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DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND TECHNICAL SURVEYS
GEOGRAPHICAL BRANCH

INDO-CHINA

A GEOGRAPHICAL APPRECIATION

FOREIGN GEOGRAPHY INFORMATION SERIES
No. 6

PRICE: FIFTY CENTS

OTTAWA, CANADA
1953

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Preface

This report on Indo-China is the sixth in the series of Foreign Geography Information Reports produced by the Geographical Branch under the supervision of George A. Bevan.

The text was written by Marion H. Matheson and the final maps and illustrations were prepared under Paul H. Laurendeau.

Indo-China today holds some considerable attention in Southeast Asia. This report is designed to provide background information on the geographical aspects of the country which may assist the reader in interpreting events there.

Many generalizations and omissions are unavoidable in a report of this nature. Those wishing more detailed information on specific aspects of the country's geography will find additional reference works in the map and textual bibliography of the report.

J. Wreford Watson,
Director, Geographical Branch.

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KEY TO REGIONAL DIVISIONS

A. Tonkin - Annam delta

1. Double harvest sub-region
2. June harvest sub-region
3. November harvest sub-region
4. Irrigated sub-region

B. Annam coast

1. June and November harvest sub-region
2. April and September harvest sub-region
3. September and January harvest sub-region

C. Mekong lowland

1. Cambodian rice lands
2. Mekong delta
3. Lowland plantation sub-region
4. Tonle Sap flood plain
5. Bac Lieu marshes

D. Cambodian plain

E. Red lands plateau

1. Plantation sub-region
2. Dalat sub-region

F. Central Mekong plateau

1. Alluvial sub-region
2. Bolovens plateau

G. Central uplands

1. Upper Mekong sub-region
2. Tonkin-Annam-Laos mountains
3. Tonkin mining sub-region
4. Si-Kiang drainage basin
5. Northeast rice lands

H. Cambodian uplands

1. Cambodian plateau
2. Cambodian mountains

INTRODUCTION

Indo-China lies on the eastern side of the great peninsula which thrusts southward between China and India (Fig. 1). The location of this peninsula has caused it to be influenced by both great civilizations. However, the physical barriers of the area have prevented an actual political or military meeting of the two countries, so that the peninsula is rather a zone where neighbouring cultures have mingled.

Physical conditions within Indo-China itself have tended to keep Indian and Chinese influences somewhat separated. In fact, prior to French occupation, the Indo-China of today was but a loosely defined group of territories, each influenced to a greater or lesser degree by the impact of Indian or Chinese civilization.

PHYSICAL SETTING

The river courses of Southeast Asia indicate the physical structure of the region (Fig. 1). The complex peninsula has been folded between two ancient, stable, land masses: the Shillong Plateau, in the bend of the Brahmaputra River, and the massif of southeast China.¹ A smaller stable block in southeastern Indo-China tended to deflect the folds farther south.² Thus the river valleys running from the heart of Asia are closely spaced and parallel, but fan out in their lower reaches to by-pass the Indo-China block on either side (Fig. 1). The geological structure of Indo-China, as yet incompletely understood, has affected the topography as well as the river systems of the country. The Mekong, rising deep in the heart of the continent, and its tributaries by-pass the block on the west (Fig. 1), but the Red River (Song-koi) and its tributaries by-pass it to the north. Some of the tributaries of the Si Kiang rise in Indo-China and flow northwards into China.

Superficially, Indo-China appears to be in a strategic position with regard to southern China and central Asia. Actually the river gorges do not offer ready access to thinly peopled areas of the interior. The valleys of the Mekong, the Red River, and the tributaries of the Si Kiang have not been great avenues of commercial traffic, but the routes used in the slow infiltration of the uplands of Indo-China by primitive peoples from the interior. Land access from China to Indo-China by way of the chain of coastal deltas has proved of greater importance.

Land communication between Indo-China and its neighbours has always been difficult, but access by sea has been comparatively easy. At least as early as the beginning of the Christian era, Indian merchants and others

¹ Sion, J. *Asie des moussons*. Tome IX, Quatrième partie, p. 394.

² Blondel, F. *Etat de nos connaissances en 1929 sur la géologie de l'Indochine française*. Tome XVIII, Supplément Bulletin Service géologique de l'Indochine française, Hanoi, 1929.

came along the coasts to southern Indo-China.¹ Sea communication with China began at an even earlier date. The Gulf of Tonkin attracted fishermen from China,² and the semi-annual change in direction of the monsoon winds favoured the development of coastal traffic and the navigation of the lower reaches of the rivers.³

Indo-China has been in a less fortunate maritime position during recent history. Although she faces the potentially important Philippine and Indonesian Islands across the South China Sea (Fig. 1) she is, nevertheless, owing to the configuration of the southeast coast of Asia, located somewhat off the main trade route between Singapore and Hong Kong. However, Indo-China has proved to have greater strategic value as a centre for air-borne traffic.⁴

Indo-China is situated in that part of Asia dominated by the monsoon climate. The alternating wet and dry seasons greatly influence life, as they do in all monsoon Asia. The rice culture which the monsoon climate favours brings in its train all the social and economic problems common to the region as a whole. As in many other respects, two climatic variations of the monsoon climate, the tropical and sub-tropical types, meet in Indo-China.

The population of Indo-China is concentrated in the valleys and deltas of two great rivers, the Mekong and the Red, and those of many smaller rivers. Communication between these valleys is still comparatively difficult; Indo-China was first administered as a unit under the French.

HISTORICAL SETTING

The history of Indo-China before the coming of the French is that of a few large ethnic groups divided by both their cultural and their physical environments. The most numerous and influential of these groups were the Annamites, strongly affected by Chinese culture, the Cambodians, or Khmers, and the Chams, both of whom had Indian cultural affinities. The indigenous Indo-Chinese and the upland peoples from the interior of China played a smaller part in the history of the country.

In the 2nd Century B.C., Tonkin and a narrow coastal strip of north Annam (Fig. 2) became part of the Chinese Empire,⁵ remaining so for about a thousand years. In the 10th Century A.D., the Annamites regained their

¹ Robequain, Charles. The economic development of French Indo-China. Oxford University Press, London. 1944. p. 14.

² Ibid., p. 15.

³ Masson, André. Histoire de l'Indochine. Que Sais-je? Presses Universitaires de France, Paris. 1950. p. 14.

⁴ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 126.

⁵ Masson. Op. cit., p. 29.

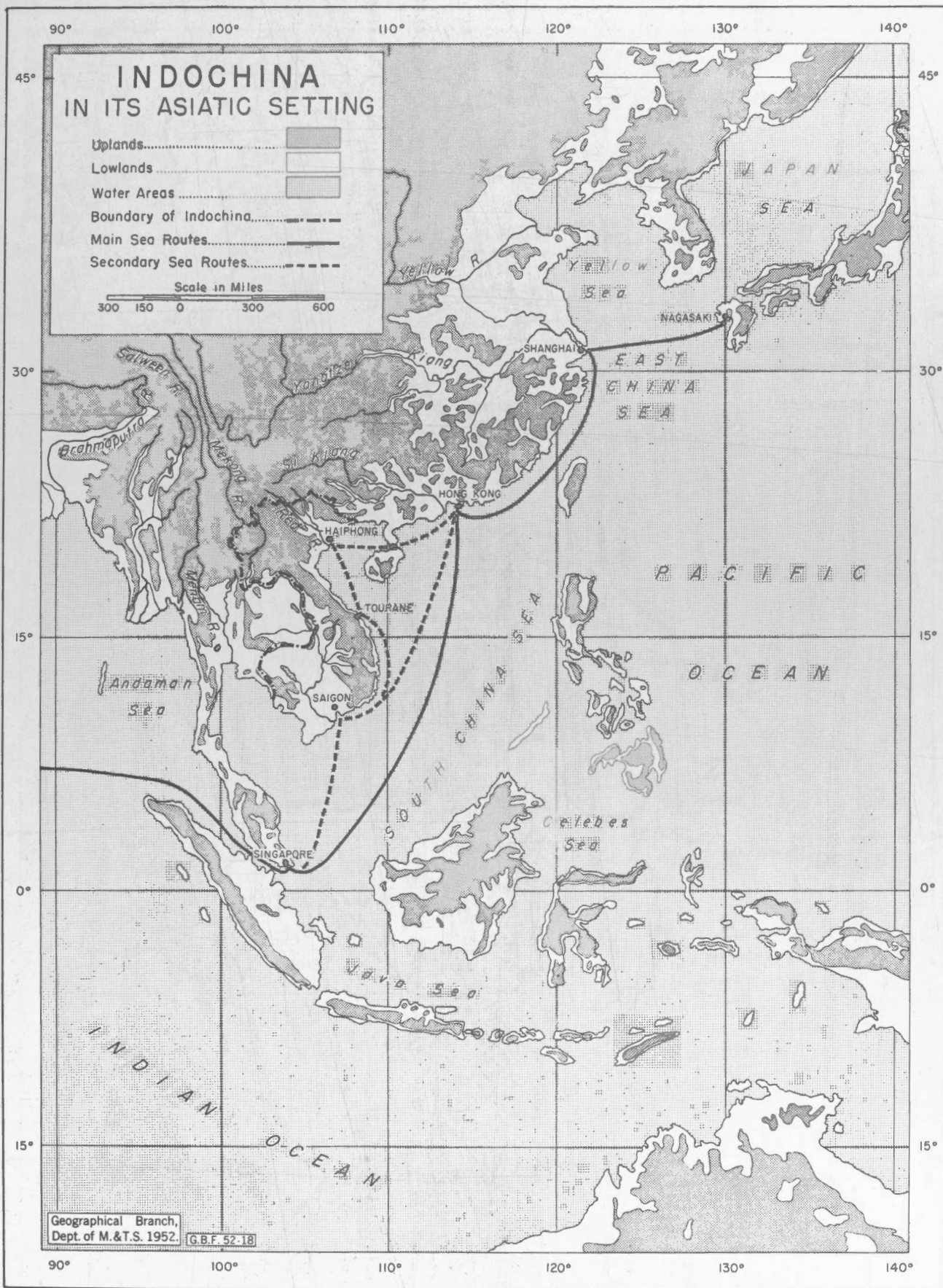


FIG. I



FIG. 2

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independence, which they maintained, except for a short interval, until the advent of the French. The effects of the millenium of Chinese influence have continued to dominate Annamite culture until the present day.

Independent Annam was a vigorous state. During the 13th Century, a Mongol invasion led by Kublai Khan was successfully repelled.¹ The slow southward expansion of the Annamites, which has marked their whole history, began in the 11th Century. The kingdom of Champa, immediately to the south, was finally defeated by the end of the 14th Century. By the 18th Century, the Annamites had begun to penetrate Cochin-China. These conquests were carried out by military colonists who, when they had driven out the inhabitants, immediately established themselves as farmers.² Conquered lands thus became new areas of permanent Annamite settlement. The present boundary between Cochin-China and Cambodia marks the approximate limits of Annamite infiltration at the time of the French intervention.³

The kingdom of Champa, which had extended along most of the present Annam coast, was gradually encroached upon from the north, and was finally completely overrun. The Cham people of today form a minor ethnic group scattered throughout southern Annam.

The Khmer kingdom of Cambodia occupied the lower Mekong basin and much of modern Siam. It was most powerful from the 9th to the 13th Centuries, during which time the famous buildings of Angkor was constructed.⁴ Each king built himself a new capital; Angkor was the temple erected by one king. Angkor Thom, the fourth of that name, was the capital erected by another king some fifty years later. The Cambodian kingdom was weakened by the southward movement of the Thai people from Yunnan, which began in the 12th Century. Owing to Thai pressure, the Cambodian capital was, near the close of the 15th Century, moved from Angkor to its present site at Phnom-Penh.⁵ Indian culture, most evident among the ruling classes, suffered decline. The Cambodian kingdom survived, however, but was tributary to either Annam or Siam previous to its becoming a French protectorate. Had it not been for French intervention in 1863, it is considered that the Cambodian kingdom would have disappeared.⁶

The Thai people began to move out of Yunnan in the 13th Century before the Mongols, who were moving outward from central Asia. For centuries there were internal wars and a long struggle with Burma. Siam (or Thailand) was founded in the 18th Century, having control of parts of Laos and indefinite powers over Cambodia.⁷ The rivalry between Siam and Laos was an important factor in the French occupation of these areas.

¹ Masson. Op. cit., p. 31.

² Ibid., p. 39.

³ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 7.

⁴ Briggs, L.P. A sketch of Cambodian history. The Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. VI: 345-363. August, 1947. pp. 351-353.

⁵ Masson. Op. cit. p. 25.

⁶ Janse, O.R.T. The peoples of French Indochina. Smithsonian Institution, War Background Studies. No. 19. Washington, 1944. p. 15.

⁷ Peterson, A.D.C. The Far East. Duckworth, London, 1949. p. 178.

Europeans, in the persons of Portuguese and Spanish merchants and missionaries, became interested in Indo-China during the 16th Century. They were followed by the Dutch, English, and French at various times during the course of the next two hundred years. Although there had been a few French missionaries and merchants in Indo-China since the 17th Century there was little French activity there until the 18th Century.

The first important instance of French intervention in Indo-China resulted from dynastic wars among the Annamite rulers. One of the claimants gained the support of a French missionary in the country, which contributed to his eventual success. This emperor, assuming the name of Gia Long, obtained the approval of the Chinese emperor to found the country of Viet-Nam which comprised the traditional regional divisions of Bac Ky (Tonkin), Nam Ky (Cochin-China) and Trung Ky (Annam).¹ In return for the help he had received, Gia Long established commercial relations with France. His successors, however, were less favourably disposed towards French activity, and it was their increasing hostility which aroused the French to intervene more effectively in 1858.

In the autumn of 1858, a combined French and Spanish fleet captured Tourane. If the hinterland were to be reached, a base was required where supplies could be obtained and access gained to the interior. Tonkin or Cochin-China were the alternative sites and, owing to the onset of the winter monsoon, the fleet moved to Saigon. Thus it was that Cochin-China became the first part of Indo-China to come under French domination.² The eastern provinces were ceded in 1862, and in 1867 all of Cochin-China became a French colony.

Cambodia, which had been menaced by both Annam and Siam, became a French protectorate in 1863. French occupation of the Annamite lands, Tonkin and Annam, resulted primarily from the desire to obtain access to Yunnan, because the Mekong Valley had proved impracticable.³ In 1885, Tonkin and Annam became French protectorates. The capitulation of Annam strengthened Siam's position in Laos. However, the French assumed Annamite claims to the territory on the east side of the Mekong⁴ and in 1893 Laos became a French protectorate.

By the end of the 19th Century, these four protectorates and one colony were grouped together as the Indo-Chinese Union. Previously, these lands had not been united by any ties, and as Robequain remarks, "The Indo-Chinese Union is a French creature whose cohesion is assured only by the will and power of France."⁵

¹ Masson. Op. cit., p. 62.

² Ibid., p. 30.

³ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 4.

⁴ Peterson. Op. cit. p. 180.

⁵ Ibid., p. 18.

When the power and prestige of France were undermined by events in Europe and the Far East during the Second World War, Indo-China, to some extent, lost its cohesion. After the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, Annamite nationalists formed a government of Viet-Nam, comprising Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin-China. In Cambodia and Laos the governments functioned separately from the Viet-Nam administration.¹ Cambodia and Laos, however, felt greater security against Siam and Annam within the French orbit,² and reached agreements with France regarding their future status within the French Union.

Two main points of contention arose between the Viet-Nam group and the French government: the inclusion of Cochin-China with Viet-Nam, and the status of Viet-Nam.

Cochin-China had been controlled by the provisional Viet-Nam government which was set up after the defeat of Japan. In the autumn of 1945, however, the French had removed the Viet-Nam authorities from office and had re-established their administration in Cochin-China. Much of the country remained in Viet-Nam hands.³ As negotiations proceeded, the leaders of the Annamite nationalist party, or Viet-Minh, insisted upon the restoration of "The Unity of the Three Ky",⁴ which had some historical precedent (page 4 *supra*).

In March, 1946, an agreement between the French authorities and Viet-Nam which declared hostilities at an end was signed; it recognized the independence of Viet-Nam within the French Union, and agreed to a referendum on the Cochin-Chinese question. The diplomatic status of Viet-Nam was left for consideration at a later conference.

In April of the same year at a conference held at Dalat in Annam, differences in the views of France and of the Viet-Minh leaders became apparent, particularly those concerning the status of Cochin-China.⁵ Negotiations broke down.

The French Commissioner, in June, set up a provisional government in Cochin-China, before a referendum was held. The Viet-Nam leaders asserted this to be a breach of the March agreement.

In July a conference was held in France, but before it was concluded the French High Commissioner in Indo-China called a second conference at Dalat, from which representatives of the Viet-Nam regime were excluded. The only result of the conference in France was a modus vivendi on cultural and economic questions; in Indo-China hostilities broke out during the winter of 1946-47.

¹ Micaud, C.A. French Indo-China in The new world of southeast Asia, edited by L.A. Mills, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. 1949. p.232.

² A.S.B.O. "Trial of strength in Indo-China". The World Today. Royal Institute of International Affairs, London. March, 1950. p. 128.

³ Micaud. Op. cit., p. 216.

⁴ Peterson. Op. cit., p. 188.

⁵ S.H. The Nationalist movement in Indo-China. The World Today. Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, June, 1947. p. 274.

