, <https://blog.inspitr.com/5441/4-types-vietnam-local-markets/>.
- 615 Ly Nguyen, "Capability Approach to Street Vendors in Vietnam: Evaluation of Current Situation" (paper, School of Public Policy, University of Maryland, 5 August 2012), 1, https://hd-ca.org/?s2member_file_download_key=bb120af5ec0237938c1d43d88607918b&s2member_file_download=Ngyuen-Capability Approach to Evaluating Policy towards Street Vendors-475 a.pdf.
- 616 Worldwide Travellers, "5 Major Cities Worth a Visit," in *Vietnam: Where to Go, What to See: A Vietnam Travel Guide* (Worldwide Travellers, 2017), loc. 63, Kindle.
- 617 Vietnam Visa, "The Ultimate Guide to Shopping in Vietnam," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://vietnamvisa.govt.vn/vietnam-travel-tips/the-ultimate-guide-to-shopping-in-vietnam/>.
- 618 Piumi Rajapaksha, "The 5 Best Markets in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam," *Culture Trip*, updated 7 June 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/top-5-markets-in-ho-chi-minh-city/>.
- 619 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Asia: Vietnam's Best Markets," accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/things-to-do/vietnam-s-best-markets>.
- 620 Laura Mallonee, "Bike Couriers Got Nothing on These Vietnamese Street Vendors," *Wired*, accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.wired.com/2016/11/bike-couriers-got-nothing-vietnamese-street-vendors/>.

Endnotes for Chapter 4: Urban Life

621 Hoang Phuong, Hong Phuc, and Duc Hoang, “To Street Vendors in Vietnam’s Biggest Cities, Sidewalk Is a Lifeline,” Viet Nam Express International, 26 April 2018, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/to-street-vendors-in-vietnam-s-biggest-cities-sidewalk-is-a-lifeline-3741263.html>.

622 Viet Nam News, “HCMC to Move Homeless to Shelters, Provide Jobs,” 25 December 2014, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/264482/hcmc-to-move-homeless-to-shelters-provide-jobs.html>.

623 May Titthara, “Begging for Survival in Saigon,” Phnom Penh Post, 4 October 2011, <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/begging-survival-saigon>.

624 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Vietnam: Travel Advisory: Safety and Security,” 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.

625 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, “Foreign Travel Advice: Vietnam: Safety and Security,” accessed 13 December 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/vietnam/safety-and-security>.

626 Mai Nguyen, “Knight Riders to the Rescue: Vietnam Vigilantes Bust Crooks,” Reuters, 31 May 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-crime-knights/knight-riders-to-the-rescue-vietnam-vigilantes-bust-crooks-idUSKCN1IX3OZ>.

627 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Vietnam: Travel Advisory: Safety and Security: Crime,” 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 4 | Urban Life

Assessment

1. Helmets are optional for motorbike passengers.
2. Rice is Vietnam's biggest export commodity.
3. Public transportation is not well developed in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City.
4. The Ben Thanh Market is the most famous place to shop in Hanoi.
5. Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in Vietnam.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True



Rice harvesting, near Hoi An, Central Coast
Flickr / Loi Nguyen Duc

Chapter 5 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Rural Life

Introduction

Vietnam is historically a rural country, and the majority (64%) of Vietnamese today live in the countryside, where the village is the nexus of society.⁶²⁸ Over the centuries, Vietnam took shape through the spread of small settlements, which provided its people with a political, social, and economic foundation. Villages united people in their struggle with nature, and villagers built and maintained large communal irrigation and drainage systems to support wet-rice cultivation. On a wider scale, Vietnam's dense network of villages supported resistance to invasions.⁶²⁹



Rural home near Sapa, northwestern Vietnam
Flickr / margolove CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Economic reforms over the last three decades have significantly improved the lives of Vietnamese, including those in rural areas. Migration for seasonal work has increased household incomes, and between 2014 and 2016, rural poverty dropped from 22% to 14%.^{630, 631} Challenges remain in reducing inequalities among regions and ethnic groups. Of the 9.1 million poor Vietnamese, 95% live in rural areas. The poorest households are

concentrated in the highlands and mountainous areas. Poverty among ethnic minorities is significantly higher (45%) than for the Kinh and Hoa (3%).^{632, 633}

Recent urbanization and modernization have accelerated changes in rural culture and society. In the delta regions, *doi moi* has changed the fabric of daily life for Vietnamese villagers. The household farm is again the norm (as opposed to collective farming), household incomes have diversified, with off-farm work being more available, and the market is open to foreign investment and trade.⁶³⁴ This has helped improve the lives of many Vietnamese.⁶³⁵

Areas on the outskirts of cities have experienced major changes as well, owing to urban expansion. Typical farmhouses, one-story houses with gardens and outbuildings surrounded by fences or walls, have been replaced by multistory houses similar to those found in inner-city neighborhoods. The expansion of the city into the countryside has brought new residents into villages, increasing density, environmental problems, and local government issues. The influx has also eliminated shared agricultural work, thus weakening the sense of community and of belonging to the village.⁶³⁶

Social Organization and Local Politics

Traditionally, village populations were organized into several groups: the hamlet, family clan, associations, and guilds.⁶³⁷ The hierarchy of the community was based on Confucian guidelines, dividing villagers into socioeconomic classes: scholars, soldiers, artisans, traders, and peasants. The lowest class bore the burden of taxes and hard labor. The extended family—with three and four generations living together—was the core network of socioeconomic support. Today, extended families still live together in rural areas.^{638, 639}

The countryside was organized into guilds centered around vocations such as pottery, fishing, weaving, and construction. People organized into associations, or groups with shared interests: Confucian scholars, martial arts practitioners, cockfighters, chess players, and associations of older gentlemen (*giap*) and women.⁶⁴⁰ Although guilds and associations share some common aspects—for example, they are all democratic in nature—guilds tended to be smaller and more specialized. Today, guilds and associations are an important social structure in remote areas of the country.^{641, 642}



Tet Festival at Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture and Tourism Flickr / Philipp Manila Sonderegger CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The hall (*dinh*) was the center of rural community life, where religious and secular ceremonies were held. It housed the altar of the village's patron spirit (*thanh hoang*) and was the seat of village administration, where the local council of elders (*hoi dong hao muc*) would meet to discuss and settle village affairs.^{643, 644, 645}



Traditional village community house, Central Highlands Flickr / Lon&Queta CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Although the CPV replaced village administrative hierarchy with party leadership, the *dinh* remained an important meeting place, where harvest quotas were assigned, and the harvest tallied. After *doi moi* was introduced in 1986, villagers could seek off-farm work. Now, they may return once a year to celebrate the Tet Lunar New Year holiday. As the collective nature of village life eroded, the *dinh* lost its central function.^{646, 647, 648}

Does your (village) leader live here?		
Visitor:	sar ju-urng koo-a ko song uh daay Khong?	Does your leader live here?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 47

Can you take me to your (village) leader?		
Visitor:	ko doo-ah toy den sar ju-urng koo-a ko dew-uk Khong?	Can you take me to your leader?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 48

We need your help / advice / opinion.		
Visitor:	tuh-a bar, choong toy kun bar zoop / Khwen bao / haay chor ee keeyin	We need your help / advice / opinion.
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 49

Land Use and the Rural Economy

Agriculture employs around 44% of all workers in Vietnam, down from around 70% in 1996.⁶⁴⁹ Rice is a staple of the Vietnamese diet; its production in the Mekong and Red River deltas is vital to Vietnam's food supply and economy. The sophisticated system of canals and dikes used to irrigate rice fields (*lac dien*) was developed in the sixth century BCE, and it became the backbone of Vietnamese society.⁶⁵⁰ In fact, the Vietnamese traditionally describe their country as two rice baskets hung on a shoulder pole (*don ganh*), the traditional method of carrying goods to market. The two baskets represent the rice growing regions of the Red River Delta in the North and the Mekong Delta in the South, with the narrow central region acting as the pole.⁶⁵¹

Most rice grown in Vietnam is cultivated in flooded lowland fields or on terraced hills. The soil in the highlands is less favorable to food crop cultivation. Thus, highland areas are planted with coffee, tea, and rubber, interspersed with corn and sweet potato.⁶⁵²

Where do you work, Miss?		
Visitor:	tuh-a ko, ko larm veeyik uh dow?	Where do you work, Miss?
Local:	tuh-a ko, toy laar nong zun	I am a farmer, Miss.

Exchange 50

After national reunification in 1975, agricultural production was collectivized in the South, where private ownership and autonomous household farming had been

more pervasive than in the North, which underwent collectivization in the 1950s. Collective farming was largely unsuccessful. Farmers were required to sell a quota of rice to the government in exchange for low-cost and substandard equipment and goods, which hurt production. Additionally, southern farmers resisted collectivization, destroying farming equipment before it could be appropriated by the state. Harvests plummeted across the country, and people went hungry.⁶⁵³



Rice paddies near Sapa Flickr / Philipp Manila Sonderegger CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In 1986, local officials were directed by Hanoi to break collective farms into household-size parcels. Under the new arrangement, farmers could decide where, when, and at what price to sell their crops. Harvests increased commensurately.⁶⁵⁴ In 1993, a new law allowed the household user rights to be transferred, leased, mortgaged as collateral for a loan, etc.⁶⁵⁵ To engage in these transactions, farmers received certificates documenting their claim to the land, a de facto form of land ownership.⁶⁵⁶

With rural-urban migration, household aging, and the growth of off-farm work, land rentals have become a common means of juggling resources. Rentals are typically informal verbal agreements between parties, rooted in trust that is based on geography or kinship.⁶⁵⁷

Do you own this land?		
Visitor:	bar larm choo meeyng dut naay faay Khong?	Do you own this land?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 51

Coffee

Between 1990 and 2000, Vietnamese farmers in the Central Highlands planted more than a million acres of coffee trees.⁶⁵⁸ Annual coffee production expanded from 84,000 tons to 950,000, making Vietnam the second-largest coffee grower after Brazil.⁶⁵⁹