On 19th May, 1948, the French-controlled towns elected a provisional Central Government of Viet-Nam with General Nguyen Van Xuan, an Annamite soldier, as Prime Minister. Bao Dai, the former Emperor of Annam, resumed his position. In June of that year an agreement was signed with this provisional government recognizing the independence of Viet-Nam, and in June, 1949, a further agreement was reached in which, among other points, Cochin-China was permitted to enter Viet-Nam if it so wished. The new status of Cochin-China became law in June, 1949. The treaties with Cambodia, Laos, and the Bao Dai government of Viet-Nam were ratified by the French government in January, 1950.

The Viet-Minh party led by Ho Chi Minh claims to be the real representative of the Viet-Nam people, and has been opposing the Bao Dai regime in those parts of the country which it still controls.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE FRENCH REGIME

The economic life of Indo-China, and its social structure, are predominantly based upon rice culture. The life of the great mass of Indo-Chinese peasants closely resembles that led by their ancestors. Since the beginning of French occupation, however, widespread social changes have occurred. Although all of Asia is passing through a period of social change, Indo-China is, in part, feeling the indirect effects of those economic developments resulting from French administration.

The chief problem of the region is still the unequal distribution of the population with regard to the need of developing the resources, including rice lands. Tonkin is a densely populated, closely cultivated area. Whenever floods or droughts lower the rice production of the area, famine ensues. The chief efforts of the French administration have been exerted towards solution of this problem.

Projects undertaken have included the improvement of farming methods and of seed quality, the opening up of new rice lands, through large-scale irrigation and drainage projects, the introduction of new crops in the hinterlands, the improvement of communication, and the development of mining and manufacturing.¹ The use to which capital has been put in various regions has varied, not because of administrative differences, but owing to the varying geographical conditions of each area.²

Not all these projects have been successful. Large new rice areas have been developed in Cochin-China, but in Tonkin the population is increasing at a greater rate than is rice production. On the northern deltas the land has long been cultivated so intensively and traditional methods are so deep-rooted that little improvement has been possible.³ The development of new crops, of mining, and of industry have not been on a scale sufficient to raise the standard of living greatly throughout the country. The progress of road and railway building has been slow and costly, hindering the movement of the population and the distribution of rice from areas of surplus.

¹ Micaud. Op. cit., p. 220.

² Robequain. Op. cit., p. 11.

³ Micaud. Op. cit., p. 220.

In spite of the fact that economic development has in itself met with many difficulties it has, nevertheless, effected many social changes in the lives and attitudes of the Indo-Chinese people. Perhaps the most profound change has come about as a result of the impact of European thinking upon the traditional structure of Indo-Chinese life. In speaking of social change in Indo-China, Robequain says:

"Recognition of the individual's importance has grown at the expense of the two basic units - the family and the village."¹

The breakdown of family and village ties has been felt most keenly in the Annamite lands. The Cambodians, chiefly for philosophical reasons, never possessed strong village organization.² The mountain villages vary greatly in social organization, but, because of their inaccessibility, have been less affected by recent changes.

Annamite village life reflects that of China. Strong religious and social obligations are laid upon the family members, in keeping with the cult of ancestor worship. Each member feels himself a part of the family and village group, because the family is an integral part of the village. In order to fulfil the necessary religious and social obligations involved, it is also necessary to live on the land of one's ancestors, a fact which partly explains the lack of success in making large-scale, sudden transfers of population.

The conflict between individualism and collectivism arose as a result of Western intervention. During the first period of administration, the object of French rule was pacification of the country, but later policies were based to some extent, upon the individualistic trend of French political thought.³ The concept of the value of individual life has led to the suppression of many old, harsh laws, but has weakened the authority which guided the people.⁴ This, together with the physical isolation from the home group imposed by economic changes, has produced in the Annamites a sense of "uprootedness".⁵

This does not mean that the Annamites have not assimilated, superficially at least, many of the aspects of French culture. The adaptability which enabled them to seize upon many elements of Chinese culture has operated upon Western culture as well. It is also possible, so similar is Annamite to Chinese life, that a period of revolutionary change, such as that in China, would have occurred in Annam even without French intervention.⁶ The effects of assimilation have been the breakdown of Confucianism and of many superstitions with regard to the soil. Other effects have been the growth of urban communities, the formation of new social classes, and the rise of Annamite nationalism.

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 12.

² Masson. Op. cit., p. 70.

³ Janse. Op. cit., p. 10.

⁴ Micard. Op. cit., p. 226.

⁵ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 85.

⁶ Peterson. Op. cit., p. 184.

Before the arrival of the French there were no large towns in Indo-China. There are now several urban centres within the delta areas, such as Hanoi and Haiphong in Tonkin, and Saigon-Cho-lon in the Mekong delta. These cities act as focal points for the further concentration of population in areas already densely peopled.

One class which has grown considerably in Indo-Chinese society is that of the "landless proleteriat" - those who own either no land or insufficient land to provide a living.¹ This group is composed of two types, the wage-earners and the landless farmers, from whose ranks the former emerge. In earlier times, land was not held in equal amounts, but the communal organization of community life lessened the effects of this discrepancy. The breakdown of village organization has removed this source of support from the small land-holder, and, at the same time, the rapid increase in births has reduced the size of family holdings. Even in Tonkin, therefore, where peasant farming was best established, there are growing numbers of large estates and landless tenants.² The newly drained lands in Cochin-China were sold, in order to defray expenses, to those best able to develop the land quickly. Large estates grew up, managed by an intermediate group and worked by tenant farmers. The tenants have become involved in a cumulative process of borrowing against future harvests from the landlords, to some of whom interest on such loans has become a major source of income.³ The French authorities, through the formation of agricultural credit organizations, have attempted to alleviate this situation.⁴

The increased rates of population growth resulting from French medical and engineering projects, the improved transportation facilities, and the growing need for labour in mines, on plantations, and in industry, have combined to bring the wage-earning class into being. Formerly, work was undertaken by the family group. Now there is a demand, especially in the south, for a labour force composed of employable individuals who have left the home and family group. These people enjoy better living and working conditions than at home, but feel themselves to be lacking in moral and social compensations.⁵ For this reason, many return home upon the expiration of their contracts, or even earlier. Thus, although the total wage-earning group is small, large numbers must be recruited to fulfil the requirements for labour. The instability of the wage-earning population has delayed the development of a conscious "working class", but the great change from farming to wage-earning has been experienced by a proportionately large group of the population.⁶

Another social class to emerge in Indo-China is that of the wealthy and intellectual "new élité". The impact of western ideas and education, the weakening of traditional hierarchies, and the intellectual traditions of

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 85.

² Ibid., p. 83.

³ Ibid., p. 84.

⁴ Masson. Op. cit., p. 109.

⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

⁶ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 82.

Confucian Annam and Buddhist Cambodia have accounted for the rise of this class.¹ The wealth of these people is founded upon their ownership of rice-lands, especially the newly drained areas in Cochin-China. Associated with land ownership is the lending of money to their tenants.² Although some have invested in a variety of industrial and commercial enterprises, rice lands continue to form their main source of wealth.³ It is from the wealthy class that many of the intellectuals appear, because they place great value upon education and Western culture, and have the means to satisfy their wishes. However, many desire greater opportunities for westernized education than they consider to have been provided.⁴ Furthermore, those who have received such education find limited opportunity in the administrative system. The highly centralized form of government developed by the French in their home-land has been made the basis of colonial administration in the overseas territories.⁵ Since 1938, Indo-Chinese have been admitted to responsible administrative positions, but this did not altogether allay the sense of frustration in the wealthy intellectual class.⁶

Nationalism has flourished in those regions of Indo-China where the Western impact has been strongest, because it is based on Western political concepts. The supporters of the movement originally came from the professional and intellectual classes, which arose as a result of westernization. Prior to the Second World War however, in spite of growing dissatisfaction among the "proletariat",⁷ the movement was neither strong nor well-organized.

Indo-China has seen a gradual ascendancy of Chinese over Indian influence. Contact with China commenced at an early date, and has continued ever since, both by the slow infiltration of peoples along the rivers, valleys, and coastal plains, and by the migration of Chinese to the delta areas. Direct Indian cultural contacts were few, and have been lessening since the decline of the Cambodian kingdom. The upsurge of Annamite nationalism since that date marks the further increase of Chinese influence in Indo-China.

In the chapters which follow, the various factors which contribute to the present situation in Indo-China are analyzed in terms of its human and material resources. Finally Indo-China is considered regionally to determine areas of 'natural' cohesion.

1 Masson. Op. cit., p. 108.

2 Robequain. Op. cit., p. 86.

3 Ibid., p. 87.

4 Loc. cit.

5 Micaud. Op. cit., p. 227.

6 Ibid., p. 228.

7 Ibid., p. 235.

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Indo-China, with an agricultural base, is more than usually dependent upon the physical environment. Surface configuration, climate, vegetation, and soils, all determine the limits and the potentialities of rice-growing areas. The extent to which rice culture can be supplemented by other activities is also influenced by these factors, as well as by the presence of such resources as coal, other minerals, and fisheries.

LAND

The surface of Indo-China is the result of a complicated geological history. Areas can be classified on the basis of similar origins or their passage through similar geological processes. From a geographic point of view, Indo-China can be divided into regions in which the life of the inhabitants clearly reflects the influence of the configuration of the land.

Geological History and Structure¹

There are thought to have been five periods of folding in the geological history of Indo-China. The first occurred in Pre-Cambrian time, and little evidence of it remains. The second, in the early Palaeozoic, produced the metamorphic rocks of Tonkin and Upper Laos.

Throughout much of the Devonian, seas covered the land, but from the late Devonian to the early Carboniferous mountain-building produced the Annam Cordillera. Intrusions took place at the end of this period, which account for most of the granitic rocks in the area.

From the late Carboniferous to the early Triassic, the seas again invaded the land. The Annam Cordillera was eroded and sediments were deposited on the low-lying areas. Limestone beds were laid down in Laos and Tonkin, but in the southern part, the sediments were laid down on dry land or in lagoons.

Near the end of the Triassic period, mountain-building began again. This activity produced the mountain arch northeast of the Red River, in Upper Tonkin. Many of the sediments deposited during the previous period of marine invasion were eroded. Intense folding occurred throughout Tonkin, Northern Annam and Upper Laos, but the sediments in the lower Mekong basin and the Cardamome Mountains were relatively undisturbed. This period marked the final emergence of Indo-China from the sea.

The final period of folding has been called the Himalayan. Ancient surfaces were elevated and exposed to erosion, while, in the west and south, the land was lowered. Along some of the ancient folds, fracturing

¹ The following passages are based on "La structure de l'Indochine" by Charles Robequain. *Annales de Géographie*, vol. 45: 192-197. Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1936. This article is a summarization of numerous studies made in the years immediately preceding 1936.

took place. The Red River now flows in one of these fractures. The movement was accompanied by the outpouring of basalt which, decomposed, has produced the "red earths" of upland Indo-China.

Erosion has played an important part in the development of present surface features. In areas of heavy rainfall, rapid erosion has produced deep gorges and narrow valleys. The great volume of sediments from these areas is contributing to the building up of the modern deltas.

Physiographic Regions

The physiography of Indo-China is dominated by the uplands which cover more than one-half of the total area of the region.¹ These uplands lie all across the northern section and extend southward through the centre of the land (Fig. 3). A second, smaller upland lies close to the southwest coast of Cambodia. There are two lowland regions of great importance: the Red River (Fleuve Rouge, Songkoi) valley and delta, and the Mekong valley and delta. The Annam Cordillera, really an elevated, tilted plateau, slopes abruptly to the east coast with a more gradual slope westward to the Mekong. The Cambodian mountains, of similar structure, also rise abruptly from the Gulf of Siam, sloping gently to the Tonlé Sap lowland. Lowlands and uplands may be further distinguished on the basis of their relief features.

1. The Tonkin-Laos Uplands: (Fig. 4) Within this area are included diverse types of rock and structure, all having as common features the presence of deeply cut river valleys and steep mountain crests.

The mountains in the region have three main structural trends: the trend of the northeast mountains, where the rivers flow to the Si Kiang; the northwest-southeast trend of the central area, as indicated by the Red River and its tributaries; and the northeast-southwest trend in the western part of the region within the Mekong basin.

Detailed surface configuration varies according to the underlying rock materials. Limestone deposits account for very abrupt relief, such as that which extends beyond the coast-line into the Bay of Along (Fig. 3), forming typical abrupt islets notched at the bases by the action of seawater.² The extreme solubility of limestone is shown in the interior by the presence of underground rivers, circular ponds hollowed out by standing water (solution lakes) and other features typical of "karst" topography. Farther inland, the great calcareous plateaus, such as that on the right bank of the Black River (Rivière Noire or Song Bo), are deeply dissected by "cluses", or trenches formed by the tributaries of the main rivers.³ In areas where schists prevail, the hills are lower and more rounded, but here, also, deep river valleys have been cut. In the northeast corner of the country is a zone of low hills and somewhat broader valleys, owing to the presence of sandstones and slates. Rugged relief, although less abrupt than

1 McCune. The diversity of Indochina's physical geography. Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. VI. No. 4: 335-344. August, 1947. p. 335.

2 Sion. Asie des moussons. p. 418.

3 Ibid., p. 420.

in limestone, is found in the areas of crystalline rocks, such as the great chains on the right bank of the Red River from Yunnan to its junction with the Black.¹

2. The Annam Cordillera: The eastern limits of the Annam Cordillera are well defined, both structurally and topographically, for the dissected forefront of the plateau rises steeply from the narrow alluvial plains along the coast. To the west, however, there is not always a distinct separation between the Cordillera proper and the lower plateaux. In the highest part of the plateau, owing to more rapid erosion, increased altitude and relief impose "mountain" conditions upon the inhabitants.

The northern part of the Annam Cordillera is the narrowest. River erosion has attacked both flanks, and the range is broken by passes or "cols" giving access from the Annam coast to the Mekong Valley. This part of the Cordillera comprises the remnants of some of the earlier folded mountains. Farther south, crystalline rocks are found (page 10). The highest parts of the Annam Cordillera are formed by these more resistant materials.² However, it is the width of the Annam Cordillera, more than its height which makes it a true regional barrier, a dividing zone for climate, vegetation, and ethnic groups.³

3. The Mekong Plateaux: Although the plateaux west of the Nam-hou River in northern Laos are not structurally related to those farther south, which form part of the Annam Cordillera, their physiography is sufficiently similar to permit their being classified with the latter group. (Fig. 4)

Most of the Mekong plateaux are composed of sandstone beds, laid down under water, which suffered little disturbance subsequent to their deposition. In some cases, the plateau character of the surface has been maintained by the resistant qualities of the beds themselves, as in the case of the Tran Minh Plateau, north of Vientiane.⁴ Many of the plateaux, particularly towards the south, have been formed by level beds of extruded basalt, such as the Bolovens plateau north of the Se-Khong River. Between Dalat and the border of Cochin-China, the plateaux are formed by a series of granite formations descending in steps to the plain. Whatever their structural origins may be, the character of all these plateaux has favoured the development of human activities which differ in some respects from those of the inhabitants of plains and high mountains.

4. The Cambodian Uplands: The upland areas of Cambodia resemble the Annam Cordillera, but on a smaller scale. They, too, are composed chiefly of raised sandstone plateaux and some crystalline massifs, rising steeply from the sea and sloping more gently to the interior. In the crystalline areas and on the higher coastal edges, where precipitation is heaviest, erosion has carved rugged topography. The drier leeward slopes exhibit a more uniform surface.

1 Ibid., p. 421.

2 Ibid., p. 434.

3 Ibid., p. 435.

4 Ibid., p. 438.

5 Ibid., p. 434.

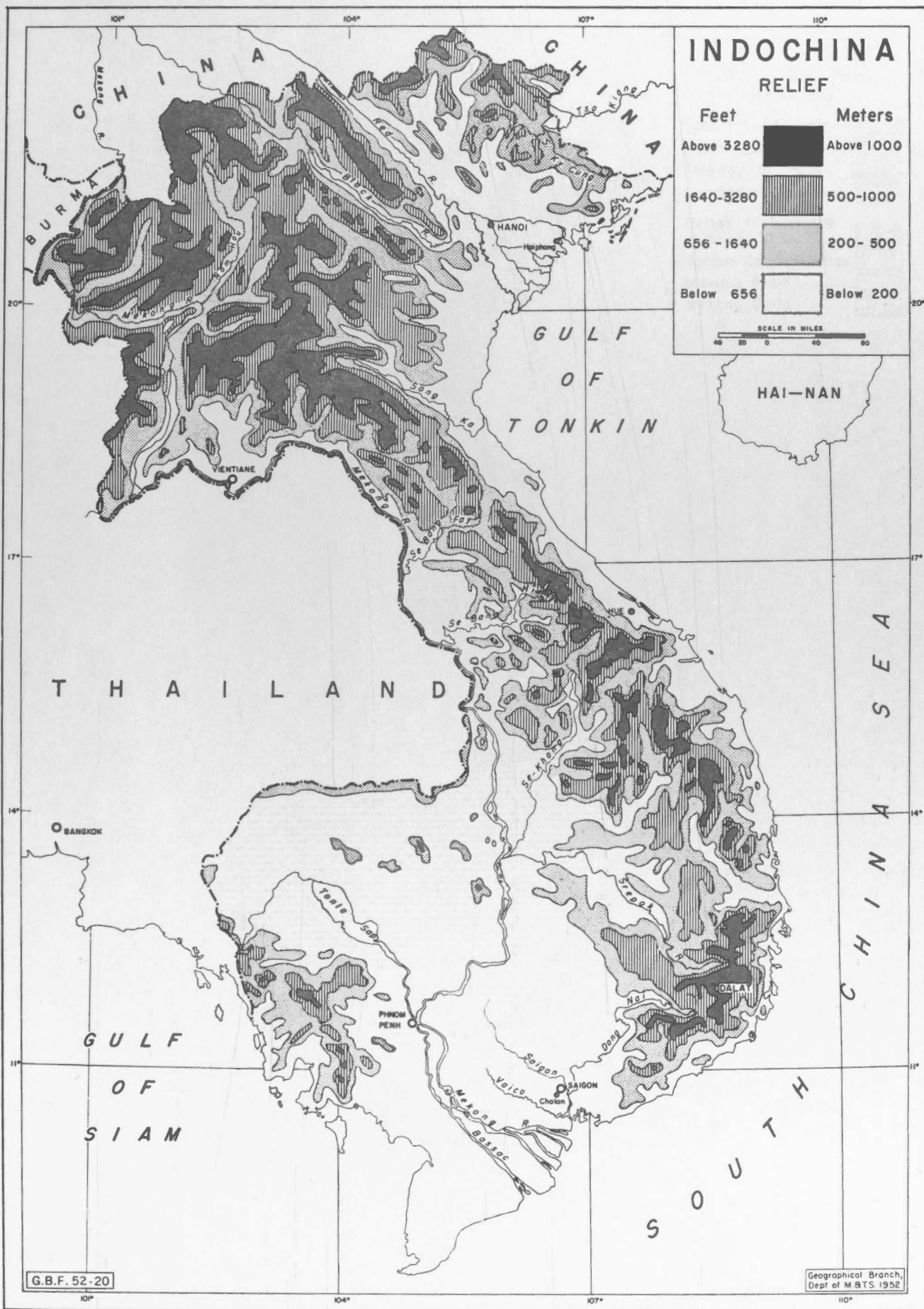


FIG. 3

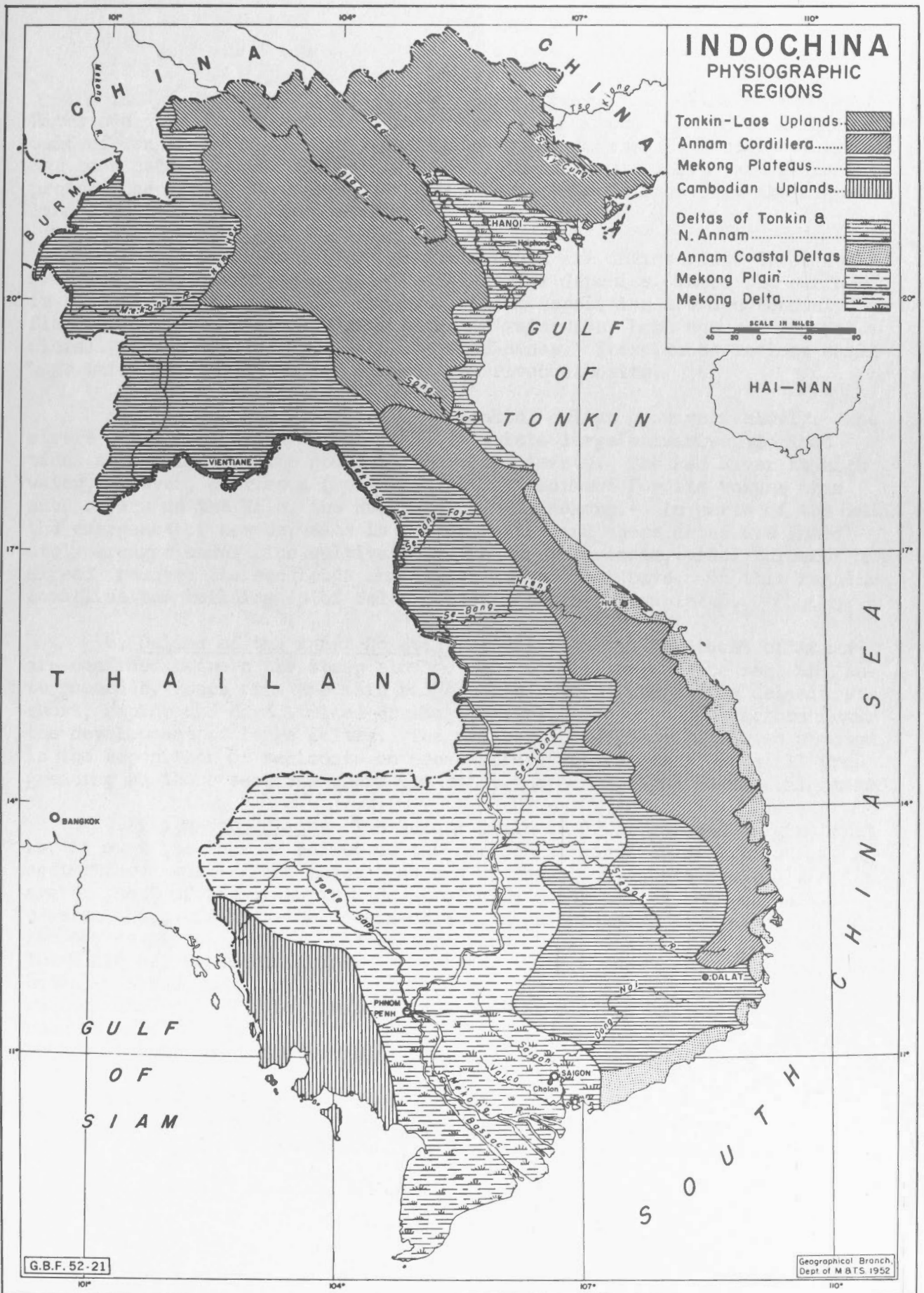


FIG. 4

5. The Deltas of Tonkin and Northern Annam: The deltas of the Red River and of the northernmost Annam rivers form a contiguous area along the Gulf of Tonkin (Fig. 4). In this region, owing to the river regimes, it has been necessary for the people to build embankments along the rivers to protect the fields from floods. Such structures sometimes form the highest land elevations in these areas.

The deltas of Tonkin and northern Annam are divided into three zones. Fringing the uplands are areas of old alluvial deposits, where the surface is slightly undulating. The areas of recent deposition are monotonously flat and are intersected by many embanked waterways, both natural and artificial. The shorelines are lined by sand-dunes. These dunes enclose small bays which eventually become filled with river deposits.

East of the Red River delta in Tonkin, deltas grow very slowly. The rivers carry less alluvium, and also flow into large estuaries, so that tidal action impedes the accumulation of sediments. The Red River at high water, however, carries a greater weight of sediment for its volume than such rivers as the Nile, the Hwang-ho, or the Mekong.¹ In parts of the delta the emergence of new deposits is fairly rapid, and these areas are immediately brought under rice cultivation. In northern Annam, tidal currents have already removed the headlands and filled the coastal bays. On this regular coastline the building up of delta deposits has been completed.

6. Deltas of the Annam Coast: The deltas along the coast of Annam are confined between the steep slope of the Cordillera and the sea, and interrupted by spurs from the main range. The rivers forming the deltas are short, rapid, and have limited drainage basins, none of which factors favour the development of large deltas. The process of delta-building, as opposed to the deposition of sediments on areas already above water, is still progressing in those sections where the coastline has not yet been straightened.

7. The Mekong Plain: The Mekong plain is of structural origin; that is, it owes its lack of relief to the horizontal position of its underlying sedimentary beds. Where these beds are of sandstone, there are small upland areas. Most of the plain is made up of clay deposits. A belt of basalt crosses the plain near the Cochin-China-Cambodia border, forming rapids in the course of the Mekong. The western part of the plain forms the basin of the Tonlé Sap (Great Lake). This lowland, lying between the Annam and Cambodian uplands, may have resulted from subsidence, so that the area was a gulf of the sea. The scattered granitic uplands of today would then have been islands.³ Deposition of recent alluvial material is proceeding rapidly in the vicinity of the Mekong and the Tonlé Sap.

8. The Mekong Delta: The delta of the Mekong is being built up by alluvial deposits carried by that river, as well as by shorter rivers which reach the sea in the same vicinity. The delta is monotonously flat, and is

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 424.

² *Ibid.*, p. 424.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

composed of sticky mud with narrow deposits of sand. Without drainage projects, the delta is marshy and almost uninhabited, because the brackish water is unfavourable to the growth of rice.

River Systems and Lakes:

There are three main drainage basins in Indo-China: the Red River system and some smaller rivers drain into the Gulf of Tonkin; the rivers of eastern Annam drain into the South China Sea; the Mekong and its tributaries also drain into the South China Sea, but the basin of this system lies west of the Annam Cordillera. A few short rivers drain from the Cambodian mountains into the Gulf of Siam (Fig. 3). In northeast Tonkin, the rivers follow the curving land structure and become tributaries of the Si Kiang, which flows into the China Sea.

1. Gulf of Tonkin Drainage System: The Red River, the greatest of the Gulf of Tonkin group, has a total length of about 720 miles. In its upper course, it flows in a deep structural trough. Its tributaries, such as the Black River and the Rivière Claire, flow in deep canyons caused by downcutting of the rivers following uplift of the land surface.¹

The runoff from the rugged drainage area produces great fluctuations in the river regime. During high water, from June to October, the volume of the river is approximately triple its low-water volume, from March to May. Because of great variability in precipitation, however, the volume of the river fluctuates greatly. Hydrographic projects are mainly for the purpose of flood control. Banks are built to keep back floods, dividing the land into casiers or basins. The embankments decrease in height downstream where the diverging river mouths permit more equal distribution of the flood waters.

The smaller rivers, east of the Red, have much lower volumes and carry a smaller proportion of sediments. Delta building is slower, tidal movements are felt farther upstream and, during the dry season, brackish water penetrates farther inland than in the distributories of the Red.

The rivers of north Annam are connected by old watercourses behind the coastal sand-dunes and bars. Because they also rise in areas of rugged topography, their deltas have to be embanked as a flood-control measure.

2. The Annam Coastal Plain: The rivers flowing east from the Annam Cordillera are short and swift (Fig. 3). Because they are able to cut their valleys more rapidly than the streams flowing west, many of these eastward-flowing rivers have already pierced the "divide" between the Mekong and the South China Sea. In places, this action has been so rapid that short streams have been able to "capture" the head-waters of the slower westward-flowing streams, which are now diverted towards the east.² These valleys across the divide facilitate east-west communication in the Cordillera. Many of the Annam rivers are linked by old waterways which cross the deltas.

¹ Sion. Op. cit., p. 418.

² Ibid., p. 435.

The Mekong System: The Mekong, nearly 2,500 miles in length, is one of the great rivers of Asia. In its upper reaches the Mekong flows in a deep valley, but where it reaches the borders of Indo-China its course is more placid. The Mekong falls less abruptly than does the Red River (Fig. 3), so the process of valley-cutting is less severe than in the upper Red River basin.¹ In its lower course, however, uplift of the land surface has placed barriers of resistant rock in the river bed. The river is cutting through these in a series of rapids which hinder navigation.

The tributaries from the Annam Cordillera to the Mekong flow very gently on the upland plateaux. These uplands are often swampy, and the divides between the rivers are poorly defined. Farther downstream, where they leave the plateaux, the rivers become more entrenched and only regain their placid character on the more level Mekong plain.

The watershed between the Mekong and the Menam, the main river of Siam, is very low. At one time, it is thought, both may have drained into the Gulf of Siam.

The Mekong once drained into the sea in the present vicinity of Phnom Penh. The Tonlé Sap was then an arm of the sea. The land uplift which raised obstructions in the bed of the river cut off the lake from the sea. Species of marine life which have adapted themselves to fresh-water conditions are still found in the lake. This uplift caused the Mekong to build its present delta below Phnom Penh and will cause the lake to fill up in about 200 years.²

Tonlé Sap acts as a regulator of the Mekong floods. During June to October, when the water-level of the river is high, the current runs into the lake from the river. From November to June, the low-water period, the lake drains into the river. Tonle Sap doubles its surface area during the high-water period. As a result there are no large permanent settlements in the vicinity of the lake. The rivers flowing into Tonlé Sap from the Cambodian uplands are mere creeks during the dry season.

The regime of the Mekong is less well known than that of the Red River. The maximum high-water period is reached in Laos, in July, but in the lower reaches the high-water period, which commences in June, does not attain its maximum until October. The Mekong does not drain directly from the rugged uplands to the delta, the Tonle Sap acts as a reservoir for the overflow, and the river has more outlets than does the Red. For these reasons, hydraulic projects are more for the purpose of drainage and removal of brackish water than for flood control. Undrained areas still support only a scanty population.

Immediately east of the Mekong delta are those of smaller rivers, such as the Saigon River, which flow from the foot of the Annam Cordillera to the sea. They carry less silt than the Mekong, and are less important

¹ Sion. Op. cit., p. 438.

² Ibid., p. 447.

from an agricultural point of view. However, it is this comparative lack of sediment that has permitted the development of the port of Saigon in this area.

CLIMATE

Indo-China is situated in the heart of that vast area of the world known as "Monsoon Asia" which extends around the margins of the continent from India to the Kamchatka Peninsula. Life in all the lands of this great belt is dominated by the annual regime of monsoonal winds and precipitation.

The Monsoon Regime

The monsoon regime is caused by unequal air pressure over the land mass of Eurasia and the seas surrounding the continent. In winter, the air over the central continent becomes very cold and dense, and sinks, to form a centre of high pressure. Over the surrounding oceans the air is warmer and less dense. The winter monsoon period is thus characterized by the outflowing of cold, dry air from the land mass to the oceans. From the prevailing direction of the winds the winter monsoon is often called the North-east Monsoon.

In summer, reversed conditions obtain. The air over the central continent becomes very warm and rises, resulting in the formation of a vast low pressure area. The summer monsoon is marked by moist winds flowing inward from the warm seas to the warmer land and bringing with them the heavy summer rains characteristic of monsoon climates. The summer monsoon winds flow from the southeast, but, upon crossing the equator, the rotation of the earth induces a 90° change in direction. Over much of Monsoon Asia, therefore, the summer monsoon is known as the Southwest Monsoon, although local surface conditions may produce variations in its direction.

Winds

The winter monsoon period in Indo-China lasts from mid-September until March. The northeast winds commence first in northern Indo-China, and are not well established in the south until the end of October. Wind directions vary throughout the land (Fig. 5). In all parts of the country, local topographic variations change, or may even reverse, the direction.

The summer monsoon in Indo-China commences in less pronounced fashion than does the winter. The date of its onset varies considerably, from late April to June. During the summer, wind directions are generally completely reversed to their various winter patterns (Fig. 5). Wind directions in northern Indo-China are less constant than in the south, owing to the passage of shallow depressions. The summer monsoon winds are usually moisture-bearing, but those which cross the Annam mountains and descend to the coast, known as the "Winds of Laos" are dry and hot, having lost their moisture en route.

Temperature

Relief exerts a strong influence upon temperatures in Indo-China. Owing to its proximity to mountainous central Asia, and to the northwest-

southeast trend of the great valleys from the interior, Tonkin is much cooler in winter than is typical for its latitude.¹ The Annam Range also acts as a climatic barrier, confining the cooler air to the northeast part of the country. Thus Tonkin, northern Laos, and the higher parts of the Annam Range have temperatures in the coldest month (January) below 65° F. (Fig. 6). These areas do not, therefore, have the "tropical" climates of the other regions. Temperatures are high enough, however, for year-round rice production, and the importance of the cool winters lies chiefly in its effects on human energy.

Spring, and particularly April, is the warmest period of the year in much of Indo-China (Fig. 7). Elevation, latitude, and the influence of coastal position cause the plains of Tonkin and Annam to have temperatures below 80° F., but in the Mekong Valley temperatures are warmer and in the lower portion they rise to over 85° F.

In July, temperatures in Tonkin and in the lower Mekong region are more nearly similar (Fig. 8). The increased cloud cover associated with the monsoon rains decreases temperatures in the Mekong lowlands. On the Annam coast, where summer rainfall is less pronounced, temperatures average over 85° F., so that this region is the warmest in the country in July.

The pattern of the isotherms in October is similar to that of mid-winter (Fig. 9), coolest in the mountainous uplands and warmest over the lower Mekong. However, owing to the autumn rains on the Annam coast, the temperatures there in October average about the same as those in the Tonkin lowlands.

Precipitation

Because of the cultivation of rice, precipitation is a vital climatic factor in Indo-China. However, the areas having the greatest rainfall are not the densely populated lowlands, but the mountainous regions.

The wettest part of Indo-China is in the southwest, where the moisture-bearing Southwest Monsoon strikes the mountains bordering the coast of Cambodia (Fig. 10). The Annam Range generally receives a higher precipitation than the surrounding lowlands, in particular the frontal slopes of the Annam Chain north of the Mekong lowlands. The mountains of northern Indo-China receive a greater rainfall than do the lowlands, but less than those further south, owing to their greater distance from the sea.

The lowlands of Tonkin, in the north, receive more rain than the region of Tonlé Sap and the lower Mekong because the latter area is sheltered from the Southwest Monsoon by the Cambodian coastal mountains.² The summer monsoon reaches Tonkin without such interruption.

¹ Tulippe, O. *Initiation à la Géographie Humaine*. Sciences et Lettres, Liège. 1949. p. 121.

² McCune. *Op. cit.*, p. 340.

Rainfall on the Annam coast varies according to the direction of the coast-line. The northeastward-facing coasts have an annual precipitation of over 80 inches, but along the southern coast of Annam, where both summer and winter monsoon winds parallel the coast-line, the rainfall may be less than 40 inches in a year.

Rice requires a constant supply of moisture during its growing season, yet the rice-growing regions of Tonkin and the lower Mekong both have dry periods of considerable length. In addition, annual precipitation totals fluctuate greatly. Even in a normal year, one season may be abnormally dry or wet. As little as 10 days' drought in the growing season may cause a failure in the rice crop,¹ or excessive rainfall may cause floods. All these factors indicate the necessity for hydraulic projects in Indo-China.