Though many farmers in the Central Highlands cut down their coffee trees when prices hit record lows after 2000, Vietnam has stayed in the robusta bean market.^{660, 661}

Robusta beans are blended with arabica to make instant coffee, as opposed to gourmet coffee made exclusively from higher-quality arabica beans. Steam-cleaning has been developed to eliminate the bitter taste of poorer-quality robusta beans.⁶⁶²

Aquaculture

In 2017, Vietnam ranked as the fourth-largest producer of seafood from aquaculture in the world, behind China, Indonesia, and India. Pangasius (catfish) and shrimp are its two main farmed seafood products. These are mainly raised in the Mekong Delta, though about 50,000 households are farming marine products across the country. Most are independent farmers who operate on a small scale using old equipment and outdated practices.⁶⁶³

Many farmers have adopted intensified production methods to increase the harvest. In 2017, shrimp accounted for almost half of Vietnam's total seafood exports.^{664, 665} Over the next decade, shrimp exports are expected to represent as much as 75% of total aquaculture exports.⁶⁶⁶ The new production methods, however, have had an adverse impact on the environment; mangrove forests have been destroyed to make room for shrimp ponds.⁶⁶⁷ Moreover, aquaculture is a weather-dependent business, and with no trees to hold nutrients in the soil or stop saltwater intrusion, farms are exposed to the elements and inventories can be decimated by drought or flood. In recent years, the government has made a move toward increased integrated shrimp farming in which small-scale shrimp ponds and mangrove forests coexist.⁶⁶⁸



Shrimp farm, Nam Dinh city, northern Vietnam
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

Transportation and Lodging

About 25% of Vietnam's rural roads are in good or fair condition; most are unpaved and regularly damaged by flooding.⁶⁶⁹ Rural roads can be hazardous. Accidents have occurred when temporary bridges collapsed during the rainy season.⁶⁷⁰ Additionally, long-distance buses and trucks are often overloaded and travel at high speeds with little regard to other vehicles.⁶⁷¹



Road near Ha Long Bay, northeast Vietnam
Flickr / Greg Walters

Vietnam's rail network covers a large swathe of the country. Only the Central Highlands and Mekong Delta are inaccessible by rail.⁶⁷² The entire network, with a total length of 2,632 km (1,635 mi), was built under the French colonial government.⁶⁷³ The first major line, from Hanoi to Haiphong, was completed in 1901. Hanoi was linked with Saigon in 1936.^{674, 675} Because all domestic railways are single-track lines, even the fastest trains idle on pull-out tracks to let trains going the other direction pass.^{676, 677}

For those needing accommodations, modern amenities and services may be hard to find in rural areas. It was once common to charge foreigners substantially more for lodging and transportation. While this is now illegal, private hotels do not generally post room rates, which are subject to negotiation. Foreigners can expect to pay more.⁶⁷⁸

Is there lodging nearby?		
Visitor:	kor nar ngee uh gun daay Khong?	Is there lodging nearby?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 52

Health Care



Dental exam, Nghe An Province
Flickr / PACAF

Before the implementation of *doi moi*, Commune Health Centers (CHC) provided free health care to farmers. When cooperatives were disbanded, the CHC lost most of their funding as well as many staff, who moved into outpatient, fee-based services that offered a better income.⁶⁷⁹

Only public-sector employees are automatically covered through Vietnam Health Insurance, which was established in 1992. For Vietnamese employed full-time, coverage is mandatory; for everyone else it is voluntary, and only a modest number of those are covered.⁶⁸⁰ Because the household registration system limits families' access to social services, children of migrants, whether they are left behind

in the care of rural relatives or migrate with their parents, have difficulty accessing health services.⁶⁸¹

The quality and availability of health care are especially poor in rural areas, and in some of the most remote parts of the country, it is nonexistent. The northwest, Central Highlands, and Mekong Delta regions have severe shortages of health-care workers, who work with inadequate medical equipment and training.^{682, 683} Child malnutrition rates in these regions are as high as 34%.^{684, 685}

Is there a medical clinic nearby?		
Visitor:	kor jarm ee tee uh gun daay Khong?	Is there a medical clinic nearby?
Local:	kor, uh darng keeya keeya	Yes, over there.

Exchange 53

My arm is broken. Can you help me?		
Visitor:	karng taay koo-a toy bee gaay, ko zoop toy dew-uk Khong?	My arm is broken. Can you help me?
Local:	vang, toy zoop ko dew-uk	Yes, I can help you.

Exchange 54

Education

Vietnamese have traditionally venerated education, and this is reflected in Vietnam's high literacy rate. Yet a farmer's decision about whether and for how long to send children to school is based on how much additional income schooling would eventually bring in for the family. Schools require families to contribute to upkeep rather than pay tuition. Although schools offer holidays during peak periods in the agricultural cycle, girls often work longer hours during the harvest and are more likely to drop out.⁶⁸⁶

State figures indicate that 15.5% of students aged 5-18 leave school early. School fees for textbooks, uniforms, and school maintenance services put education



Rural schoolhouse, Central Highlands
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

out of reach for many families. While ethnic minority students are exempt from paying school fees under a government subsidy program, authorities do not always enforce the fee-waiver. Access to facilities is a problem for ethnic minorities; many students are required to walk more than 10 km (6 mi) to school.^{687, 688} Additionally, rural-to-urban migration has left some children vulnerable to poverty and inadequate care. The household registration system limits families' access to social services, and children of migrants left behind in the care of rural relatives have difficulty accessing schools.^{689, 690}

Is there a school nearby?		
Visitor:	kor ju-urng hork uh gun daay Khong?	Is there a school nearby?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 55

Do your children go to school?		
Visitor:	kark korn ko kor dee hork Khong?	Do your children go to school?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 56



Middle school students and teacher, Central Highlands
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

Ethnic minority children and children of poorer households, many in the Central Highlands and the North, have the lowest literacy rate in Vietnam.^{691, 692, 693} About 21% of ethnic minorities above the age of 15 were illiterate despite improved education and vocational training.⁶⁹⁴ Ethnic minority children—particularly the Khmer Krom and Hmong—have lower enrollment and higher dropout rates.⁶⁹⁵ Language barriers are another reason for not attending school.

The government is attempting to address these challenges through bilingual education, which has improved student test scores.⁶⁹⁶ Additionally, the percentage of ethnic minority children who have never attended school or who drop out is significantly less than in 2009.⁶⁹⁷

Village Life

For generations, more than 90% of Vietnamese lived in rural areas.⁶⁹⁸

Traditionally, residents (particularly women) would only venture outside the village when dire safety concerns or financial circumstances forced them to move elsewhere. In addition to self-defense, community irrigation systems strengthened the communal characteristics of Vietnamese villages. In the North and Central regions, the village was self-contained and could

only be entered through a gate that was locked at night.^{699, 700} In the South, settlements were more dispersed, yet life was similar. It was a continuous cycle of planting and harvesting, in which ancestral graves provided the physical link between generations. Few outsiders came to the village; those who did—the tax collector, law enforcement authorities, or the soldier-pillager—typically came to extract something.^{701, 702}



Riverside homes, Mekong Delta
Wikimedia / McKay Savage

Communities in southern Vietnam developed along intertwining waterways, which replaced the village lanes common in the North. Compared with northern villages, they were young communities with a more heterogeneous population, including Hoa, Cham, and Khmer Krom minorities. The age-old Confucian strictures common in northern Vietnam did not bind people in these newly formed communities.^{703, 704}

Within the family, the traditional gender division of labor is observed. Males are responsible for matters outside the house, such as ensuring an adequate supply of food, while females are responsible for cooking and childcare. Community leadership roles are also filled by males.^{705, 706}

Do you know this area?		
Visitor:	ko beeyet zor Khoo vuk naay faay Khong?	Do you know this area?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 57

Identification

Since the 1960s, Vietnamese children have been recorded at birth as belonging to a household (*ho*), typically that of their father. The name of every household member (*khau*) is entered in a booklet known as the household registration (*ho khai*) book.⁷⁰⁷ The *ho khai* is kept in the family's home, but local officials held the authority to add and remove members. The information for each adult member of the family included name, date of birth, schooling, occupation, and place of employment. Possession of a local *ho khai* is necessary to enroll children in school, conduct banking transactions, or register a vehicle. In addition, Vietnamese citizens are required to have a national identification card.⁷⁰⁸



Front of Vietnamese identification card
Wikimedia / Quangnguyen.vietnam CC BY SA 4.0

Is this your entire family?		
Visitor:	day lar twan zar dink koo-a ko faay Khong?	Is this your entire family?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 58

How many people live in this house?		
Visitor:	kor bow nee-yoh ngwee song jong nar naay?	How many people live in this house?
Local:	muee	Ten.

Exchange 59

Are these people part of your family?		
Visitor:	nung ngwee naay kor faay lar zar ding ko Khong?	Are these people part of your family?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 60

Is this all the ID you have?		
Visitor:	daay lar tut kar churng ming nun zen mar ko kor faay Khong?	Is this all the ID you have?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 61

In 2017, the Vietnamese government decided to replace both the household registration requirement and the national identity card system with national identity numbers. All personal and residence information will be stored and updated in a database that will be accessible around the clock. The new digitized system may take years to implement, but the government hopes it will resolve the host of problems Vietnamese citizens face in changing their *ho khau*. In particular, it has made it nearly impossible to change from rural to urban status. The city of Hanoi requires migrants to have a public sector job before they can change their status. But to get a state job, they must possess a local *ho khau*.⁷⁰⁹

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are common in Vietnam and often associated with local law enforcement shakedowns. They may appear random or be set up at specific locations.⁷¹⁰ If a car contains foreign visitors and Vietnamese nationals, the Vietnamese hosts may turn on the vehicle's interior lights while they pass through checkpoints after dark, to discourage local authorities from extracting a bribe. Nonetheless, drivers know to stop and expect to have their papers examined. They will also assume a bribe can reduce the wait time. In 2018, the standard police bribe in Vietnam was 200,000 dong (USD 10).⁷¹¹ Drivers can expect to have their cargo inventoried for contraband and taxation purposes.⁷¹²



Vietnam-China border, Bang River, northern Vietnam
Wikimedia / Phó Nháy CC BY-SA 1.0

Where is the nearest checkpoint?		
Visitor:	jarm keeyim swat gun nuk uh dow?	Where is the nearest checkpoint?
Local:	haay kay so	It's two kilometers.