Climatic Regions

On the basis of the above factors, Indo-China may be divided into two main climatic regions, and five sub-regions, each having certain characteristics significant to its human occupants.

The basic climatic division in Indo-China is between those areas having an average temperature for the coldest month of less than 64.4° F. (18° C.).² Tonkin, northern Laos, and the highlands of Annam have thus a sub-tropical climate as compared to the tropical climate of the rest of the country (Fig. 11). This region has mid-summer maxima in rainfall and precipitation and an annual temperature range of about 20° F. (Fig. 12).

A sub-region within the sub-tropical zone is marked by the crachin period, a season of fine, drizzling rain which occurs from February to the end of April (Fig. 11). In this area, maximum rainfall occurs in summer, but the crachin period is distinguished by the proportionally high number of days with rain in the months of February to April (Figs. 12a and 12b).

The tropical climates are marked by monthly temperatures which exceed an average of 64.4° F. all year. Throughout most of the region, the temperature maxima occur before the high sun period in June (summer solstice) (Figs. 12, c, e). Some parts of the region have a slight tendency toward a double maximum of summer rainfall (Figs. 12, c), but not all (Fig. 12e).

The narrow annual temperature range typical of many tropical climates occurs in Indo-China only in the Mekong lowlands (Figs. 11, 12 and e). In the upper Mekong Valley, average temperatures for the year, although high, have a range of more than 9° Fahrenheit (Fig. 12c).

The climate of the Annam coastal sub-region is marked by the dominance of the autumn rainfall maximum (Fig. 11). This maximum is not associated with the winter monsoon, which reaches a climax in January, but with the typhoon period in October and November (Figs. 12, and d).

¹ McCune. Op. cit., p. 341.

² This is the basis of Koppen's division between A and C climates.

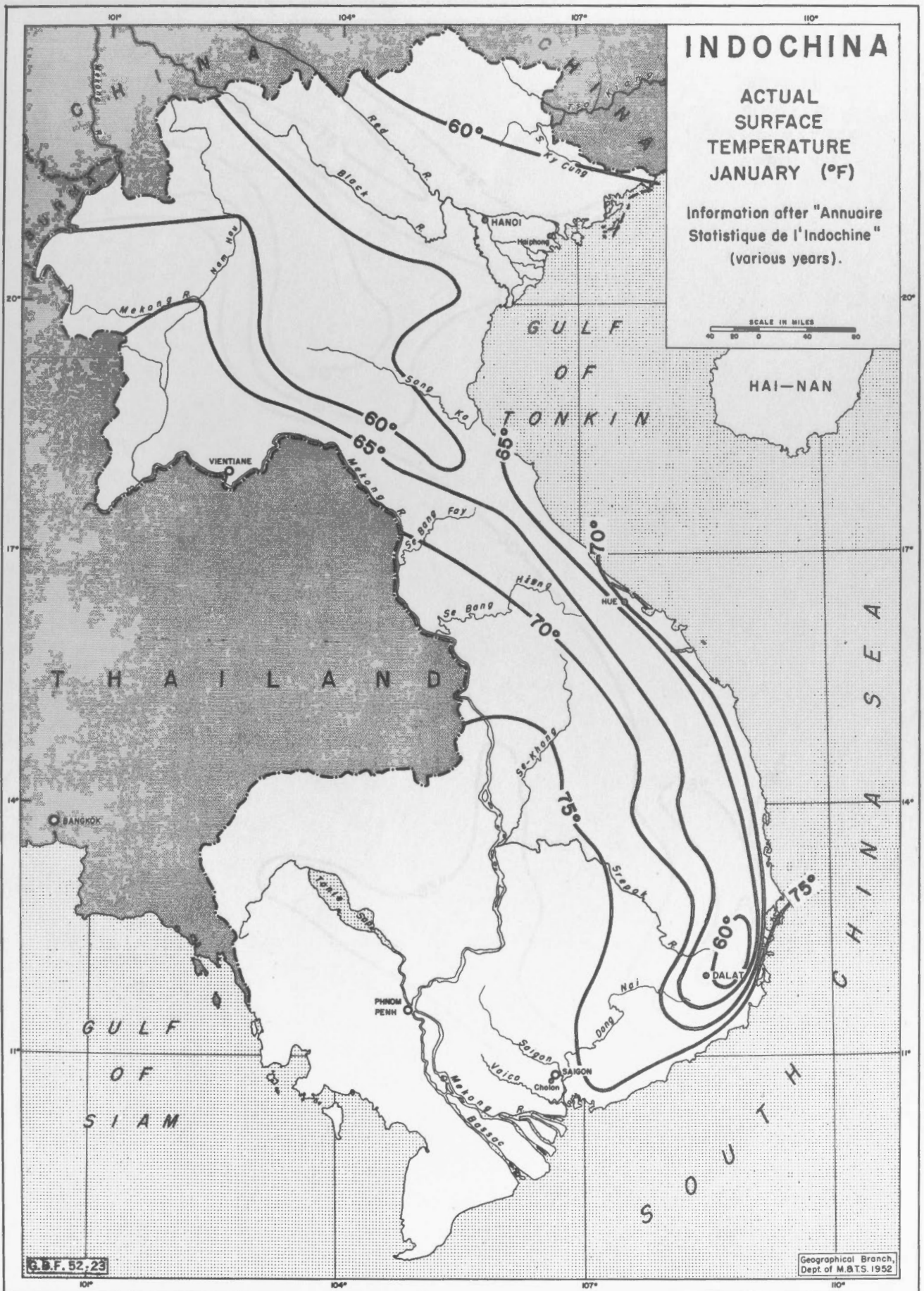


FIG. 6

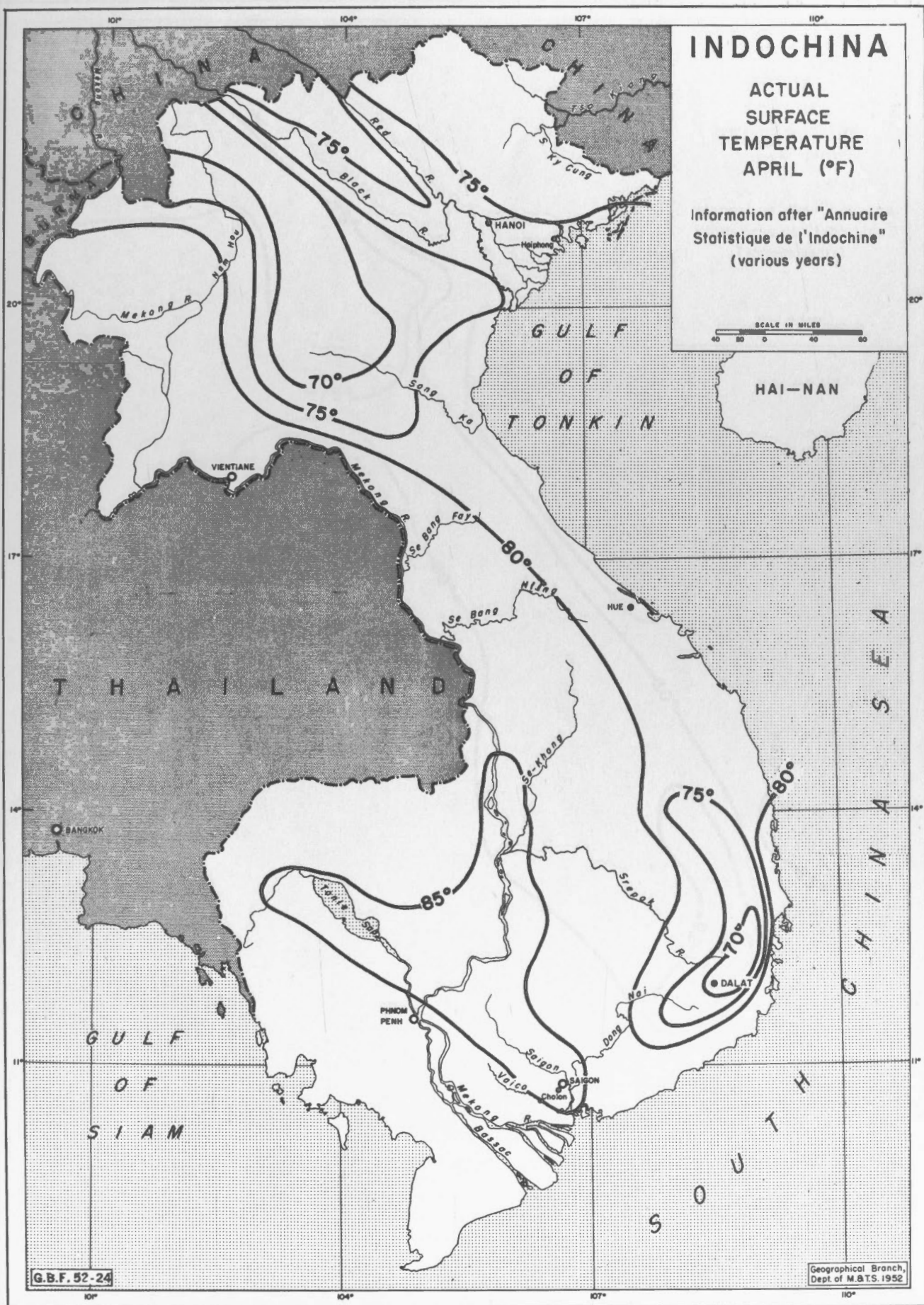


FIG. 7

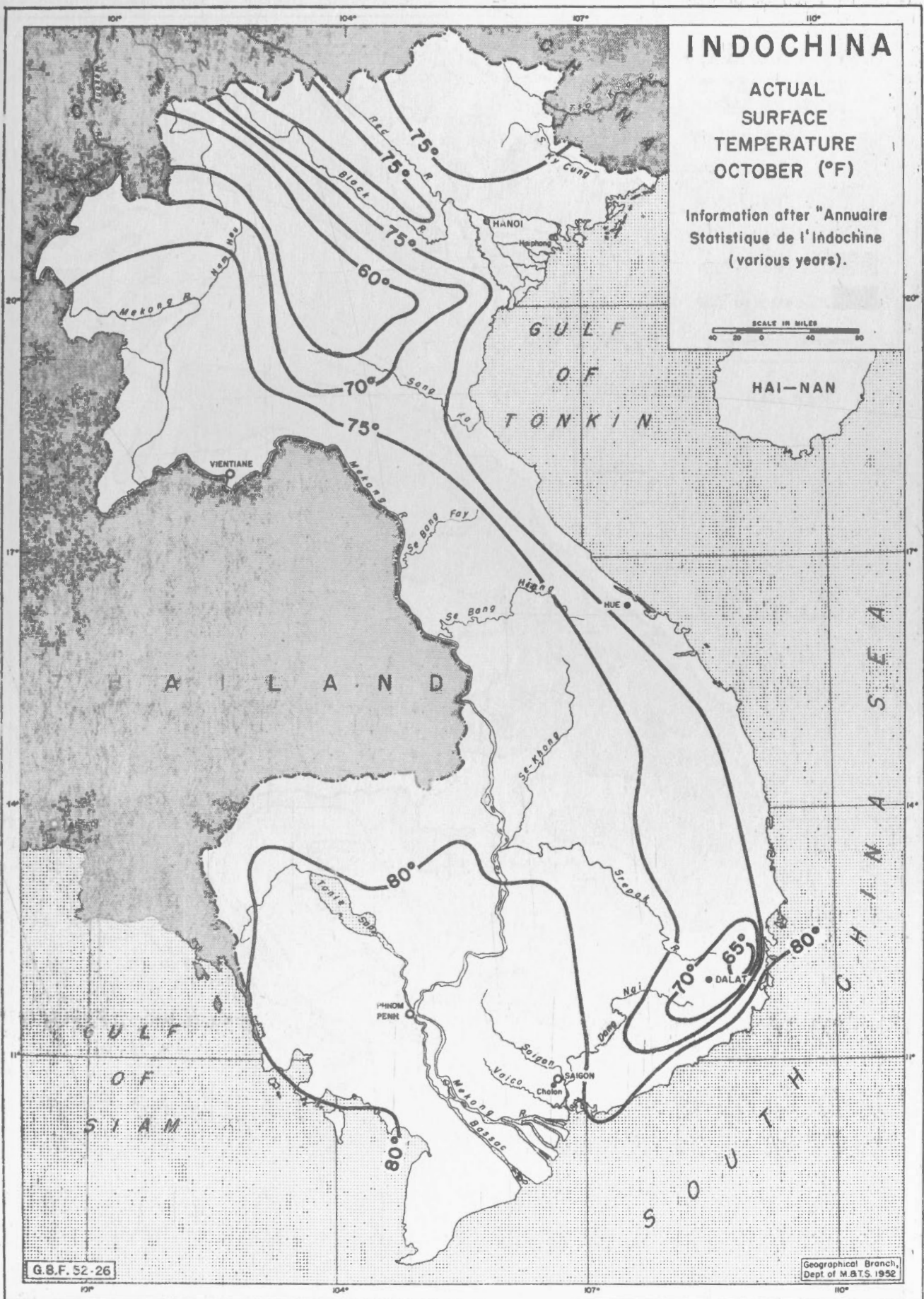


FIG. 9

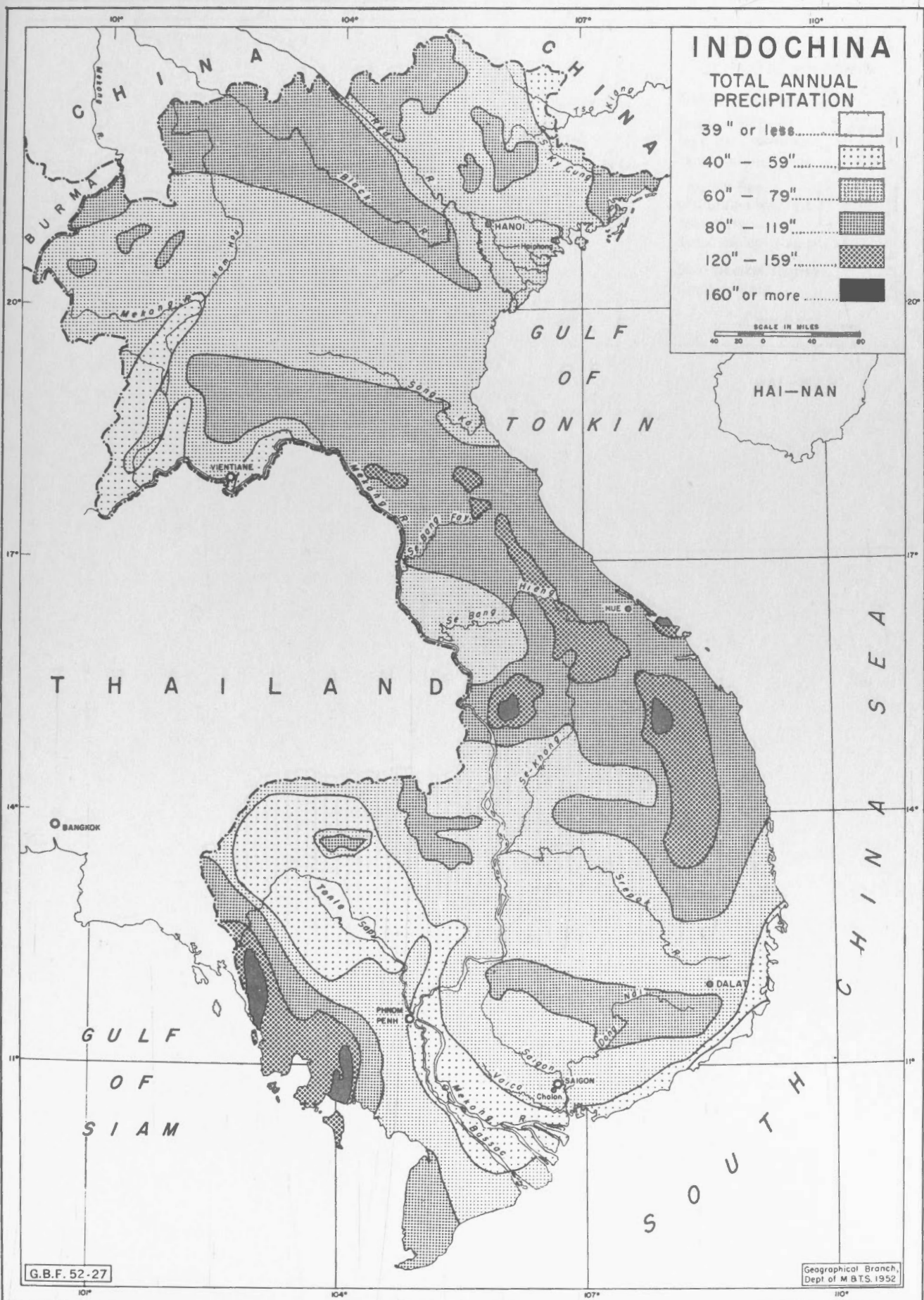


FIG. 10

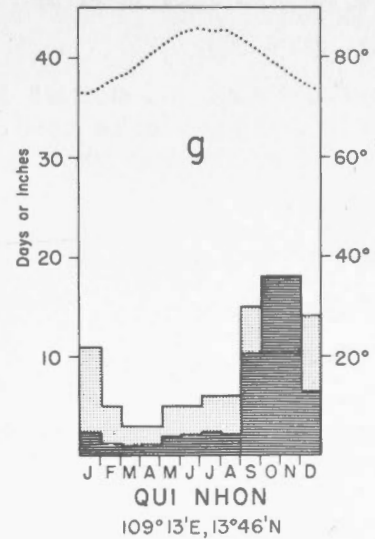
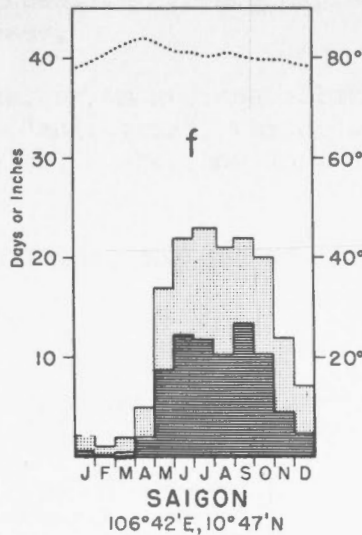
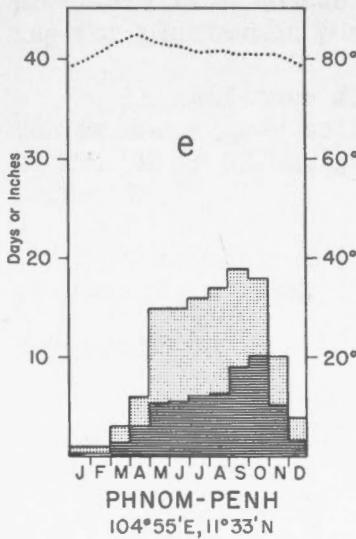
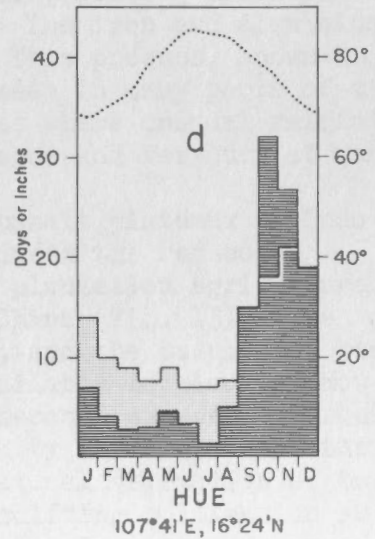
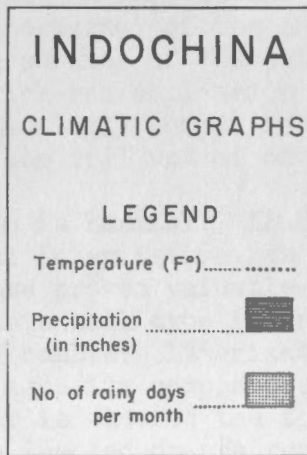
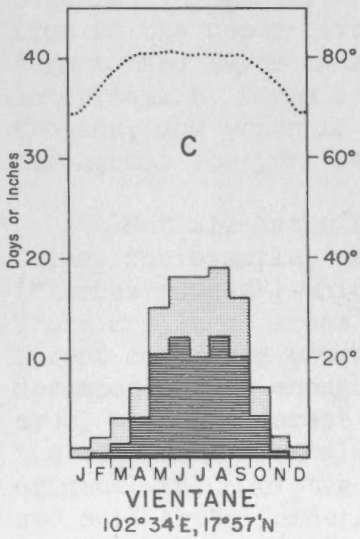
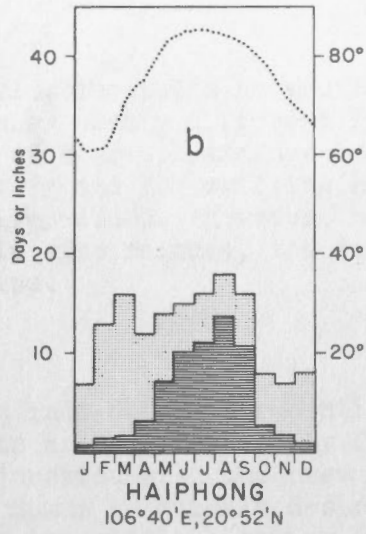
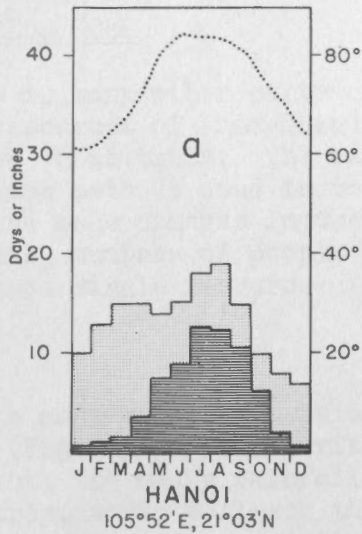


FIG.12

NATURAL RESOURCES

As in many other parts of the world, Europeans have utilized the natural resources of Indo-China in a manner vastly different from that of the native inhabitants. The resources, of course, remain essentially similar, but the methods used in their recovery and the shifting emphasis in demand have made changes in their relative values. However, because of the overwhelming numbers of people engaged in rice culture, the soil remains the greatest single resource of Indo-China.

Soil

The most valuable type of soil in Indo-China is recently deposited alluvium (Fig. 13). If alluvial deposits are not renewed by fresh layers of sediment, the heavy rainfall, in conjunction with the prevailing high temperatures, tends to leach the soil. Humus is quickly destroyed and, in soil lacking humus, water action removes the silica, leaving aluminium and iron in the upper levels (horizons) of the soil. The iron and aluminium form a hard layer near the surface of the soil. This process, known as laterization, forms the brick-red soil which is seen in many parts of the tropics, and which is particularly common in areas where unequal rainfall throughout the year keeps the soil wet at one season and very dry at another.

Not all laterization is harmful. In the basalt plateaux of Indo-China, for example, partial laterization has produced the red soils ("terres rouges") which have proved valuable for plantation agriculture. There are large areas of this soil type in Indo-China (Fig. 13). The forest cover has prevented complete laterization, and the basalt has been decomposed only enough to make its components available to plants. However, when the forest cover is cleared the soil becomes exposed to erosion, the component minerals are leached or are removed by the crops, and the original value of the soil is lost. The dense natural vegetation of the red soil areas formerly limited exploitation to shifting cultivation as practised by mountain tribes, but French capital has been expended on clearing for plantation purposes.

In sandstone areas, or on ancient alluvial terraces, laterization has produced grey soils ("sols gris") which have been also used for plantations. Many of the grey soils are, however, older than the red and are infertile.¹

Over most of Indo-China, the surface is mantled with a deep layer of decomposed rock.

Vegetation

About 120,000 square miles, or somewhat more than 40 per cent of the country is forested.² Little of the forest cover remains in its original condition, owing to exploitation by the natives. Industrial development in the deltas has hastened the cutting of accessible forests.³

¹ McCune. *Op. cit.*, p. 342.

² Gourou, P. *L'Utilisation du Sol en Indochine française*. Paris, 1940. p. 359.

³ Robequain. *Economic development*. p. 272.

The ray, or shifting cultivation, of the mountain tribes is particularly destructive of the vegetation cover. Fields are cleared by burning in order to grow crops. In a few years, the soil is exhausted and a new patch is cleared. The original area is returned to cultivation when the vegetation is re-established, but the prolonged practice of ray leads to deterioration of the forest cover. About 16 per cent of the total forest area has been affected.¹

About 33 per cent of the forests are inaccessible to the population at the present time. These forests are chiefly in Laos and in the Cardamome mountains of Cambodia. Over-cutting in the accessible areas has caused serious inroads in 17 per cent of the forests, and only about 34 per cent is both accessible and of quality suitable for exploitation.

Climatic and soil variations have produced several forest types in Indo-China, but nearly all are altered from their original condition.

The tropical rain forest is found in areas having an annual rainfall of approximately 80 inches or more, distributed fairly evenly throughout the year. Soil conditions greatly alter this distribution, however. A moist area with a light soil may not support a tropical rain forest, whereas a drier climate in an area where lateritic "pans" (impervious sub-surface layers) restrict drainage may support this type. The tropical rain forest is found on the plains and on slopes to an approximate altitude of 2,300 feet (Fig. 14). This forest typically contains a great variety of plant species, a high proportion of which are tree species. Among the species found are many belonging to the Dipterocarpaceae family; tall trees with winged fruits. Trees of the legume family also occur, as do some palms and climbing rotan.

The rain forest, in its natural state, exhibits three layers of vegetation. The first is of trees from 75 to 90 feet tall. Below them grow trees whose mature height is about 50 to 65 feet. The third layer is composed of young, immature trees. Bushes and other smaller plants are not found, because of the lack of light on the forest floor. Such untouched forest types are found only in the inaccessible areas.

If the tropical rain forest is cleared and then abandoned, a secondary rain forest type results. The trees are smaller and more closely spaced, the slower-growing hardwoods are scarcer, but lianas and other herbaceous climbers are more common. This type is widespread in Indo-China.

When the annual rainfall is 60 to 80 inches, with a pronounced dry season, the monsoon forest develops (Fig. 14). This type is distinguished by the shedding of leaves during the dry season. It is usually an open type of forest cover, with some clumps of dense growth. Dipterocarps are found in this type of forest also. Teak (Tectona grandis) a monsoon forest species, is rare in Indo-China (Fig. 14), although its resistance to fire gives it an advantage over other species. A typical monsoon forest species is a rank type of grass known as tranh (Imperata cylindrica) which can be

¹ Thompson, V. French Indo-China. New York, 1937. p. 112.

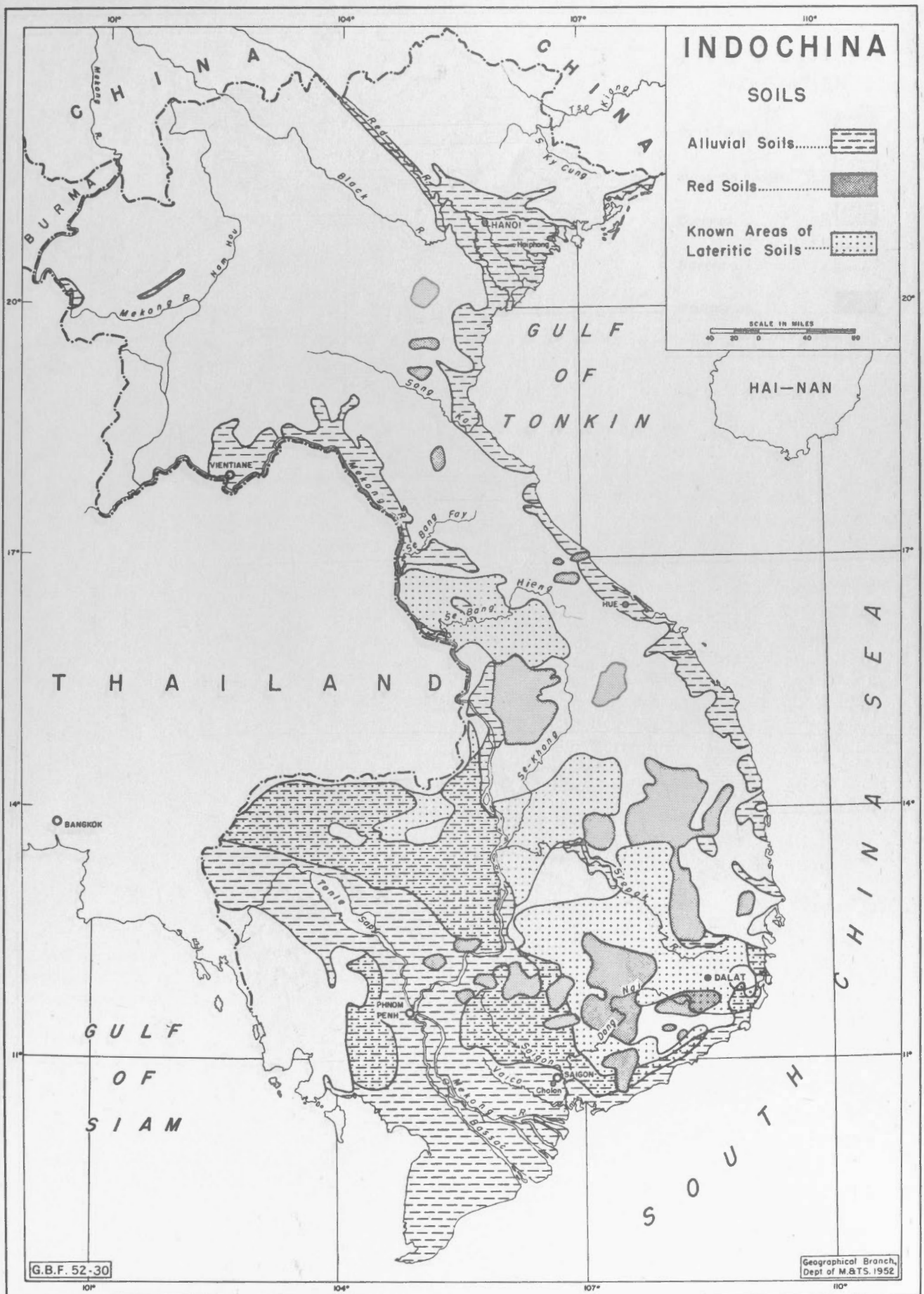


FIG.13

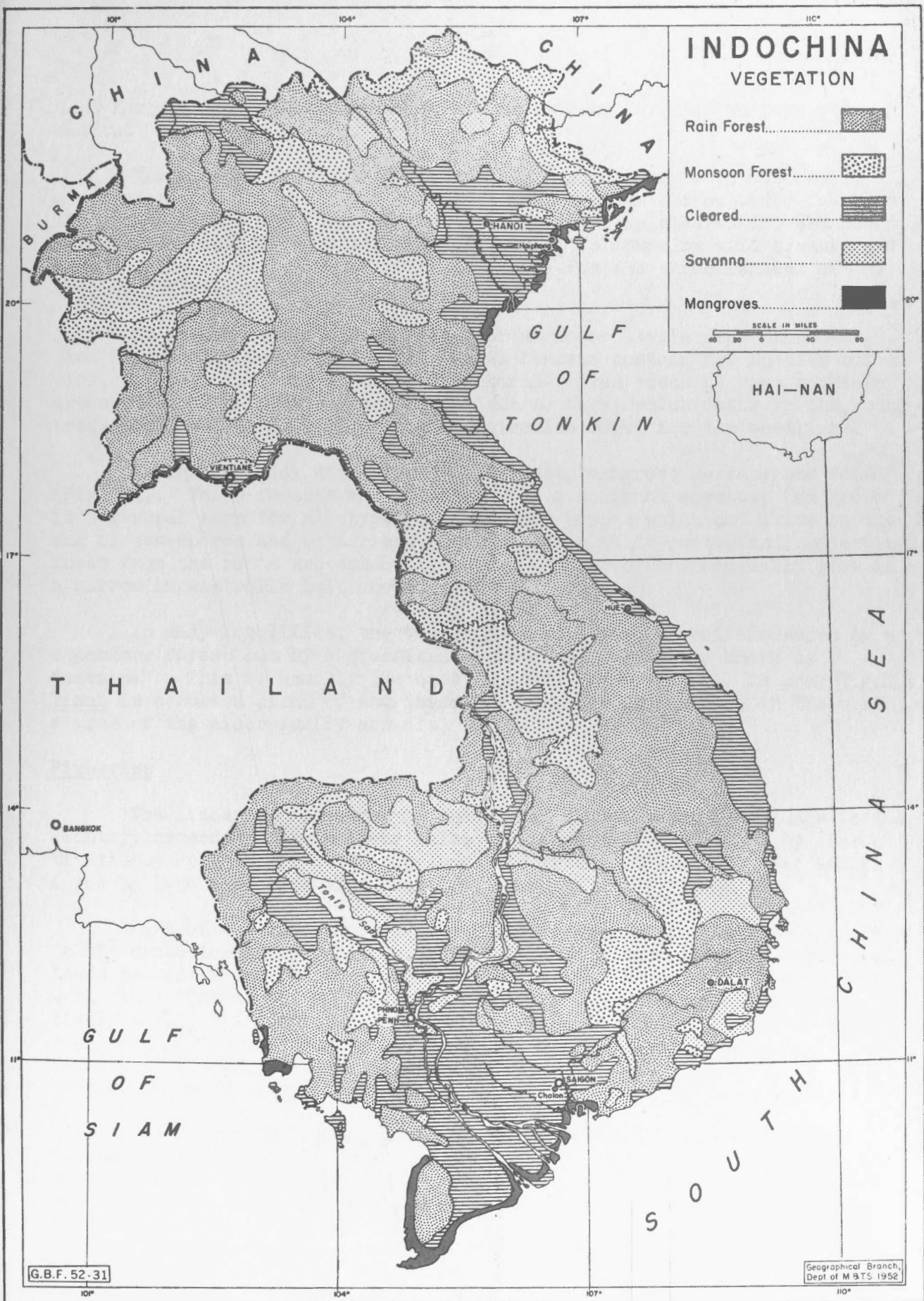


FIG. 14

used for grazing when it is young, but is useless for that purpose when mature. Lianas are scarce.

The monsoon forest is so frequently burned that it is now nearly all a secondary forest type. The less resistant species die out, and few seedlings or saplings survive. If the monsoon forest is cleared and abandoned, herbaceous plants first establish themselves, followed by wild bananas and bamboo. The latter gives a protective cover for the establishment of the secondary forest.

At altitudes above 2,300 feet, or at lower levels near the coast, pine forests are found (Fig. 14). These forests contain few species but pine, although they may be mixed with broad-leaved trees in some mountain areas. The pine forests are also subject to fire, which destroys the young trees and the undergrowth forming a protective cover for the seedlings.