Exchange 62

Please get out of the car.		
Visitor:	seen dee zar Khoy sair oto	Please get out of the car.
Local:	dew-uk	Okay.

Exchange 63

Show us the car registration.		
Visitor:	chor choong toy sem zay darng kee sair	Show us the car registration.
Local:	dew-uk	Okay.

Exchange 64

Are you carrying any guns?		
Visitor:	ko kor dem teyo soong now Khong?	Are you carrying any guns?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 65

Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War

Vietnam was extensively mined over the latter half of the 20th century—during the war against France, the long conflict with the United States, and the border hostilities with China. Hanoi estimates that mine removal will take another 100 years.⁷¹³ Today, about 15% of Vietnam is contaminated with unexploded ordnance (UXO), but 84% of Quang Tri Province—which saw most of the bombing in the Vietnam War—is still littered with unexploded ordnance. In the former DMZ, walking outside marked tracks can be dangerous.^{714, 715}

Is this area mined?		
Visitor:	Khoo vuk naay kor min Khong?	Is this area mined?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 66

The Chinese military has taken responsibility for several mine sweeps along its border with Vietnam. The United States has also provided bilateral mine removal assistance.^{716, 717} According to a Vietnamese government study, the existence of unexploded ordnance causes over 4,000 sq km (1,544 sq mi) of land that could be cultivated to lie fallow. Some demining has not penetrated the topsoil. As a result, soil erosion, flooding, and farming continue to unearth mines that still claim casualties.⁷¹⁸



UXO detection demonstration, Da Nang
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

Endnotes for Chapter 5: Rural Life

- 628 Central Intelligence Agency, "Vietnam: People and Society: Urbanization," in *The World Factbook*, updated 28 November 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vn.html>.
- 629 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Demography," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 6, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 630 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Demography," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 6, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf> p6.
- 631 Harvard-Yenching Institute, "Call for Applications: Training Program on 'Urbanization and Social Change in Contemporary Rural Vietnam'," accessed 17 December 2018, <https://harvard-yenching.org/features/call-applications-training-program-urbanization-and-social-change-contemporary-rural>.
- 632 World Bank, "Climbing the Ladder: Vietnam Poverty and Shared Prosperity Update Report: Update Report 2018," accessed 26 February 2019, 23, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/206981522843253122/pdf/124916-WP-PULIC-P161323-VietnamPovertyUpdateReportENG.pdf>.
- 633 World Bank, "Program Appraisal Document on a Proposed Credit in the Amount of SDR 278.8 Million (US\$ 385 Million Equivalent) to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for a Results-Based Operation for Local Bridge Construction and Road Asset Management," 8 April 2016, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/370451468186857408/pdf/104789-PAD-P155086-IDA-R2016-0061-1-Box394885B-OUO-9.pdf>.
- 634 Nguyen Tuan Anh, Jonathan Rigg, and Annuska Derks, "Migration and Agricultural Production in a Vietnamese Village" (working paper no 164, Max Planck Institute for Anthropology, Halle, 2015), 2-3, <https://www.eth.mpg.de/pubs/wps/pdf/mpi-eth-working-paper-0164.pdf>.
- 635 Harvard-Yenching Institute, "Call for Applications: Training Program on 'Urbanization and Social Change in Contemporary Rural Vietnam'," accessed 17 December 2018, <https://harvard-yenching.org/features/call-applications-training-program-urbanization-and-social-change-contemporary-rural>.
- 636 Harvard-Yenching Institute, "Call for Applications: Training Program on 'Urbanization and Social Change in Contemporary Rural Vietnam'," accessed 17 December 2018, <https://harvard-yenching.org/features/call-applications-training-program-urbanization-and-social-change-contemporary-rural>.
- 637 Phan Huy Le, "Research on the Vietnamese Village," in *Viet Nam: Borderless Histories*, ed Nhung Tuyet Tran and Anthony J.S. Reid (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 3 November 2006), 30-33.
- 638 Hữu Ngọc, "The Traditional Village: For and Against," in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, RIS Southeast Asia Series, 15 August 2016), loc 13-15, Kindle.
- 639 W. Jean Yeung, Sonalde Desai, and Gavin Jones, "Families in Southeast and South Asia" (paper, Asia Research Institute and Centre for Family and Population Research, National University of Singapore, accessed 17 December 2018, 13), <https://iusp.confex.com/iusp/ipc2017/mediafile/Presentation/Paper3637/Families%20in%20Southeast%20and%20South%20Asia%20Aug%2030%202017.pdf>.
- 640 Marie-Eve Blanc, "Chapter 11: An Emerging Civil Society?" in *Rethinking Vietnam*, ed. Duncan McCargo, (London: Psychology Press, 2004), 156.
- 641 Vietnam Culture, "Vietnamese Village's Guilds," accessed 17 December 2018, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-26-3/villages-guilds.aspx>.
- 642 Hữu Ngọc, "The Traditional Village: For and Against," *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, RIS Southeast Asia Series, 15 August 2016), loc 18, Kindle.
- 643 Kirsten W. Endres, "Local Dynamics of Renegotiating Ritual Space in Northern Vietnam: The Case of the Dinh," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 16, no. 1 (April 2001): 70-101, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41057051?seq=1>.
- 644 Charles F. Keyes, "Traditional Society in Vietnam," in *The Golden Peninsula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 189.
- 645 Terry Rambo, "Chapter 12: Vietnam: Searching for Integration," in *Religion and Societies: Asia and the Middle East*, ed. Carlo Caldarola (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 413-414.
- 646 Jeffrey Hays, "Villages in Vietnam: Vietnamese Village Dinh," accessed 17 December 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9c/entry-3406.html.
- 647 Neil L. Jamieson, "How the Vietnamese See the World," in *Understanding Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 10 March 1995), 28-29.
- 648 Voice of Vietnam, "Vietnamese Village Communal House-Beautiful Feature of Rural Vietnam," 21 August 2015, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/culture/vietnamese-village-communal-housebeautiful-feature-of-rural-vietnam-361475.vov>.
- 649 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Demography," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 8, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.

Endnotes for Chapter 5: Rural Life

- 650 Ronald J. Cima, "Early History," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/3.htm>.
- 651 Ngo Vinh Long, "Vietnam's Revolutionary Tradition," in *Vietnam and America: A Documented History*, ed. Marvin E. Gettleman et al. (New York: Grove Press, 1995), 5.
- 652 Joseph Buttinger et al., "Vietnam: Economy: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Agriculture-forestry-and-fishing>.
- 653 Chad Raymond, "No Responsibility and No Rice: The Rise and Fall of Agricultural Collectivization in Vietnam," *Agricultural History* 82, no. 1 (2008): 43-61, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20454780>.
- 654 Trung Dang, "Agrarian Reform in Southern Vietnam from 1975 to the Late 1980s: From Small to Large Scale Farming and Back Again" (thesis, National University of Singapore, September 2007), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/300915619_Agrarian_reform_in_southern_Vietnam_from_1975_to_the_late_1980s_from_small_to_large_scale_farming_and_back_again/download.
- 655 Sally P. Marsh and T. Gordon MacAulay, "Farm Size and Land Use Changes in Vietnam Following Land Reforms" (paper, 47th Annual Conference of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society, Fremantle, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Sydney, 2006), http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/57919/2/2003_marshmacaulay.pdf.
- 656 Quy-Toan Do and Lakshmi Iyer, "Land Rights and Economic Development: Evidence from Vietnam," *Policy Research Working Paper Series* 3120 (World Bank: 2003): 7, <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-3120>.
- 657 Nguyen Tuan Anh, Jonathan Rigg, and Annuska Derks, "Migration and Agricultural Production in a Vietnamese Village" (paper, no. 164, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany), 17, <https://www.eth.mpg.de/pubs/wps/pdf/mpi-eth-working-paper-0164.pdf>.
- 658 Dang Thanh Ha and Gerald Shively, "Coffee vs. Cacao: A Case Study from the Vietnamese Central Highlands," *Journal of National Resources and Life Sciences Education* 34, no 107-111 (2005): 107, <https://www.agronomy.org/files/jnrlse/issues/2005/e05-0028.pdf>.
- 659 World Atlas, "Top 10 Producing Countries: Top Coffee Producing Countries," accessed 17 December 2018, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/top-coffee-producing-countries.html>.
- 660 Dang Thanh Ha and Gerald Shively, "Coffee vs. Cacao: A Case Study from the Vietnamese Central Highlands," *Journal of National Resources and Life Sciences Education* 34, no 107-111 (2005): 108, <https://www.agronomy.org/files/jnrlse/issues/2005/e05-0028.pdf>.
- 661 Quan Tran, "Vietnam Coffee Annual: May 2018," USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (4 June 2018), https://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Coffee%20Annual_Hanoi_Vietnam_6-4-2018.pdf.
- 662 Katharina Wecker, "Vietnam's Quiet Coffee Revolution," Deutsche Welle, 16 May 2018, <https://p.dw.com/p/2xklk>.
- 663 Toan Dao, "Vietnam Poised to Become Top Player in Ocean Aquaculture," Seafood Source, 9 August 2018, <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/aquaculture/vietnam-poised-to-become-top-player-in-ocean-aquaculture>.
- 664 Toan Dao, "Vietnam Sets Goals for Shrimp Industry through 2025," Seafood Source, 8 February 2018, <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/supply-trade/vietnam-sets-goals-for-shrimp-industry-through-2025>.
- 665 Weimin Miao, "Support Scaling up of Integrated Mangrove-Shrimp Farming for Blue Carbon and Blue Growth in the Southern Coastal Provinces of Viet Nam," *FAO Aquaculture Newsletter*, no. 58 (April 2018): 18, <http://www.fao.org/3/i9200en/i9200EN.pdf>.
- 666 Stephen Chin, "Vietnam's Shrimp Exports at Risk," Asean Post, 8 October 2018, <https://theaseanpost.com/article/vietnams-shrimp-exports-risk>.
- 667 International Union for Conservation of Nature, "Scaling up Integrated Mangrove-Shrimp Farming in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam," 29 November 2016, <https://www.iucn.org/news/viet-nam/201611/scaling-integrated-mangrove-shrimp-farming-mekong-delta-vietnam>.
- 668 Zoe Osborne, "Pushing Vietnam's Shrimp Industry in the Direction of Sustainability," 20 July 2018, Mongabay, Eco-Business, <https://www.eco-business.com/news/pushing-vietnams-shrimp-industry-in-the-direction-of-sustainability/>.
- 669 Karla Koopmann and Camilla Trigona, "Viet Nam Road Network," Logistics Capacity Assessment, updated 31 May 2018, https://dlca.logcluster.org/display/public/DLCA/2_3+Viet+Nam+Road+Network;jsessionid=EBABF0B7F6256D6FE7F5E3487724A646.
- 670 World Bank, "Program Appraisal Document on a Proposed Credit in the Amount of SDR 278.8 Million (US\$ 385 Million Equivalent) to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for a Results-Based Operation for Local Bridge Construction and Road Asset Management," 8 April 2016, 3, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/370451468186857408/pdf/104789-PAD-P155086-IDA-R2016-0061-1-Box394885B-OUO-9.pdf>.