Along the muddy stretches of the coast, mangrove forests are found (Fig. 14). These forests are not named for a dominant species; "mangrove" is a general term for all types of trees and bushes which can exist in the mud of sea-shores and estuaries. Buttressed or stilt roots, and projecting knees from the roots are common features. Mangrove forests usually grow in a narrow impenetrable belt about high-tide level.

In many localities, the burned monsoon forest is not succeeded by a secondary forest but by a grassland or parkland vegetation known as "savanna". This is usually the case in areas where the soil is poor (Fig. 14). Tranh is a common plant of the savannas; numerous bushes and, in the north, a tree of the alder family are also found.

Fisheries

The fisheries resources of Indo-China are of major importance to the country, exceeded only in their value to the general population by rice cultivation. Fish is the chief supplement to rice in the native diet and also forms an important item of export.

Part of the importance of the fisheries is due to their availability to the dense lowland population. Not only do the shallow seas, rivers, and lakes provide fish, but the canals, ditches, and flooded rice-fields teem with fish. The number of full-time fishermen among the population is relatively small, but nearly every peasant engages in fishing at some time of the year. It is only during the busy planting and harvesting seasons that fishing is not pursued as a subsidiary activity to rice cultivation. In Tonkin, the natural supply is increased by the feeding of captured fish.

The intensity of fish production in the Tonlé Sap is the highest in the world, the volume for a given surface area being ten times that of the North Atlantic or the North Sea. When the lake retreats during the drier season, vegetation covers the exposed areas, and when this land is again flooded, the vegetation provides an abundant food supply for fish. This favours the existence of vast quantities of fish within the lake, and the rapid growth of individual specimens. The fishing season is from December to June, towards the end of the dry season, when shrinkage of the lake area

concentrates the fish in the central part.¹ When the lake is eventually filled by sediments, this valuable resource will be lost, although it will be replaced by an immense new rice area. Over-fishing and destruction of the lake-shore forests have tended to reduce the catch in recent years.

Salt water fisheries are a less important resource, although the coastal fishing grounds contain good supplies. Both the Gulf of Siam and the Gulf of Tonkin, less than 600 feet in depth, are part of the Eurasian continental shelf. The sea-waters are warm, but contain a fairly good supply of tropical fish species. Off the mouth of the Mekong, food supplies promote the growth of large fish. In addition, the coasts of Tonkin, Annam, and Cambodia have many small harbours. Coastal fishing is carried on in Tonkin, northern Annam, and Cambodia. However, the prevalence of typhoons on the central Annam coast discourages the development of a large-scale industry along much of the coast. Thus, although salt-water fishing is locally important, it is of relatively small scale when compared to the fresh-water industry.

Minerals

The mining industry has increased its scope greatly during the period of French occupation. Although some mining was carried on by the Chinese and Annamites,² using primitive methods, it was not until the modern industrial market was created that mining became important. Minerals and coal comprise a large part of the country's exports.

Coal. Coal is the principal product of Indo-China's mines. The estimate prepared for the International Geological Congress held in Toronto in 1913 placed the reserves of Indo-China at about 20,000,000,000 tons.³ This estimate is considered to be over-optimistic, but indicative of the considerable volume of coal reserves in Indo-China.⁴ Most of this reserve is comprised of coal of anthracite type, deposited during the Triassic and Jurassic periods of the Mesozoic era.

The greatest coalfield in Indo-China is the Quang Yen field in Tonkin (Fig. 15), which runs in an arc concordant with the structure of the region. The measures extend from the off-coast Ké Bao Island westward for about one hundred miles, divided by a barren area in the middle into two basins: the Dong Trieu to the west and the Hon Gay to the east. The coal seams are irregular in depth, varying from about two feet to over 250 feet in thickness. The beds are interrupted by faults and other irregularities in places, but are generally economical to work. Earlier mines were of the

¹ Sion. Op. cit., p. 447.

² Miller, E.W. Industrial resources of Indochina. Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. VI. No. 4: 396-408. p. 401.

³ For comparison, Canada's coal reserves were estimated in 1946 as follows: probable mineable reserve 62,000,000,000 tons; probably recoverable reserve 31,000,000,000 tons. Canada, Report of the Royal Commission on Coal, 1946. Ottawa, 1947. p. 11.

⁴ Miller. Op. cit., p. 403.

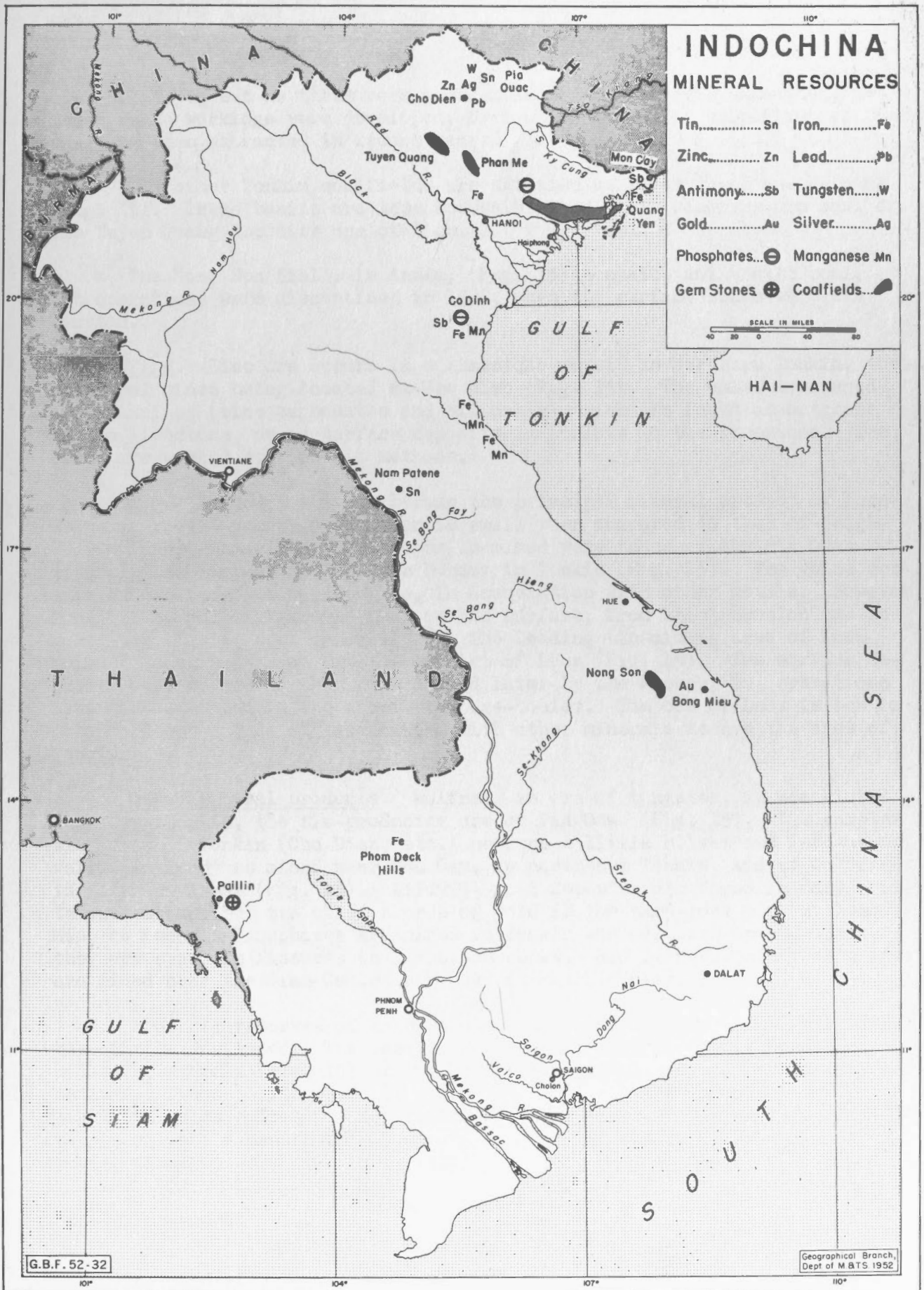


FIG. 15

open-pit type, but as these more accessible reserves became exhausted, new underground workings were developed, from which the major proportion of the coal has been extracted in recent years.

Two other Tonkin coalfields are situated at Tuyen Quang and Phan Me (Fig. 15). These basins are less accessible and their reserves are smaller. The Tuyen Quang deposits are of lignite.

The Nong Son field, in Annam, (Fig. 15) contains anthracite coal, but operations were discontinued in 1920, when the surface seams were exhausted.

Zinc. Zinc ore occurs in a limestone massif in northern Tonkin, the principal mines being located at Cho Dien (Fig. 15). The chief ores used are calamines (zinc carbonates and silicates) which are found as outcrops in the limestone, or as surface deposits in hollows in the limestone. The mines are worked by open-pit methods.¹

Tin. Although tin has become the principal mineral product of Indo-China in recent years, production is small when compared to that of neighbouring countries. The first deposits mined were those of the Pia Ouac granitic massif near the Chinese border in Tonkin (Fig. 15). The veins contain an ore known as cassiterite, in association with other metals. However, most of the workings are in beds on the surface, from which erosion has removed the lighter soil materials.² The leading tin-mining area of Indo-China is now in the Nam Patene district of Laos (Fig. 15). The surface deposits were worked by the Laotians and later by the French, but operations have now commenced in the underlying ore-bodies. The ore of Laos is low in metal content and is not associated with other minerals as are the ores of Tonkin.

Other mineral products. Wolfram, an ore of tungsten, is associated with cassiterite, the tin-producing ore of Pia Ouac (Fig. 15). The complex zinc ores of Tonkin (Cho Dien, etc.) produce a little silver and lead as well. Antimony is mined near Mon Cay, in northeast Tonkin, and at Co Dinh in northern Annam (Fig. 15). Alluvial gold deposits are found in many mountainous areas, but the chief source of gold is the hard-rock mine at Bong Mieu in Annam. Phosphates are mined in Tonkin and northern Annam, where they are found in fissures in limestone rocks. Gem stones, mainly sapphires, are mined near the Siam-Cambodia border at Paillin (Fig. 15).

Iron ore reserves of unknown quantity exist in Indo-China, but have been little developed. The magnetite and hematite ores of the Phnom Deck Hills in Cambodia (Fig. 15) are of lateritic origin, and are worked by the natives. The deposits near the Quang Yen coalfield are thought to be potentially valuable. Those of Ké Bao Island, mined by open-pit methods, have been used in the manufacture of certain kinds of cement.³ The small deposits of north Annam (Co Dinh, etc.) (Fig. 15) are associated with manganese.

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 258.

² Ibid., p. 259.

³ Ibid., p. 262.

The limestone and clay deposits of Tonkin are used for the manufacture of cement. Salt is prepared by brine evaporation on the coasts of Annam and Cochin-China.

The presence of coal, iron, limestone, and alloy metals in Indo-China would appear favourable for the development of an iron and steel industry. However, to the difficulties of terrain and climate must be added those of inadequate labour supplies in mineral areas and poor transportation facilities. Furthermore, the country lacks good coking coal.¹ The lack of capital and uncertainty of markets offer financial obstacles to such an industry.

In retrospect it can thus be seen that Indo-China is a land of limited physical endowment, the most important feature of which is its wet lowland areas available for rice cultivation. The following chapters consider the adaptation to the land of the Indo-Chinese people.

¹ Thompson. Op. cit., p. 119.

CHAPTER II

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Two groups of people comprise the greater part of the population of Indo-China; those whose appearance, language, and religious beliefs, demonstrate their Chinese origins, and those whose origins can be traced to India and Burma. The indigenous peoples form only a small part of the total population. In general, those of Chinese origin live in the northern parts of the country, those of Indian origin live in the south, and the Indonesians live in the central plateaux.

The contrast between peoples of the uplands and peoples of the lowlands is, however, perhaps greater than that between the great racial groups.

PEOPLES OF CHINESE ORIGIN

Annamites. The 17 million Annamites who inhabit the lowlands of the Red River and the coastal deltas of Annam (Fig. 16) form the largest single group in the country. They are thought to have originated in Tonkin from the mingling of Chinese, Mongols (Thai or Muong) and the local inhabitants.¹ Over several centuries, they have spread slowly as far south as the Mekong Valley.

The Annamites, comprising 75 per cent of the population, live on 8 per cent of the land surface of the country.² Fear of the upland regions, possibly based on the prevalence of malaria there, has kept them from moving to more sparsely settled areas.³ Furthermore, the influence of Chinese civilization tends to keep the family in the village where the ancestral graves are located.

These people are small and typically Mongoloid in appearance. Their language, like Chinese, is tonal, and words pertaining to administration and religion are Chinese, although common words are derived from Khmer (the Cambodian language), and their modern script is Roman. The predominant religions are Confucianism, Taoism, and Mahayana Buddhism, all of which came from China, but local animistic beliefs and practices have been adopted as well.

Most of the Annamites are engaged in intensive rice cultivation combined with fishing; rice and fish forming the chief items of their diet. In their native Tonkin they are a hard-working people, but they appear to lose their capacity for heavy labour in the more enervating climate of the south.⁴

¹ Janse. Peoples of French Indochina. p. 11.

² Micaud. French Indo-China. p. 217.

³ Robequain. Economic development. p. 61.

⁴ Janse. Op. cit., p. 12.

Laotians. The Thai people, to whom the Laotians are related, usually inhabit mountainous areas, but the Laotians live in the lowlands of the Mekong Valley from Yunnan to Cambodia (Fig. 16). The borders between the various Laotian kingdoms, and between Laos and Cambodia, were established where rapids impeded river navigation.¹

The influence of China upon the Laotians has been modified by contacts with Indian influences. Thus, although they are small in stature, they are less Mongoloid in appearance than the Annamites. They speak one of the variations of Thai, but their religion, Hin yana Buddhism, has come from India.

The Laotians live in small villages. Their social organization is feudal, and some areas have developed into kingdoms.

There are, approximately, only 600,000 Laotians. Because they do not live in a densely populated area, they lead an easier life than do the Annamites.² They cultivate rice, hunt game, and collect wild fruit and nuts. Fishing, boat-building, and weaving, are secondary in importance to farming.

Mountain peoples of Chinese origin. For hundreds of years, there has been a slow movement of people from the mountains of China into Indo-China. The earliest migrants moved down the Mekong and its tributaries, settling on the valley floors. Later migrants, finding these areas occupied, settled on the slopes above. Different characteristics, associated with their history, are still to be distinguished among the mountain tribes.

The largest group, the Thai, lives in some of the adjoining countries as well. These people were the first to infiltrate the area, and now live on the valley floors. With them, are found the Muong. This group, which may represent the remnants of the original Annamites, lives on the margins of the Tonkin lowlands as well.³ The Man, who began moving out of China in the 13th Century, now live on the lower slopes between 1,000 and 3,000 feet above sea-level. The Meo, who have come in during the last few centuries, live on the upper slopes at an altitude of about 3,000 to 4,500 feet (Fig. 16).

The Thai are fairly tall, and are not markedly Mongoloid in appearance. The Man are of medium height, but the Meo are small and of Mongoloid appearance. The Muong resemble the Annamites.

All these tribes, with the exception of the Muong, use Thai speech, which resembles Annamite but has some resemblances to the Cambodian language and uses Cambodian script. The Muong speak an archaic form of Annamite.⁴

Although the religions of these people have been obscured by local beliefs and practices, they are, basically, those of the periods when the

¹ Sion. *Asie des moussons.* p. 443.

² Janse. *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

³ Masson. *Histoire de l'Indochine.* p. 16.

⁴ Janse. *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

people left China. Thus, the Thai practise a pre-Confucian form of religion, the Man are Confucians, and the Meo religion is based on Buddhism.

Social organization also exhibits a vertical zonation. The lowland-dwelling Thai live in small villages and have an hereditary feudal organization. The Man, on the lower slopes, are semi-nomadic, but are adopting a sedentary life. The upland-dwelling Meo are still nomads who live in isolated cottages rather than in villages.

The Thai grow rice and other crops, but have few native industries. The Man are farmers, but collect forest products as well. The Meo practise shifting agriculture, and rear livestock. They also produce and trade in opium, which is produced from a poppy which flourishes at the altitudes they inhabit.¹

PEOPLES INFLUENCED BY INDIA

Cambodians. The Cambodians, who form the second largest group, are thought to be the descendants of the Khmer people, mingled with Thai, Chinese, and perhaps Malays and Hindus as well.² They now inhabit western Cochin-China and Cambodia (Fig. 16). At one time they dominated the whole Mekong delta, but they have retreated as the Annamites have advanced.

The Cambodians are not Mongoloid. They have brown skins, and are taller and more robust than the Annamites, but are less active than the Annamites of the north. The Khmer, or Cambodian, language is related to the Mon language of Burma. The tones of the voice, as in English, are used to convey expression rather than the meanings of syllables. A Hindu alphabet is used. The principal religion among the Cambodians is Hinayana Buddhism, which has spread from India. Cambodian settlements are almost continuous along the banks of the rivers, and villages are clustered on the alluvial lowlands beyond. The temple is the centre of village life, but the people are less firmly rooted to the village sites than are the Annamites.

Farming and fishing are the main occupations, but land is less intensively cultivated than in the Annamite lowlands. In the vicinity of the Tonlé Sap, fishing plays a fairly important part in the economy.

Chams. The Cham group of today, the remnant of a once powerful people, has been pushed back to the lowland margins and small, non-alluvial uplands (Fig. 16).

In appearance, the Chams resemble the Cambodians. They speak a Malayo-Polynesian language which has been influenced by Mon-Khmer. There are two predominant religions among them, both of which originated in India. The Chams of Annam are Brahmins, but the Chams of Cambodia are Moslems whose religion has been subjected to Hindu influences. Their society is matriarchal and is dominated by religious ritual. The villages are clustered on river and lake margins, and some may be built on rafts. The Chams tend to remain a separate group because they prefer to marry within their own group.

¹ Janse. Op. cit., p. 25.

² Ibid., p. 14.

The Chams raise a variety of products beside rice, and their diet, although restricted by religious beliefs, is further supplemented by game and fish.

The Moi. The Moi, or Indonesian, group is thought to be indigenous to Indo-China. They live in many of the upland areas (Fig. 16), but because they have been driven back by newcomers from China, they are more numerous in the south.

They are of medium height, with flat noses, straight or wavy hair, and are muscular in build. Some of the Moi speak the Khmer language, but those in contact with the Chams have adopted the Cham language, and matriarchal organization. They lead a nomadic life, but may settle long enough to build stilt houses sheltering several related families. The Moi have no organized religion. Religious practice is evolved by the individual or the family, but belief in magic and spirits is general.¹

The Moi are hunters (some specialize in elephant hunting) and primitive farmers whose main crop is rice. They collect forest products and practise domestic industries.

RECENT IMMIGRANTS

Chinese. Only about half a million Chinese live in Indo-China, but they form a very influential group. Most of them live in the cities and are engaged in business. The trade of the country was already in their hands when the French arrived, and they have prospered under French administration.

All the Chinese are members of occupational guilds which maintain order among their members.

The Chinese control the processing and handling of rice, and play an important part in the fish trade, river navigation, and the retail grocery trade. Cho-lon is predominantly a Chinese city where craftsmen and artisans have their own small businesses. There are, also, many Chinese factories, chiefly employing female immigrants from China.² The Chinese also act as money-lenders in connection with the rice trade.

Chinese not engaged in commerce include the pepper-growers of Cambodia, the market gardeners near the large cities, and the Hakka peasants of northeast Tonkin. Chinese labourers and plantation workers are being supplanted by Annamites.

Other Asiatics. Malays, Indians, and a few Japanese, living in the lowland areas, make up the rest of the Asiatic population. The Malays, who are fishermen and small merchants, live in stilt houses on the river banks. Indians settle in the cities as small merchants, or as employees in the textile trade. Some, known as Chettyars, are money-lenders.³

¹ Janse. Op. cit., p. 20.

² Robequain. Op. cit., p. 37.

³ Janse. Op. cit. p. 19.

Europeans. The European population, chiefly French, is concentrated in the larger cities. Poor communications, lack of labour, and unhealthy conditions have discouraged European penetration of the remote areas.

The European residents are rarely permanent settlers. The majority are in the armed forces and the government, serving for temporary periods. Those in private employment are usually in managerial positions and in the liberal professions. Plantation owners, who are more likely to be permanent settlers, comprise only about three per cent of the employed Europeans.¹ Thus, in 1937, nearly 60 per cent of the European population had been in the colony for less than 10 years, and 40 per cent for less than five.²

CITIES AND TOWNS

Settlements

An overwhelming proportion of the Indo-Chinese population lives in rural communities. Even with the recent growth of cities, the total urban population is probably not much more than two million.³ Village communities, not isolated homes, are typical of rural settlement in the country. Dispersed settlement is found only on newly emerged mud flats, either in southwest Cochin-China or on the seaward portions of the Tonkin deltas.

Houses in rural Indo-China are usually built of bamboo, and thatched with weeds or leaves. Leaders of Laotian communities may have brick houses, and some Meo houses have beaten earth walls. The lowland Annamites and Chams, and the upland Man, Meo, and some of the Thai build their houses directly on the ground. All other groups build houses on piles along waterways, and some of the Cambodians, Muong, and Cham build their houses on anchored rafts.

There are several types of village patterns in Indo-China, but all have been developed to meet the same two objectives: to keep the houses above the level of the flooded rice-fields, and to conserve for cultivation all available fertile ground.

In Tonkin and Annam, the levees and dykes built for flood control are used as village sites. Water is obtained from ponds and wells on the dykes, and the enclosed lowlands are used as rice-fields.

In parts of the Tonkin deltas, and elsewhere, abrupt peaks of limestone or other rock are surrounded by deltaic sediments. Villages circle the bases of these peaks, above the general level of the fields. Sometimes the slopes above the villages are terraced and cultivated.

The sand-dunes of the Tonkin and north Annam coasts are also used as village sites, the settlements forming linear patterns parallel to the coast-line. In the north, the villages completely cover the dunes, but

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 29.

² Ibid., p. 27.

³ Reduction of the urban population of Canada to a similar proportion would eliminate all cities except Montreal.

to the south they are confined to the lower slopes of the larger dunes. Water is obtained from springs at the bases of the dunes.¹

The more regular regime of the lower Mekong has permitted the development of almost continuous settlement on its banks. As new canals are opened, settlement spreads along their banks also. The new communities of Cochinchina are developing on a more angular pattern quite different than those following natural waterways.

There are two zones of settlement around the Tonlé Sap. The first is at the high-water level of the lake, where live people who combine rice cultivation and fishing. Urban communities are found only in this zone. Along the low-water level are found the homes of professional fishermen; houses built on piles or floating on rafts.

The characteristic appearance of certain villages is usually due to the customs and beliefs of the inhabitants. In the Annamite lands, the closely spaced villages are laid out on a plan. Each is surrounded by a hedge, a symbol of communal security, the removal of which is considered a disgrace, and an order to do so as a punishment upon the village. The communal house for the men and the Buddhist temple for the women form the social nuclei of the Annamite village. Cham villages, from which all vegetation is removed, are also surrounded by a palisade. The mountain villages are small, the largest of the Thai not exceeding 50 houses, and those of the Man and Meo less than ten.

The incidence and size of village settlements decreases in the uplands, but in all regions of the country the majority of the inhabitants lead the village life of peasant cultivators.

Urban settlements were never of great importance prior to the period of French administration. The earlier cities were governmental or commercial centres. Surviving Annamite cities are still surrounded by a moat and a wall. The cities developed by the French function as administrative and commercial centres, together with ports, industrial and mining centres, and military positions. With the exception of the Chinese city of Cho-lon, they were laid out on the style of French towns.

Saigon-Cho-lon (Pop., 1948: 1,669,600).² Although these two cities have been united as one administrative unit since 1931, they still preserve distinct functional and ethnic differences. Cho-lon was founded by Chinese merchants in 1778 and had become the industrial and commercial centre of the Mekong delta before the arrival of the French.³ Cho-lon is still a predominantly Chinese city, both in population and appearance. It is the great river port for the water-borne internal rice traffic and one of the world's great rice-processing and rice-marketing centres. A variety of large and small industrial plants is concentrated in Cho-lon.

¹ Rain falling on the dune permeates the sand and collects above the more impervious underlying rock layer. Springs of similar origin are found elsewhere in the world.

² *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*. 1947-1948.

³ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 112.

Saigon was, apparently, a small native settlement at the time of the French arrival. In 1860 it was declared open to international trade, and drainage work was commenced in preparation for the city site. The city was developed on a plan reminiscent of French provincial towns. It is the chief European city of Indo-China and retains some administrative functions. Saigon, however, is most important as a sea-port and the chief centre for foreign trade in the country. It has a great variety of large and small industries operated by Europeans as well as by Chinese and Annamites.

Hanoi (Pop., 1951: 216,900).¹ Hanoi was the administrative centre of the whole of Indo-China, and is similar to Saigon in its French appearance. It is a centre for both rail and river communications, and has attracted numerous industries to its vicinity, but is not primarily an industrial centre.

Haiphong (Pop., 1951: 146,082).¹ Haiphong is the chief port of Tonkin, and the second port in Indo-China. It suffers from many disadvantages as a port, because of its river-mouth location. Proximity to the Hon Gay coalfield has made Haiphong an industrial centre. Coal, limestone, clay, and other minerals are used in the manufacture of cement, glass, and similar goods, and in the smelting of tin and other metals.

Phnom-Penh (Pop., 1948: 110,600).² This city, which eventually succeeded Angkor as the Khmer capital, is still the capital of Cambodia and the residence of the King of Cambodia. Its chief economic importance is as a river port. The town has been greatly built up by the French.

Hué (Pop., 1936: 43,000).³ Hué was the capital of Annam and the seat of the Emperor. One section of the town is the old city with its traditional concentric walls. The other section is newer, and has been built by the French. It is primarily an administrative centre.

Can Tho (Pop., 1951: 58,728).¹ This city is of recent growth, its inhabitants being, in large part, Chinese immigrants. It is one of the many urban centres which have developed as markets and trading points with the increasing importance of the Cochin-China and Cambodia rice-growing regions (Fig. 2). Other such centres include Bac Lieu (40,000), Battambang (20,000 in 1936), My Tho (96,800), and Pursat (20,000 in 1936).

Vinh (Pop., 1936: 25,000). This city is one of the market towns for the agricultural regions of north Annam (Fig. 2). It is a provincial capital, and now includes the old Annamite town.

Nam Dinh (Pop., 1936: 25,000). This is the third largest city of Tonkin (Fig. 2). It has been built up quite recently, and is a centre for industries and handicrafts.

¹ Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam, 1949-1950.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1947-1948.

³ Didot-Bottin. Annuaire de commerce. Paris, 1938. All figures for 1936 are from this source.

Tourane (Pop., 1943: 50,915).¹ Tourane is the chief port of the Annam coast. Although it has a natural harbour, its scope as a port is limited by the small size of its hinterland. Other Annam coastal parts include Phan Thiet (15,500) and Phan Ri (10,900), both of which are centres for the fish trade.

Vientiane (Pop., 1936: 15,000). This city once the capital of one of the Laotian kingdoms, is now the capital of all Laos.

Some of the mining towns include: Nam Patene, in Laos, Cho Dien and Tuyen Quang in Tonkin (Fig. 2). Hon Gay (2,000) is the principal coal-shipping point.

Garrison towns, such as Cao Bang (8,900) are found in the Military Districts which adjoin the Chinese frontier.

POPULATION

The population statistics of Indo-China are of limited usefulness. No census was taken before 1906, so that it is impossible to trace any population changes which might have occurred at the time of the French intervention. The first regular census, still not completely accurate, was taken in 1921. Since 1936, only estimates have been made, and, since 1943, there have been no estimates made in the two most populous states of Tonkin and Annam. Difficulties in obtaining accurate census returns are so great that Robequain considers an estimated error of 10 per cent to be optimistic.²

Population Growth

The population of Indo-China has shown a steady rate of growth during the 20th Century (Fig. 17). In 1906, it was about 16 million, and in 1943 about 26 million. The population total for 1946 comprised the estimated population of Cochin-China, Cambodia, and Laos in 1946, combined with the 1943 estimate of the inhabitants of Tonkin and Annam. If the rate of population increase has remained steady since 1943, the total population in 1950 was probably about 30 million.

The rate of population growth in Tonkin was steady from 1906 to 1943 (Fig. 17). In Annam, an increased rate developed with the revival of prosperity after the depression of the thirties. If the estimates are trustworthy, the rate of population increase in Cochin-China, which had been steady until 1943, remained nearly static after that date. Cambodia, however, which had a slow rate of increase prior to 1946, has shown a sharp rate of increase since then. Laos, the state having the smallest population, has had a slow rate of increase because of malaria and other factors.

Ethnic Composition

The mountain peoples of Indo-China comprise only about 10 per cent of the total population (Fig. 18a), fairly evenly divided between the tribes originating from China and the aboriginal Moi.

¹ Annuaire statistique du Vietnam, 1949-1950.

² Op. cit., p. 46.

INDOCHINA

POPULATION GROWTH (1921-1948)

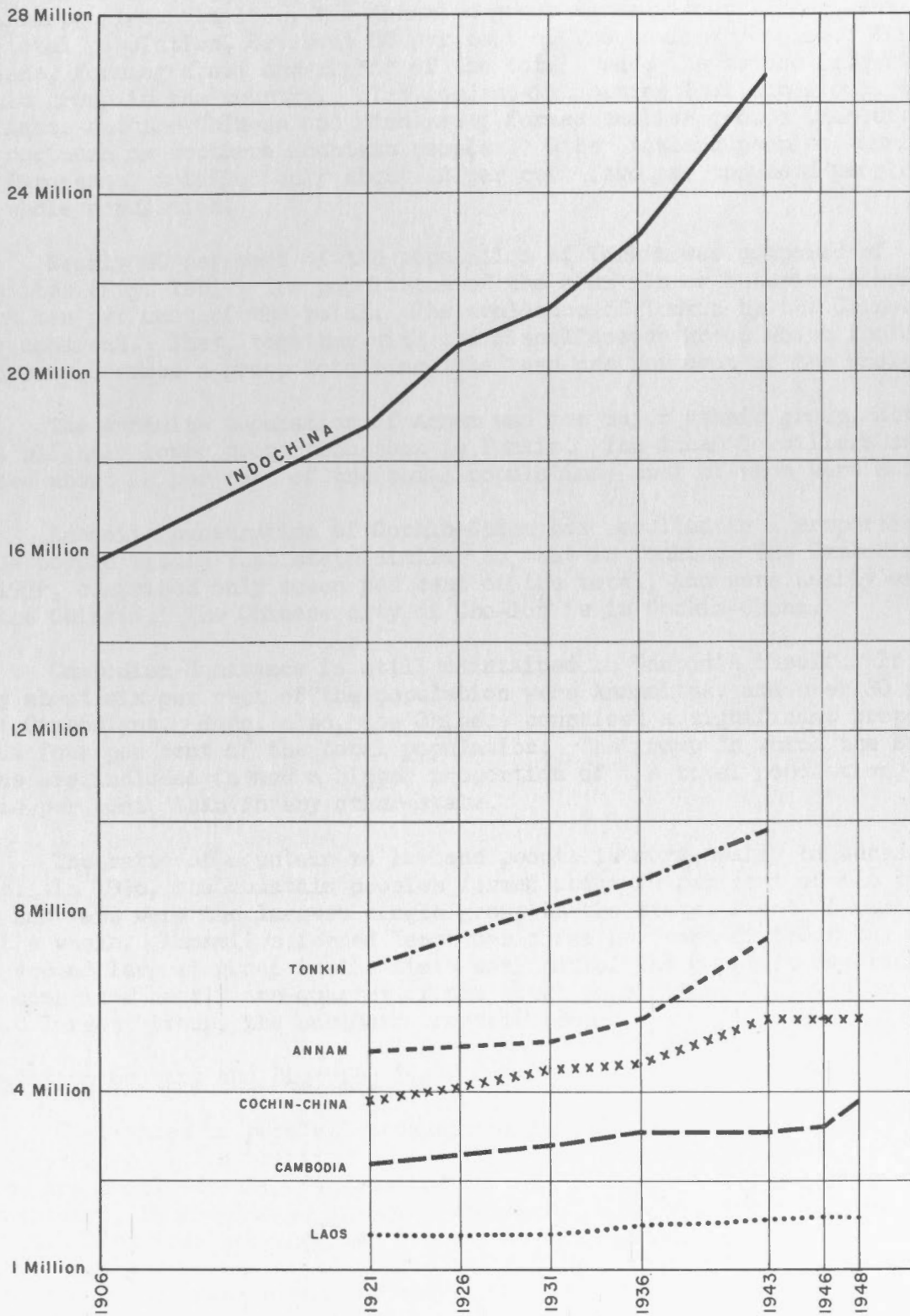


FIG.17

The remaining 90 per cent of the population is made up of the various lowland peoples. In 1936, the Annamite group formed about 72 per cent of the total population, or about 80 per cent of the lowland peoples. The Cambodians, forming about one-eighth of the total, were the second largest ethnic group in the country. The lowland-inhabiting Thai sub-group, the Laotians, and the Chinese and Minh-huong formed smaller groups than either the northern or southern mountain peoples. Other lowland peoples, including the Europeans, totalled only about .2 per cent (two per thousand people) of the whole population.

Nearly 90 per cent of the population of Tonkin was composed of Annamites (Fig. 18b). The population of the mountainous interior comprised about ten per cent of the total. The avoidance of Tonkin by the Chinese is very apparent. They, together with the miscellaneous group which included Europeans, formed a group totalling less than one per cent of the whole.

The Annamite population of Annam was the major ethnic group, although of a slightly lower proportion than in Tonkin. The Annam Cordillera supported about 14 per cent of the total population, most of whom were Moi.

Annamite penetration of Cochin-China has resulted in a proportion of these people within that state similar to that in Tonkin. The Cambodians, in 1936, comprised only seven per cent of the total, and were nearly equalled by the Chinese. The Chinese city of Cho-lon is in Cochin-China.

Cambodian dominance is still maintained in Cambodia itself. In 1936, only about six per cent of the population were Annamites, and over 80 per cent Cambodians. Here, also, the Chinese comprised a significant proportion, about four per cent of the total population. The group in which the Europeans are included formed a higher proportion of the total population, about three per cent, than in any other state.

The ratio of mountain to lowland people is more nearly balanced in Laos. In 1936, the mountain peoples formed about 40 per cent of the total. The Laotians were the largest single group in the state, about 56 per cent of the whole. Annamites formed less than three per cent of the total. The second largest group in the state was that of the mountain-dwelling Moi, who comprised nearly one-quarter of the total population, followed by the third largest group, the northern mountain people.

Population Density and Distribution

Statistics of population densities in Indo-China are available for the provinces within the five states. In the delta areas, where the provinces are small, density figures indicate population distribution fairly accurately. In the larger interior provinces, however, the average density of population in a province may include lowland areas where density is relatively high and upland areas sparsely inhabited. The pattern of population distribution in these areas is, therefore, obscured, and that for the whole country can be perceived only in a general fashion (Fig. 19).