Endnotes for Chapter 5: Rural Life

- 671 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 672 Northern Vietnam, "Vietnam Railway Map: Stations and Routes (2018), accessed 19 December 2018, <https://north-vietnam.com/vietnamese-railways-map-stations-routes/>.
- 673 Nordic Chamber of Commerce, Vietnam, "Transportation," accessed 19 December 2018, <https://nordcham.com/transportation/>.
- 674 Lonely Planet, "Vietnam: Train," accessed 19 December 2018, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam/transport/getting-around/train>.
- 675 VietnamRailways.net, "Home: Train Guide: The History of Vietnam Railways," accessed 19 December 2018, <https://www.vietnamrailways.net/train-guide/history-vietnam-railways/>.
- 676 Karla Koopmann and Camilla Trigona, "Viet Nam Road Network," Logistics Capacity Assessment, updated 31 May 2018, <https://dlca.logcluster.org/display/public/DLCA/2.3+Viet+Nam+Road+Network;jsessionid=EBABF0B7F6256D6FE7F5E3487724A646>.
- 677 Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Vietnam: Travel Advisory," 10 January 2018, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Vietnam.html>.
- 678 Rough Guides, "Asia: Vietnam: Accommodation," accessed 19 December 2018, <https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/asia/vietnam/accommodation/>.
- 679 Gill Tipping and Truong Viet Dung, "Rural Health Services in Vietnam: Their Contemporary Relevance to Other Asian Transitional Economies," *IDS Bulletin* 28, no. 1 (1997): 111, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/10f8/4d4926538e4593aa176b135c1021f008fe92.pdf>.
- 680 World Bank, "Moving Toward Universal Coverage of Social Health Insurance in Vietnam," accessed 19 December 2018, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/publication/moving-toward-universal-coverage-of-social-health-insurance-in-vietnam>.
- 681 Nicola Jones, Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, and Dang Bich Thuy, "Falling Between the Cracks," ODI, December 2014, 1, 51, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9306.pdf>.
- 682 Ministry of Health, Vietnam, "Plan: For People's Health Protection: Care and Promotion: 2016-2020," 1 March 2016, 4, 7-8, http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/vietnam/vietnam_plan_2016-2020.pdf.
- 683 Kyoko Takashima et al., "A Review of Vietnam's Healthcare Reform through the Direction of Healthcare Activities (DOHA)," *Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine* 22, no. 1 (30 October 2017): 74, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12199-017-0682-z>.
- 684 Saigoneer, "Almost 2m Vietnamese Children Under 5 Suffer From Malnutrition: Nutrition Institute," 13 December 2017, <https://saigoneer.com/saigon-health/12068-almost-2m-vietnamese-children-under-5-suffer-from-malnutrition-nutrition-institute>.
- 685 Viet Nam News, "Child Obesity Spikes While Malnutrition Persists," 30 May 2018, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/448881/child-obesity-spikes-while-malnutrition-persists.html>.
- 686 Nicola Jones, Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, and Dang Bich Thuy, "Falling Between the Cracks," ODI, December 2014, 2-3, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9306.pdf>.
- 687 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "Demography," *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 7, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 688 Le Thuc Duc and Nguyen Thi Thu Hang, "Inequality in Educational Opportunities and Outcomes: Evidence From Young Lives Data in Vietnam," *Young Lives*, November 2016, 39-39, <https://www.younglives.org.uk/sites/www.younglives.org.uk/files/YL-CountryReport-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 689 Nicola Jones, Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, and Dang Bich Thuy, "Falling Between the Cracks," ODI, December 2014, 1, 51, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9306.pdf>.
- 690 Pham Do Nhat Tien and Tran Thi Thai Ha, "Rethinking Education and Training in Vietnam Rural Areas," *US-China Education Review B* 5, no. 6 (June 2015): 399-400, 404, <http://www.davidpublisher.org/Public/uploads/Contribute/559367060d10b.pdf>.
- 691 *Economist*, "Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam: Out of Sight," 4 April 2015, <https://www.economist.com/asia/2015/04/04/out-of-sight>.
- 692 UNICEF and Viet Nam Ministry of Education and Training, "Executive Summary," in *Out-of-School Children in Viet Nam: A Country Study* (Ha Noi: UNICEF, 2013), 12, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000234310>.
- 693 OECD, "Key Issues Affecting Youth in Viet Nam," accessed 19 December 2018, <http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/youth-issues-in-vietnam.htm>.
- 694 Viet Nam News, "Poor Ethnic Households Equal 52.7 per Cent of VN's Total," 23 October 2018, <https://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/468396/poor-ethnic-households-equal-527-per-cent-of-vns-total.html>.

Endnotes for Chapter 5: Rural Life

- 695 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, “Demography,” *DFAT Country Information Report Vietnam* (21 June 2017), 7, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-vietnam.pdf>.
- 696 *Economist*, “Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam: Out of Sight,” 4 April 2015, <https://www.economist.com/asia/2015/04/04/out-of-sight>.
- 697 UNICEF, “Viet Nam: Progress Made in Reducing out of School Children: Yet, More Effort Needed to Accelerate Education for These Children,” 23 January 2018, <http://www.un.org.vn/en/unicef-agencypresscenter2-89/4634-viet-nam-progress-made-in-reducing-out-of-school-children-yet-more-effort-needed-to-accelerate-education-for-these-children.html>.
- 698 Central Intelligence Agency, “Vietnam: People and Society: Urbanization,” in *The World Factbook*, updated 28 November 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vn.html>.
- 699 Neil L. Jamieson, “How the Vietnamese See the World,” in *Understanding Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 10 March 1995), 28-29.
- 700 Huu Ngoc, “A Village Landscape,” in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*, ed. Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 18-19, Kindle.
- 701 Nguyen Trinh Minh Anh, “Transformation of Ethnic Minorities’ Society in Central Vietnam: Livelihood Negotiation During the Transition From Moral Economy” (paper, Graduate School of Environmental Science, Okayama University, Okayama, Japan, March 2016), 127, http://ousar.lib.okayama-u.ac.jp/files/public/5/54345/2016091515365455005/K0005362_fulltext.pdf.
- 702 Vietnam Guider, “The Summary about Vietnam Village Culture,” 12 June 2012, <http://www.vietnamguider.com/viet-nam-country-people/customs-and-habits/2012/06/the-summary-about-vietnam-village-culture.html>.
- 703 Joseph Buttinger et al., “Vietnam: People: Ethnic Groups,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, updated 12 October 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/Ethnic-groups>.
- 704 Huu Ngoc, “A Village Landscape,” in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*, ed. Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 18-19, Kindle.
- 705 Jeffrey Hays, “Men, Gender Roles, the Elderly and Families in Vietnam,” Facts and Details, accessed 19 December 2018, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9c/entry-3389.html.
- 706 Nina Evason, “Vietnamese Culture: Family,” Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-family>.
- 707 Vietnam Law and Legal Forum, “Executive Summary,” in *No More Household Registration Books: A Move to Reduce Administrative Burden* (25 January 2018), ix-xiv, <http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/no-more-household-registration-books-a-move-to-reduce-administrative-burden-6129.html>.
- 708 World Bank Group and Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, “Vietnam’s Household Registration System” (Ha Noi: Hong Duc Publishing House, June 2016), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/158711468188364218/pdf/106381-PUB-P132640-ADD-ISBN-ON-BACK-COVER-PUBLIC.pdf>.
- 709 Saigoneer, “Vietnam to Abolish Residence Books, Establish Online Citizen Database,” 6 November 2017, <https://saigoneer.com/vietnam-news/11710-vietnam-to-abolish-residence-books-establish-online-citizen-database>.
- 710 Ha An, “5 Vietnamese Punished for Revealing Police Checkpoints on Facebook,” Thanh Nien News, 17 March 2016, <http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/5-vietnamese-punished-for-revealing-police-checkpoints-on-facebook-60240.html>.
- 711 Tigit Motorbikes, “Mui Ne Police Sand Dune Trap,” 10 June 2018, <https://www.tigitmotorbikes.com/mui-ne-police-sand-dune-trap/>.
- 712 PBS, “Hitchhiking in Vietnam: Travel Tips: Trouble: Police,” accessed 19 December 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/hitchhikingvietnam/travel/cops.html>.
- 713 Vu Minh, “Decades after War, Vietnam Threatened by 800,000 Tons of Explosives,” *VN Express International*, 2 April 2018, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/decades-after-war-vietnam-threatened-by-800-000-tons-of-explosives-3731080.html>.
- 714 Logan Connor, “Trump Lays Time Bomb for Vietnam’s Mine-Clearing Efforts,” *South China Morning Post*, 13 August 2017, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/2106460/trump-lays-time-bomb-vietnams-mine-clearing-efforts>.
- 715 George Black, “Vietnam War is Still Killing People,” *New Yorker*, 20 May 2016, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-vietnam-war-is-still-killing-people>.
- 716 U.S Department of State, “Humanitarian Mine Action and Unexploded Ordinance Removal,” accessed 19 December 2018, <https://photos.state.gov/libraries/vietnam/8621/pdf-forms/15anniv-UXO-Demining-FactSheet.pdf>.
- 717 Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States of America, “Vietnam: The U.S Veterans Help Land Mine Removal in Vietnam,” 19 December 2018, <http://vietnambassya-usa.org/relations/us-veterans-help-land-mine-removal-vietnam>.
- 718 Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, “Vietnam: Casualties,” updated 10 October 2018, <http://www.the-monitor.org/en-gb/reports/2018/vietnam/casualties.aspx>.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 5 | Rural Life

Assessment

1. In current-day Vietnam, the village hall (*dinh*) is the focal point of village life.
2. Road checkpoints are common in Vietnam.
3. The percentage of Vietnamese citizens employed in agriculture has steadily increased since 2000.
4. The central province of Quang Tri is littered with unexploded ordnance.
5. The majority of Vietnamese live in rural areas.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True



Family on a moped, Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / USAID Vietnam

Chapter 6 | Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Family Life

Introduction

Family values in Vietnam are based on Confucian principles: responsibility to the family, family reputation, the importance of education, and respect for parents, elders, and ancestors. It also includes modern ideas such as equality among family members, respect for personal freedom, and encouraging the development of individual creativity.^{719, 720} Family is the heart of social life in Vietnam, and even extended family plays an important role in everyday life. Distant relatives will gather during times of celebration and for festivals, and to mourn death or disappointment.⁷²¹ Vietnamese distinguish between immediate and extended families. The immediate family includes the nuclear family plus the husband's

parents, male siblings, and their wives and children; the extended family can include villagers who share the same surname. Blood ties between males are the most important relationship in Vietnamese culture.^{722, 723}

Do you have any brothers?		
Visitor:	ko kor aing ehm jae now Khong?	Do you have any brothers?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 67

A significant characteristic of Vietnamese culture is the responsibility to family, living or dead.⁷²⁴ Ancestor worship traditionally strengthened families and provided a sense of belonging and purpose. Today, people often move from their villages, meaning generations of families do not live in the same location as their ancestors. Increasingly, Vietnamese believe in making their own luck, rather than their fate being decided in part on their ancestors' lives. Still, the venerated family altar is present in virtually every home. Connections to the past are essential, and ancestors are believed to actively share in the joys and sorrows of their descendants.⁷²⁵



Incense and effigial money, Hanoi
Flickr / Chelsea Marie Hicks

Vietnam has experienced dramatic social changes over the past few decades, including reunification of the country, the transition to a market economy, and increased urbanization. As a result, some family patterns are less traditional. For example, there are fewer arranged marriages, and premarital sex is more common. Other aspects of family life have not changed. Living with parents after marriage is common, and despite government policies on gender equality, women often perform the majority of household tasks.⁷²⁶

Typical Household and Family Structure

Multigenerational households are common in Vietnam, though the average household size declined from 5.2 people in 1979 to 3.8 in 2009.⁷²⁷ Today, two or three generations live together in one house, typically consisting of grandparents, father and mother, children, and grandchildren.⁷²⁸ Until about 40 years ago, three or four generations lived together under the same roof, especially in the countryside.⁷²⁹ Currently, in some urban areas, the household may include only two generations. Young married

people are growing more independent from their parents, and the number of nuclear families is increasing.⁷³⁰ Geographically, the northwest had the largest household size; the second is the Central Highlands. The Red River Delta is the area with the smallest household size.⁷³¹



Father and son
Flickr / Si Longworth Photography CC BY-NC 2.0

Residence in most Vietnamese homes is organized around the male line. Confucianism frames the duties and obligations of a family to father, a child to parent, a wife to husband, and a younger brother to an older brother.⁷³² Traditionally, the father is responsible for the well-being of family members, and he is the ultimate decision-maker. Elder relatives within the home may share authority with the father, although the mother will also

often have a say in family matters.^{733, 734} The eldest son usually remains in his parent's home, and after marriage, his bride will move in with him. Younger sons might leave to establish their own household a few years after marriage.⁷³⁵

Since the Vietnam War, the traditional family has been changing as a result of communist ideology, economic reforms, and more access to Western culture.⁷³⁶ Thus, there are fewer examples of traditional Vietnamese family life. The average household size is decreasing because of lower rates of childbirth, fewer generations living together, and the rise of divorce. *Doi moi* in the late 1980s led many married men and women to leave their families in rural areas for cities and industrialized zones to work.^{737, 738}

Male and Female Interactions within the Family

The man (father) is the primary authority in the household. The common expectation is that the mother will fulfill domestic duties and care for the children. As many men in Vietnam have very labor-intensive jobs, husbands and sons are rarely expected to do chores around the house. As a head of household, the father makes the decisions on important matters, although he might consult his wife or children on everyday decisions.^{739, 740}

Women of all generations are responsible for running the household. The persistent attitudes toward women's unequal role in families are attributed to the enduring strength of Confucian doctrine.^{741, 742, 743} Despite this, women have traditionally dominated the ranks of street vendors (*tieu thuong*), which Confucius viewed as a lowly profession because marketplace activities typically require haggling and deception. Yet women's economic contributions have lifted households out of poverty. This has enabled many families to achieve middle-class status.^{744, 745}

Is this your husband?		
Visitor:	day lar chong chee faay Khong?	Is this your husband?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 68

Are you the only person in your family who has a job?		
Visitor:	chee lar ngwee zwee nut jong zar deeng kor veeyik larm faay Khong?	Are you the only person in your family who has a job?
Local:	Khong	No.

Exchange 69

Status of Elders, Adolescents, and Children

Children

From an early age, children are taught the importance of respect for their parents, elders, ancestors (*hieu*), and moral debt (*on*). Adults generally indulge children until they reach age 5 or 6, at which point parents become stricter and begin moral instruction. Children are taught to remain quiet and listen attentively when speaking to someone older or to an authority figure.⁷⁴⁶ The message is for children to learn to respect order (*ton ti trat tu*) and understand their inferior position in society. Girls are raised in a stricter environment, as they are expected to appear modest and chaste. If a teenage girl has sex, she is considered *hu hong* (a spoiled/bad thing).^{747, 748}



Girls carrying younger children
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Throughout life, Vietnamese carry an ingrained sense of indebtedness toward their parents. Children are expected to take care of their aging parents and perform duties that extend beyond the nuclear family; for example, children are responsible for maintaining the family’s ancestral tombs. Obedience is expected to be consistent with the Vietnamese saying “children sit where their parents place them.”^{749, 750}



Children selling street lanterns, Hoi An city
Flickr / Tristan Schmurrr

Are these your children?		
Visitor:	day lar kark korn chee faay Khong?	Are these your children?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 70

Elderly

As the leaders in families, elders have the strongest influence in decision making, and they are respected and sought after for advice. Grandparents also play a significant role in helping raise children. There are few nursing homes in Vietnam. The elderly are cared for by their sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren, and grandparents help with childcare.⁷⁵¹ The oldest son takes primary responsibility and inherits a larger portion of his parents’ assets. If the parents were to die prematurely, the eldest son would be responsible for raising his siblings, and they would treat him with the deference accorded to parents.⁷⁵²

Does your family live here?		
Visitor:	zar deen ko kor song uh day Khong?	Does your family live here?
Local:	kor	Yes.

Exchange 71

When Vietnamese reach the age of 70 and beyond, their children organize celebrations for longevity (*mung tho*). These are generally held on birthdays or during Tet and are occasions for the family to show devotion and respect to grandparents and parents. The honorees wear traditional red clothing, the family presents them

with gifts, and they are photographed. In many villages and urban districts, there is an association of longevity for the elderly.⁷⁵³

Married Life and Divorce

Married Life



Vietnamese family, Da Nang
Flickr / Loi Nguyen Duc

The Vietnamese term for marriage is *ruoc dau*. It means welcoming or escorting (*ruoc*) a wife or daughter-in-law (*dau*) into her new home. This emphasis on integrating the bride into the groom's family reflects the importance of perpetuating the family bloodline.⁷⁵⁴

Historically, Confucian norms dictated that women remain virgins until marriage and chaste after widowhood. By contrast, men could practice polygamy and support

concubines.^{755, 756} Polygamy has been illegal since the 1950s; however, it is sometimes practiced in the mountainous villages of the Central Highlands.^{757, 758}

Are you married?		
Visitor:	ko lup zar ding chuh-a?	Are you married?
Local:	zoy	Already. (Yes, I am already married.)

Exchange 72

Did you grow up here?		
Visitor:	chee lun lyn uh day fai Khong?	Did you grow up here?
Local:	vang	Yes.

Exchange 73

Since the typical Vietnamese house accommodates an extended family, and the groom brings his bride home to live with the family, there is very little privacy. In larger cities, *nha nghi*, or “love hotels,” provide a place for young couples to find some privacy.⁷⁵⁹

Since the 1960s, Vietnamese families are limited to two children to keep population growth in check. Single parenthood is shameful in Vietnamese culture. Premarital



Roadside “love hotel,” Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / shankar s.

sex and cohabitation before marriage are also taboo—viewed as a form of Western decadence and condemned by the government.⁷⁶⁰ While uncommon in rural areas, it is more widespread among urbanites.^{761, 762} Traditional beliefs inhibit open discussion about sex, and sex education and family planning counseling are limited.^{763, 764} In addition, the safety and efficacy of contraceptives available in Vietnam are questionable.⁷⁶⁵ Many women rely on legal abortion, which is

free to married women, as a means of birth control. The medical procedure stirs little controversy in Vietnam, which has one of the world’s highest abortion rates. In recent years, there were as many abortions as live births in Ho Chi Minh City.^{766, 767}

Divorce



Mother and child, Trung Thanh clinic, southern Vietnam
United States Air Force

Traditionally rare in Vietnam, divorce (for reasons other than female infertility) is a relatively new phenomenon, since the interest of family is usually placed above that of the individual. In the last two decades, divorce has become more culturally accepted. Increasingly, women are more financially independent, and Vietnamese society has experienced shifting social values as the country integrates into the global economy.⁷⁶⁸

Though rates are still low by American standards, the divorce rate is increasing, with domestic violence cited as the reason for nearly 80% of the breakups.^{769, 770}

For divorcing urbanites, dividing material assets and child custody can be worked out between the couple. For farmers, it is more complicated. Women who leave their birth village to marry cannot continue to farm there. In the event of divorce, women customarily leave their husband’s house and lose the right to cultivate land in his village. Thus, only under extreme circumstances would a female farmer initiate divorce.⁷⁷¹

Rites of Passage

Marriage

Traditionally, children lived in their parent's home until they married, at which time the bride would move into the husband's household.⁷⁷² The families arranged the marriage, and the engaged couple had little contact until after the wedding. With Western influence, the number of arranged marriages declined, and young Vietnamese typically choose their own partners, although the two families are involved. Couples typically marry about 6 months after the engagement.⁷⁷³ The actual date is set by the couple's parents, with the assistance of a spiritual leader, a Buddhist monk, or a fortune teller (to select an auspicious day).^{774, 775}

Traditional Vietnamese weddings are elaborate. On the wedding day, the groom's family visits the bride's home bearing *qua*, round red trays loaded with gifts covered in red satin that has been adorned with the Chinese "double happiness" character (*song hy*).⁷⁷⁶ The number of trays must total six or nine because seven and eight are considered unlucky. The trays contain specialty foods such as wine, fruit, meat, traditional and Western-style cakes, and *trau cau* (leaves with fruit for an ancestral offering). The bride usually receives jewelry from her husband's parents, while family and friends often give the bride and groom money.^{777, 778}



Wedding ceremony, outside Hue
Flickr / Loi Nguyen Duc

The bride wears a traditional Vietnamese pantsuit dress (*ao dai*) and a headdress (*khan dong*). This combination may be either red or pink. The groom wears the equivalent except in blue. The couple asks her ancestors for permission to be married and for blessings for their future family.⁷⁷⁹ In contemporary Vietnamese culture, many Western wedding traditions have been adopted. Depending on the part of the country the family lives in, the bride may wear a white dress instead of the traditional *ao dai*, the couple may exchange wedding rings, cut a cake, and the bride may toss a bouquet of flowers.⁷⁸⁰

I wish you both happiness.		
Visitor:	toy chook aing chee harng fook	I wish you both happiness.
Local:	choong toy tut veeng zu	We are honored.

Exchange 74

Congratulations on your wedding!		
Visitor:	chook munk darm kwu-ee koo-a ko!	Congratulations on your wedding!
Local:	Su hien zien koo-a chee lar niem ving zuh cho choong toy	We are honored you could attend.

Exchange 75

Funerals

Vietnamese view death as moving from one existence to the next (*qua do*). Funeral rituals ensure that the deceased will have a smooth passage and allow the kin to adjust to their loss and take comfort that the deceased has joined the family's ancestors.

I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.		
Visitor:	Toi xin gui lui chia bowan din chee va zah ding chee	I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.
Local:	seen kam ern	Thank you.

Exchange 76



Cemetery, Hanoi
Flickr / David McKelvey

It is considered unlucky to die away from home, and unlucky to carry a corpse. Terminally ill hospital patients may be rushed home to die under their own roof. If the family is religious, a monk or priest may be present. The date and time when a funeral procession (*le dua tang*) embarks for the cemetery are selected carefully to ensure it is a favorable time to bury the deceased. Mourners wear white, the color of bone, as well as mourning turbans, a white cloth that is tied around the forehead. Family members perform rituals of veneration, including kowtowing, lighting incense, and offering food and fake paper money at

the grave and altar. The mourning period, during which specific bereavement rituals are performed, concludes on the second anniversary of the death.^{781, 782}

Please be strong.		
Visitor:	seen ko marng mair lehn	Please be strong.
Local:	choong toy ser ko gang	We will try.

Exchange 77

According to a Vietnamese proverb: “When alive, one must have a house; when dead, one must have a tomb.” If a family is unable to carry out proper funeral rituals, members can become deeply distressed because they have failed to fulfill their filial duties. The spirit of the deceased is believed unable to rest in peace and so wanders aimlessly. Traditional burial rites cannot be performed for combatants who are presumed missing in action. These unaccounted-for dead are considered wandering souls who are unable to complete their passage. Vietnamese believe they bring bad luck to their families and are blamed for accidents and misfortune.⁷⁸³

Buddhists favor cremation and store the deceased’s ashes in a temple, where they are identified by a photograph. Most Vietnamese, however, are buried, and the location of the grave is chosen carefully under the principles of feng shui to ensure the family’s good fortune. Because it is believed that ancestors continue to help and protect the family, their graves are usually placed close to the family residence, either in a grave at the bottom of the garden or in a field or rice paddy.^{784, 785}



Ricefield grave, near Ho Chi Minh City
Flickr / Dennis Jarvis CC BY-SA 2.0

Childbirth

In Vietnam, age is calculated differently than in the West. The time spent in utero is considered the child’s first year of life. Babies are considered one year old at birth; new babies turn two when the next lunar new year begins. Hence, a child born on New Year’s Eve would be considered two the next day. Tet is a nationwide birthday party. The Vietnamese do not mark their ages by the day they were born, instead,

Vietnamese turn a year older on Tet. (As Western influence grows, some younger Vietnamese do celebrate Western-style birthdays.)⁷⁸⁶

To limit the newborn's exposure to germs, only close family members visit during a child's first month. Those who come may bring gifts but should not gush about the baby's cuteness or beauty. If they do, the parents may remind them to say first "*trom via*," which means "to talk sneakily behind a spirit's back," to keep evil at bay.⁷⁸⁷ Alternatively, a person can simply comment on how much the baby resembles the mother or the father.⁷⁸⁸ Disabilities were traditionally interpreted as punishment for sins committed in earlier generations.⁷⁸⁹



Woman and baby, Nha Trang, southern Vietnam
Flickr / Khánh Hmoong CC BY-NC 2.0

After the first month, the parents throw a party for the baby (*ngay day thang*). During this gathering, relatives and close friends of the parents preside over a ritual in which water from a flower on the family altar is allowed to drip into the baby's mouth. This practice is intended to elicit sweet words when the baby begins to talk.^{790, 791}

Naming Conventions

Vietnamese names are written with the surname (family name) first, followed by a middle name, with one or two given names last. For example, in the name Dang Thi Thanh Van, the family name is Dang, Thi (the middle name) is the sex indicator, and the given names are Thanh and Van. Most names can be used for men or women. Given names are often not gender specific, so middle names can indicate the sex of a person.⁷⁹²



Children playing, Lao Cai Province, northwestern Vietnam
Flickr / Shawn Harquail CC BY-NC 2.0

Vietnamese typically address each other using their title, e.g., Dr., Mr., or Mrs. Many have also adopted Western names.⁷⁹³ Surnames often refer to dynasties. Since the final three dynasties were Tran, Le, and Nguyen, respectively, these are the most common surnames, with 40% of the population sharing the Nguyen surname.⁷⁹⁴

Given the proliferation of Nguyens, Vietnamese do not refer to themselves as Mr. or Mrs. Nguyen. Instead, they address people by their given name—a custom adopted from the Chinese. So Nguyen Van Hai would be known as Mr. Hai. Nguyen Thi Hoa would be addressed as Mrs. Hoa. The middle name Van indicates the person is male; Thi is a female name and is quite common. Other middle names might reflect generation or birth order. Vietnamese women do not change their family names upon marriage, so it is entirely coincidental if they share the same name as their husbands.^{795, 796}

Children typically take their father's family name, and parents often give them personal names with special meanings, as they believe that the lives of the children may be affected by the chosen name.⁷⁹⁷ Vietnamese often introduce themselves to foreigners by explaining the meaning of their given name: "I'm Ngoc (jade)." Popular names for boys include Minh (bright), Phuoc (lucky), and Vinh (successful). Girls are named for delicate or beautiful objects, such as flowers: Lan (orchid), Cuc (chrysanthemum), and Hoa (flower).^{798, 799}



Elementary school students, Truong Thanh, Vietnam
United States Air Force

Endnotes for Chapter 6: Family Life

- 719 Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, "The Vietnamese Values System: A Blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values," *International Education Studies* 9, no. 12 (Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2016): 35, <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1121509.pdf>.
- 720 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo, accessed 3 January 2019), <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 721 Nguyen Tuan Anh, "Kinship Relations in Weddings and Funerals as a Dimension of Human Security: The Case of Quynh Doi Village, Quynh Luu District, Nghe An Province, Vietnam," *Journal of Mekong Societies* 12, no. 2 (May-August 2016): 15, 17, <https://mekongjournal.kku.ac.th/Vol12/Issue02/01.pdf>.
- 722 Iain Stewart et al., "People and Culture: Family," in *Vietnam* 14th ed. (Lonely Planet Global Limited, August 2018), loc. 23,713-23,716, Kindle.
- 723 Jeffrey Frank Jones, "Vietnamese 200 Hour Familiarization Course," Special Forces Language Visual Training Materials (I Corps Foreign Language Training Center, Special Forces Language Office, United States Special Operations Command, Fort Lewis, WA, 10).
- 724 Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, "The Vietnamese Values System: A Blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values," *International Education Studies* 9, no. 12 (Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2016): 34, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1121509.pdf>.
- 725 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshiping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshiping-ancestors>.
- 726 Rukmalie Jayakody et al., "The Impact of Social Change on Vietnamese Families" (paper 50807, accessed 3 January 2018), <https://iussp2005.princeton.edu/papers/50807>.
- 727 Esri, ArcGIS, "Vietnam Average Household Size," updated 5 December 2018, <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=80ffd900e5284873995b4e4ffb0e1d62>.
- 728 Ronald J. Cima, "The Family," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/41.htm>.
- 729 Huu Ngoc, "'Doi Moi' (Renovation or Renewal) and Globalization: The Traditional Family under Fire," in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*, ed. Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 261, Kindle.
- 730 Countries and their Cultures, "Vietnamese: Orientation: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," accessed 3 January 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Vietnam.html>.
- 731 Thanh Binh Nguyen, "The Trend of Vietnamese Household Size in Recent Years" (2011 International Conference on Humanities, Society and Culture, Singapore, 2011), 5, <http://ipedr.com/vol20/10-ICHSC2011-M00023.pdf>.
- 732 Intercultural Communication, DePauw University, "Vietnam: Home: Family: Family Traditions," Cultural Portfolio, Fall 2007, http://academic.depauw.edu/mkfinney_web/teaching/Com227/culturalPortfolios/VIETNAM/VIETNAM/family.html.
- 733 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo), accessed 3 January 2019, 2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 734 Ronald J. Cima, "The Family," in *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington DC, GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/41.htm>.
- 735 Countries and their Cultures, "Vietnamese: Orientation: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," accessed 4 January 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Vietnam.html>.
- 736 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo), accessed 3 January 2019, 2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 737 Thanh Binh Nguyen, "The Trend of Vietnamese Household Size in Recent Years" (2011 International Conference on Humanities, Society and Culture, Singapore, 2011), 5, <http://ipedr.com/vol20/10-ICHSC2011-M00023.pdf>.
- 738 Huu Ngoc, "'Doi Moi' (Renovation or Renewal) and Globalization: The Traditional Family under Fire," in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*, ed. Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 261, Kindle.
- 739 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Family: Gender Roles," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-family>.
- 740 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Gender Roles," EthnoMed, updated December 2010, <https://ethnomed.org/culture/vietnamese/vietnamese-cultural-profile>.

Endnotes for Chapter 6: Family Life

- 741 Rukmalie Jayakody and Pham Thi Thu Phuong, "Social Change and Fathering: Change or Continuity in Vietnam?" *Journal of Family Issues* 34, no 2 (Sage Publications, 2012): 1-22, 17-18, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X12461618>.
- 742 Tatyana Mestechkina, Nguyen Duc Son, and Jin Y. Shin, "Family Structure and Roles: Parenting in Vietnam," *Parenting Across Cultures* (Springer, Dordrecht, 2014), 49-50, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7503-9_5.
- 743 Intercultural Communication, DePauw University, "Vietnam: Home: Family: Family Traditions," Cultural Portfolio, Fall 2007, http://academic.depauw.edu/mkfinney_web/teaching/Com227/culturalPortfolios/VIETNAM/VIETNAM/family.html.
- 744 Vietnam Culture, "Vietnamese Traditional Family Values," accessed 4 January 2019, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-53-6/Vietnamese-traditional-family-values.aspx>.
- 745 Countries and their Cultures, "Vietnamese: Orientation: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," accessed 3 January 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Vietnam.html>.
- 746 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo), accessed 3 January 2019, 2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 747 Countries and their Cultures, "Vietnamese: Orientation: Socialization," accessed 3 January 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Vietnam.html>.
- 748 Lan Anh Thi Do et al., "'Hu Hong' (Bad Thing): Parental Perceptions of Teenagers' Sexuality in Urban Vietnam," *BMC Public Health* 17, no 226 (28 February 2016), <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-017-4133-y>.
- 749 Marsha E. Shapiro, "Asian Culture Brief: Vietnam," *NTAC-AAPI Culture Brief Series*, ed. David E. Starbuck (National Technical Assistance Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange at State University of New York at Buffalo), accessed 3 January 2019, 2, <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss5-Vietnam.pdf>.
- 750 Quynh Thi Nhu Nguyen, "The Vietnamese Values System: A Blend of Oriental, Western and Socialist Values," *International Education Studies* 9, no. 12 (Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2016): 35, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1121509.pdf>.
- 751 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Gender Roles," EthnoMed, updated December 2010, <https://ethnomed.org/culture/vietnamese/vietnamese-cultural-profile>.
- 752 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Family: Age," Cultural Atlas, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-family>.
- 753 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Religious Beliefs and Practices: The Celebration of Tet," EthnoMed, updated December 2010, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-23-3/Celebration-for-longevity.aspx>.
- 754 Dieu Ha, "Love and Marriage in Vietnam's History and Customs," Voice of Vietnam, 30 March 2017, <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/sunday-show/love-and-marriage-in-vietnams-history-and-customs-527054.vov>.
- 755 Phuc Duy, "Sex before Marriage in Vietnam," *Asia Life Magazine*, 3 March 2013, <https://www.asialifemagazine.com/vietnam/sex-before-marriage-in-vietnam/>.
- 756 Ersheng Gao, "How Does Traditional Confucian Culture Influence Adolescents' Sexual Behavior in Three Asian Cities?" *Junior Adolescent Health* 50, no 30 (March 2012): 5, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4235616/pdf/nihms627559.pdf>.
- 757 Viet Nam News, "Polygamy Common Practice in Central Highlands," 3 October 2017, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/394863/polygamy-common-practice-in-central-highlands.html>.
- 758 Jeffrey Hays, "Marriage, Dating and Weddings in Vietnam: Polygamy and Marriage Reform," accessed 4 January 2019, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9c/entry-3387.html.
- 759 City Pass Guide, "Saigon's Secret Love Hotels," 21 January 2016, <https://www.citypassguide.com/en/living/ho-chi-minh-city/family/blog/saigons-secret-love-hotel>.
- 760 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Gender Roles," EthnoMed, updated December 2010, <https://ethnomed.org/culture/vietnamese/vietnamese-cultural-profile>.
- 761 Kaori Watanabe, "The Cross Sectional Study on the Association between Sexual Awareness and Cognitive Social Capital among High School Students in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam," *Advances in Sexual Medicine* 6, no. 3 (July 2016): 33-39, <https://doi.org/10.4236/asm.2016.63005>.
- 762 Rukmalie Jayakody et al., "The Impact of Social Change on Vietnamese Families" (paper, no. 50807, accessed 3 January 2018), <https://iussp2005.princeton.edu/papers/50807>.

Endnotes for Chapter 6: Family Life

- 763 Trung Quang Vo, Phu Minh Tran, and Hiep Huu Tran, "Birth Control Knowledge among Pharmacy Undergraduate Students in Vietnam: A Case Study and Situation Analysis," *Asian Journal of Pharmaceutics* 12, no. 1 (August 2018): 65-73, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326740100_Birth_Control_Knowledge_among_Pharmacy_Undergraduate_Students_in_Vietnam_A_Case_Study_and_Situation_Analysis.
- 764 Dana Filek-Gibson, "In Vietnam, Taboo and Tradition Hinder Contraception Awareness," *Saigoneer*, 9 July 2017, <https://saigoneer.com/saigon-health/10589-in-vietnam-taboo-and-tradition-hinder-contraception-awareness>.
- 765 Linh Anh, "Quality of Contraceptives Comes into Question," *Viet Nam News*, 7 October 2015, <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/276741/quality-of-contraceptives-comes-into-question.html>.
- 766 Matthew Pike, "Why Vietnam's Single Mothers Are Staging Fake Weddings," *Culture Trip*, 15 March 2018, <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/vietnam/articles/why-vietnams-single-mothers-are-staging-fake-weddings/>.
- 767 VN Express International, "Abortion Rate in Vietnam Highest in Asia," 30 September 2016, <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/abortion-rate-in-vietnam-highest-in-asia-3476746.html>.
- 768 *Financial Times*, "Vietnam Sees More Women Filing for Divorce," accessed 4 January 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/60466878-d39a-11e0-bc6b-00144feab49a>.
- 769 Viet Nam News, "When Verbally [sic] Abuse Resulted in a Divorce," 17 July 2018, <https://vietnamnews.vn/a-twist-in-the-tale/451898/when-verbally-abuse-resulted-in-a-divorce.html>.
- 770 Saigoneer, "Study: Divorce Is up Significantly in Vietnam," 27 August 2014, <https://saigoneer.com/vietnam-news/2592-study-divorce-is-up-significantly-in-vietnam>.
- 771 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Responses to Information Requests," 11 February 2016, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/sites/default/files/pages/attachments/2016/05/05/vnm105425.e.pdf>.
- 772 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Marriage and Dating," *Cultural Atlas*, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/vietnamese-culture-family>.
- 773 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Gender Roles," *EthnoMed*, updated December 2010, <https://ethnomed.org/culture/vietnamese/vietnamese-cultural-profile>.
- 774 What to Do in Hanoi, "8 Wedding Superstitions You Should Know Before Marrying a Vietnamese," accessed 4 January 2019, <https://whattodoinhanoi.com/vietnam-wedding-superstitions/>.
- 775 Jeffrey Hays, "Superstitions, Astrology and Fortunetelling in Vietnam: Fortunetellers, Mediums and Fortunetelling in Vietnam," accessed 4 January 2019, http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9d/entry-3381.html.
- 776 Minh Nguyen, "Traditional Vietnamese Wedding," *Vietnam Track*, 16 May 2017, <https://vietnamtrack.com/traditional-vietnamese-wedding/>.
- 777 Nguyen Thi Huong Lien, "Traditional Wedding Customs of Vietnam," 14 February 2011, <http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/traditional-wedding-customs-of-vietnam-4142.html>.
- 778 Elizabeth Burns, "Traditional Vietnamese Wedding Gifts," updated 28 September 2017, <https://oureverydaylife.com/traditional-vietnamese-wedding-gifts-12499536.html>.
- 779 Bliss Vietnam, "Wedding Custom and Ceremony in Vietnam: The Important Rituals," 23 December 2013, <https://www.blissvn.com/en-US/wedding-custom-and-ceremony-in-vietnam-the-important-rituals>.
- 780 Tran Thi Minh Hieu, "Wedding Traditions in Vietnam," *City Pass Guide* (blog), 16 January 2018, <https://www.citypassguide.com/en/travel/vietnam/blog/blog/wedding-traditions-in-vietnam>.
- 781 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshipping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshipping-ancestors>.
- 782 Pamela LaBorde, "Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Gender Roles," *EthnoMed*, updated December 2010, <https://ethnomed.org/clinical/end-of-life/death-in-viet>.
- 783 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshipping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshipping-ancestors>.
- 784 Rosemary Shewry, "Aspects of Burial and Cremation in Vietnam and Cambodia," *Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management*, accessed 9 January 2019, <https://www.iccm-uk.com/iccm/library/Journal%20Winner%2006.pdf>.
- 785 Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, "Vietnam: Worshipping the Ancestors" (lecture, Teaching Asia Through Cultural Media, Cornell University, June 1995), <https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/worshipping-ancestors>.
- 786 Nina Evason, "Vietnamese Culture: Other Considerations," *Cultural Atlas*, 2016, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/vietnamese-culture/866-other-considerations#866-other-considerations>.

Endnotes for Chapter 6: Family Life

787 Dana Sachs, “Names are Important in Vietnam,” in *The House on Dream Street* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2000), reprinted with permission, <http://www.adoptvietnam.org/vietnamese/names-vietnamese.htm>.

788 Kulture Studier, “An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don’ts,” updated September 2018, 4, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.

789 Kim Dieu, “Perceptions of Disability in the Vietnamese American Community,” *Thompson Policy Institute* (blog), Chapman University, 22 February 2018, <https://blogs.chapman.edu/tpi/2018/02/22/perceptions-of-disability-in-the-vietnamese-american-community/>.

790 Ann Caddell, “Chapter 6: Customs and Rites: Pregnancy and Birth: Celebrations,” in *Customs and Culture of Vietnam* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 7 August 2012).

791 Vietnam Culture, “Superstitions After Birth of Newborn Baby in Vietnam,” accessed 4 January 2019, <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/supersitions-after-birth-of-newborn-baby.aspx>.

792 Qld Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, “Vietnamese Cultural Profile” (Brisbane: Diversicare, March 2009), 6, <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.

793 Qld Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, “Vietnamese Cultural Profile: Language” (Brisbane: Diversicare, March 2009), 25, <http://www.diversicare.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vietnamese.pdf>.

794 Dan Nosowitz, “Why 40% of Vietnamese People Have the Same Last Name,” *Atlas Obscura*, 28 March 2017, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/nguyen-name-common-vietnam>.

795 General Secretariat, United Kingdom, “A Guide to Names and Naming Practices,” March 2006, 66-67, https://www.fbiic.gov/public/2008/nov/Naming_practice_guide_UK_2006.pdf.

796 Palash Ghosh, “Why Are So Many Vietnamese People Named Nguyen?” *International Business Times*, 18 February 2014, <https://www.ibtimes.com/why-are-so-many-vietnamese-people-named-nguyen-1556359>.

797 Kulture Studier, “An Introduction to Vietnamese Etiquette: The Dos and Don’ts,” updated September 2018, 3, https://www.kulturstudier.com/m/files/Dev_1/Etiquette.pdf.

798 Behind the Name, “Vietnamese Names,” accessed 4 January 2019, <https://www.behindthename.com/names/usage/Vietnamese>.

799 Huu Ngoc, “The Vietnamese Identity: On Naming a Child,” in *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*, ed. Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), loc 11-13, Kindle.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Chapter 6 | Family Life

Assessment

1. Black is the color of mourning in Vietnam.
2. Vietnamese children are considered 1 year old at birth.
3. Vietnamese place honorifics such as Mr. or Mrs. in front of the person's first name rather than their last name.
4. A Vietnamese woman takes her husband's last name after marriage.
5. In Vietnam, it is considered unlucky to die away from home.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Further Reading and Resources

Bowden, Mark. *Hue 1968: A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam*, 1st ed. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 6 June 2017.

Bui, Tin. *Following Ho Chi Minh: Memoirs of a North Vietnamese Colonel*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, January 1999.

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State. *2017 Human Rights Report: Vietnam*. Accessed 11 January 2019.
<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/277375.pdf>.

Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State. *2018 Investment Climate Statement–Vietnam*. 2018.
<http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/ics/investmentclimatestatements/index.htm?year=2018&dldid=281549>.

Central Intelligence Agency. “Vietnam,” in *The World Factbook*. Updated 28 November 2018. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html>.

Charlot, John. *Vietnam, The Strangers Meet: The Vietnam Film Project*. Institute of Culture and Communication, East-West Center, University of Hawaii. Accessed 11 January 2019.
<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~charlot/The%20Arts/Cinema/HIFF8/VNproject%20copy.pdf>.

Chong, Denise. *The Girl in the Picture: The Story of Kim Phuc, The Photograph, and the Vietnam War*. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.

Duong, Thu Huong. *Paradise of the Blind*. New York: William Morrow, 1993.

Elliot, Duong Van Mai. *The Sacred Willow: Four Generations in the Life of a Vietnamese Family*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Freedom House. *Country Report: Vietnam (2018)*. 2018.
<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/Vietnam>.

- Goscha, Christopher. *The Penguin History of Modern Vietnam*. New York: Penguin Books, 25 May 2017.
- Greene, Graham. *The Quiet American*. New York: Penguin Classics, 31 August 2004.
- Hayton, Bill. *Vietnam: Rising Dragon*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.
- Herr, Michael. *Dispatches*. New York: Vintage Books, 6 August 1991.
- Human Rights Watch. *World Report 2018: Vietnam: Events of 2017*. 2018.
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/Vietnam>.
- Marlantes, Karl. *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War*. New York: Grove Press, 10 May 2011.
- Ngoc, Huu. *Viet Nam: Tradition and Change*. Edited by Lady Borton and Elizabeth F. Collins. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016. Kindle edition.
- Nguyen, Kien. *The Unwanted: A Memoir of Childhood*. New York: Back Bay Books, 2001.
- Ninh, Bao. *The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam*. Edited by Frank Palmos. Translated by Phan Thanh Hao. New York: Riverhead Books, 1 April 1996. Reprint edition.
- Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State. *2018 Trafficking in Persons Report: Country Narratives: Vietnam*. 2018.
<https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/282780.htm>.
- Pham, Andrew. *The Eaves of Heaven: A Life in Three Wars*. New York: Harmony Books, 2008.
- Phung, Vu Trong. *Dumb Luck*. Translated by Peter Zinoman and Nguyen Nguyet Cam. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.
- Sachs, Dana. *The House on Dream Street: Memoir of an American Woman in Vietnam*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2000.

Thiep, Nguyen Huy. *Crossing the River*. Evanston, IL: Curbstone Books, 1 October 2002.

U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Vietnam: Overview." Updated February 2017. <https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.php?iso=VNM>.

United Nations Data. *Viet Nam: General Information, Economic Indicators, Major Trading Partners*. Accessed 11 January 2019. <http://data.un.org/en/iso/vn.html>.

Webb, James. *Fields of Fire: A Novel*. New York: Bantam Books, 28 August 2001. Reprint edition.

World Trade Organization. "Viet Nam and the WTO." Accessed 11 January 2019. https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/vietnam_e.htm.

Vietnamese Cultural Orientation

Final Assessment

1. In Vietnam's history, population pressure drove expansion southward.
2. Few ethnic Chinese remain in Vietnam because of the ethnic cleansing campaign carried out in the 1970s.
3. Ethnic Khmer Krom live mostly in the Mekong Delta.
4. Christmas Day is not a state-sanctioned holiday in Vietnam.
5. Tet is the most celebrated holiday in Vietnam.
6. Vietnamese cuisine uses both cooked and raw ingredients.
7. Hanoi is still widely referred to as Saigon by the Vietnamese people.
8. The "Reunification Express" is Vietnam's lone high-speed train.
9. Families must pay tuition for their children to attend high school.
10. The *ho khai* (household registration) is easily transferable from one location to another.
11. Montagnard refers to ethnic tribal people who live in the Central Highlands.
12. Nguyen is the most common Vietnamese surname.
13. The middle name "Thi" indicates the person is male.
14. Women have traditionally dominated the ranks of street vendors in Vietnam.

15. Hanoi has continuously served as Vietnam's capital city since 1010.
16. The Vietnamese Cham are predominantly Sunni Muslim.
17. After the Vietnam War, many Montagnards faced harsh consequences because of their support of the United States.
18. The Khmer Krom people face persecution and discrimination based partly on the version of Buddhism they practice.
19. The Mekong River provides the primary source of protein for approximately 1 million people.
20. Water-induced destruction is the primary form of natural disaster in Vietnam.
21. The system of irrigating rice fields using canals was developed in the sixth century BCE.
22. Market reforms have made Vietnam one of Asia's fastest-growing economies.
23. The socialist government in Vietnam is officially committed to promoting gender equality.
24. The Vietnamese national women's dress is called the *áo dài*.
25. Vovinam is a Vietnamese martial art.
26. President Ngo Dinh Diem's government exhibited favoritism toward Buddhists, which caused Catholics to regularly protest in the early 1960s.
27. The Truong Son Mountains are home to Vietnam's highest mountain.

28. Vietnam assumed its present-day borders under French colonial rule.
29. The Red River flows into the Gulf of Tonkin.
30. Lack of harmony is the distinctive feature of traditional Vietnamese music.

Assessment Answers: 1. True; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True; 6. True; 7. False; 8. False; 9. True; 10. False; 11. True; 12. True; 13. False; 14. True; 15. False; 16. True; 17. True; 18. True; 19. False; 20. True; 21. True; 22. True; 23. True; 24. True; 25. True; 26. False; 27. False; 28. False; 29. True; 30. True