This general pattern of population distribution shows the intense concentration of people in the deltas of the Mekong and the Red River. A

narrow belt of fairly densely populated lands fringes the east coast between the two river mouths. The uplands of the interior are all sparsely populated, although local concentrations of population occur. Factors affecting population distribution include the suitability of the land for irrigated rice cultivation, the distribution of the Annamite people, and the prevalence of malaria.

The most densely populated upland area of Indo-China is in northeast Tonkin (Fig. 19), where the rounded hills are much less rugged than in the interior. Even here, however, a detailed map of population distribution would show concentration of the inhabitants in the lowlands. In the interior of Tonkin, only the province of Lao Kay, where the Red River crosses the Chinese border, has a density of more than 15 persons per square mile (Fig. 19). The people live chiefly on the narrow alluvial lowland of the Red River (Fig. 13). Local population centres are formed in mining areas.

Only three provinces of Laos have an average density of more than 15 persons per square mile. These contain areas of fertile river valley alluvial soils (Fig. 13), or low passes through the Cordillera to Annam (Fig. 3).

The average population density in the Cambodian mountains is over 50 per square mile; the population is chiefly distributed on the landward slopes above the Mekong plain.

Population densities on the Mekong plain vary greatly, the higher concentrations being found in areas of alluvial soil that have not been laterized (cf. Figs. 13 and 19). On the Mekong delta, however, it is the presence of undrained, swampy areas which lowers the population density. Some of the delta provinces have densities of less than 50 persons per square mile (Fig. 19).

A further factor making for unequal population distribution within the delta is the presence of urban centres. The provincial population totals do not include those of the actual city inhabitants, so that the concentration in the vicinity of the cities is significant of the attractive force these centres exert upon the population.

Population densities have not yet become as high as in the Red River delta. The average densities of the provinces of Gia Dinh and Cho-lon, which abut on Saigon and the city of Cho-lon, are less than 1 000 per square mile, a figure which is exceeded in parts of the Tonkin delta.

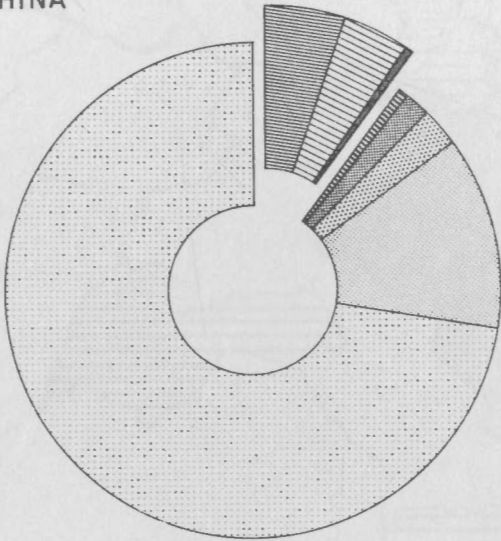
The provinces of the Annam coast have densities which vary in accordance with the number and size of the deltas within their boundaries. The highest densities are thus in northern Annam and in the provinces south of Hue (Fig. 19), the lowest on the southeast coast, where the Annam Range is closer to the sea (Fig. 3), the soil is laterized (Fig. 13), and the rainfall light (Fig. 10).

The unequal population density in the Red River delta is due to variations in soil fertility and the presence of modern irrigation projects in some of the areas. In addition, some provinces can support higher densities because many of their people are engaged in handicrafts. Larger scale

INDOCHINA

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION OF FRENCH INDOCHINA -1936-

(A) INDOCHINA



LEGEND

- ANNAMITES.....
- CAMBODIANS.....
- LAOTIANS.....
- CHINESE AND MINH-HUONG.....
- OTHER LOWLAND PEOPLES
(INCLUDING EUROPEANS).....
- NORTHERN MOUNTAIN TRIBES
(THAI, MUONG, MAN, MEO, etc.).....
- SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN TRIBES
(INDONESIANS OR MOI).....
- OTHER MOUNTAIN TRIBES.....

(B) THE STATES OF INDOCHINA

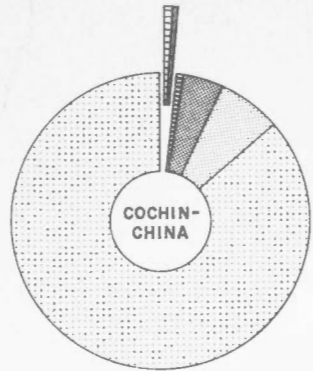
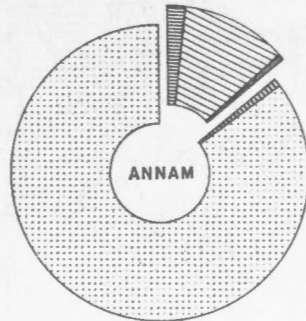
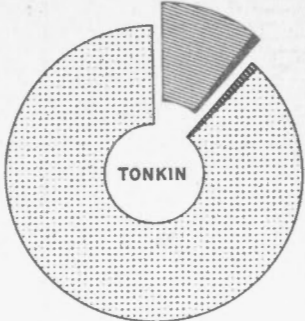
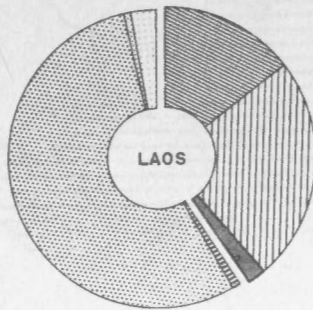
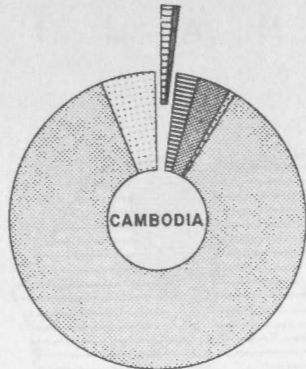


FIG.18

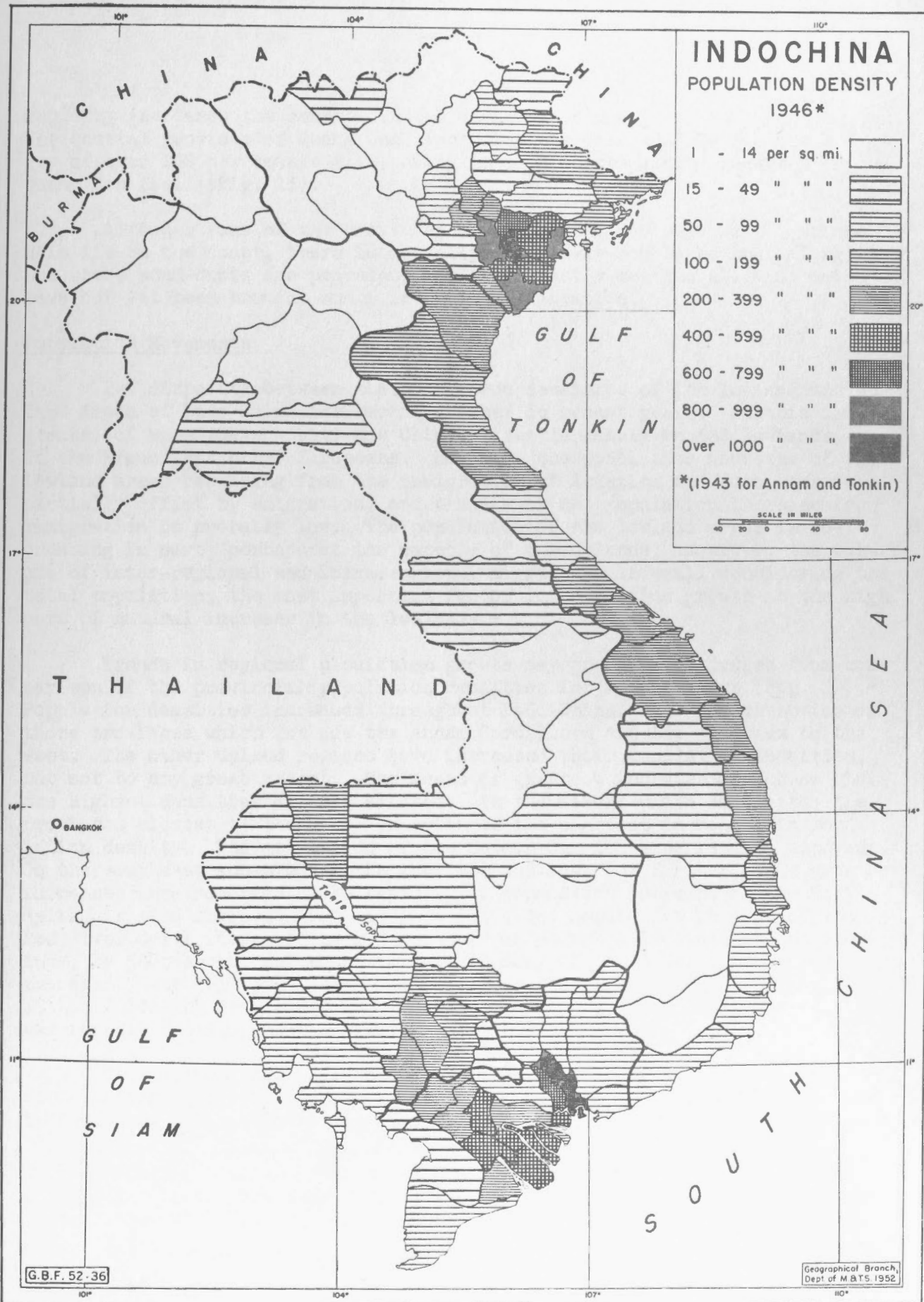


FIG.19

industry increases the density in the vicinity of Hanoi and Haiphong (Fig. 19). The coastal province of Quang Yen, including the island of Ké Bao has a density of over 100 per square mile, owing in part to the mining industry of the Quang Yen field (Fig. 15).

Although some of the provinces having over 1,000 persons per square mile lie on the coast, there is actually a sparsely populated belt along the sea where sand-dunes are prevalent and the recently emerged alluvial soils have not yet been brought under intensive cultivation.

Population Movements

The disparity between the population densities of the lowland and upland areas of Indo-China has become greater in recent years. Asiatic immigrants, of whom the majority are Chinese, settle mainly in the lowlands, as do the French and other Europeans. However, the population increase of the lowland areas resulting from the immigration of Asiatics and Europeans is partially offset by emigration, and the annual net population increase from immigration is probably low. The population of the lowland areas is increasing in part, perhaps at the expense of the uplands. However, the volume of inter-regional and intra-regional migrations is small considering the total population; the most important factor in population growth is the high rate of natural increase in the lowlands.¹

Trends in regional population growth may probably be judged from comparison of the provincial population densities for recent years (Fig. 20).² Population densities increased throughout Indo-China, with the exception of those provinces which include the Annam Cordillera and the plateaux to the west. The other upland regions have increased their population densities, but not to any great extent. The areas of greatest increase are those where the highest densities already existed. In the Mekong plain and delta, the provinces closest to the river experienced the sharpest increases in population density. The attraction of the Saigon-Cho-lon area is also apparent. On the southeast Annam coast the increase was low, but farther north greater increases were recorded. The rapidity of population increase on the Tonkin deltas is also obvious. From 1931 to 1943, the population on most of the Red River delta increased by 200 persons per square mile, and, in one province, by 500 persons per square mile. In many of these delta provinces, therefore, the 1943 population was nearly double that of 1931. (cf. Figs. 19 and 20). The problem of local over-population was not being solved but was rapidly becoming more serious.

The disturbances in Indo-China appear to have affected population distribution to a great degree. Population movements between 1946 and 1948 indicate the disruption of the Indo-Chinese economy (Fig. 21). In Coch-

¹ United Nations. Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. Economic survey of Asia and the Far East, 1948. Department of Economic Affairs, Lake Success, 1949. p. 29.

² The period examined is from 1931 to 1946, but in the case of Tonkin and Annam from 1931 until 1943.

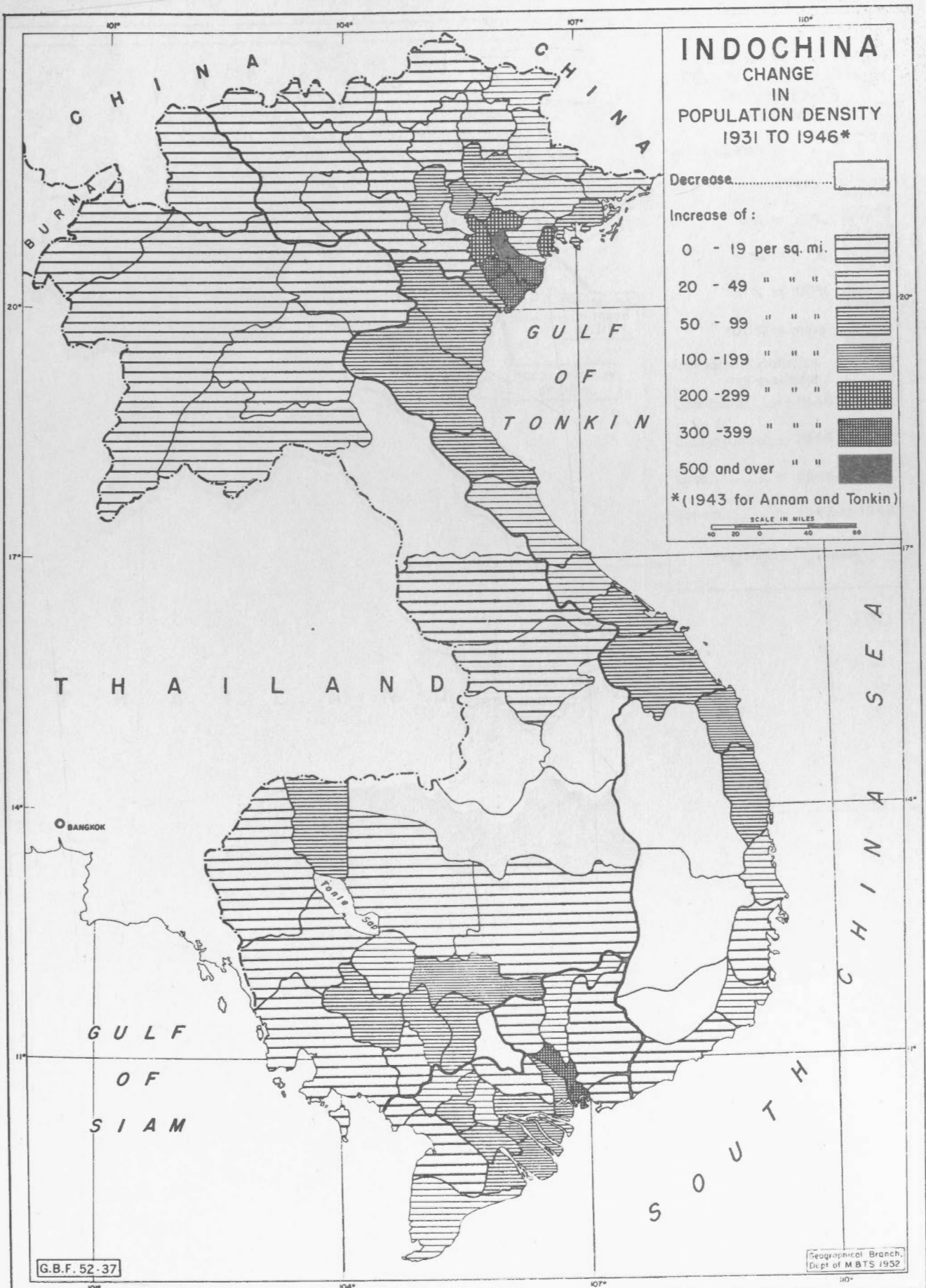
China and Cambodia, considerable areas experienced little change in population numbers. However, many of the most populous delta provinces experienced heavy losses of population. These were compensated, to some extent, by movements into the peripheral lowland areas. Many of the people, however, moved into the Saigon-Cho-lon area, which from 1946 to 1948 increased its population from 492,000 to 1,179,000.

Figures from many of the Tonkin provinces are lacking (Fig. 21). Here also, there appear to have been movements from the delta lands to the peripheral areas, or into the cities.¹

Recent movements, such as these, are not the commencement of new trends in internal migration, but result from disturbed conditions within the country. They are not likely to be of a permanent nature, and, to the extent that the people move from the deltas to less fertile lands, will serve to intensify the problem of providing adequate food supplies. Growth of urban populations probably reflects an increase in the size of the floating, landless population.

We can thus see that the majority of the Indo-Chinese people have through force of circumstance been tied to the lowland areas where the production of subsistence crops constitutes the main endeavour.

¹ The French authorities did not prepare population estimates for all provinces of Tonkin in 1948.



INDOCHINA

CHANGE IN POPULATION DENSITY 1931 TO 1946*

- Decrease..... [white box]
- Increase of:
- 0 - 19 per sq. mi. [horizontal lines]
 - 20 - 49 " " " [diagonal lines /]
 - 50 - 99 " " " [diagonal lines \]
 - 100 - 199 " " " [cross-hatch]
 - 200 - 299 " " " [dense cross-hatch]
 - 300 - 399 " " " [very dense cross-hatch]
 - 500 and over " " [solid black]

*(1943 for Annam and Tonkin)

SCALE IN MILES
0 20 40 60 80

G.B.F. 52-37

Geographical Branch,
Dept of M & S 1952

FIG. 20

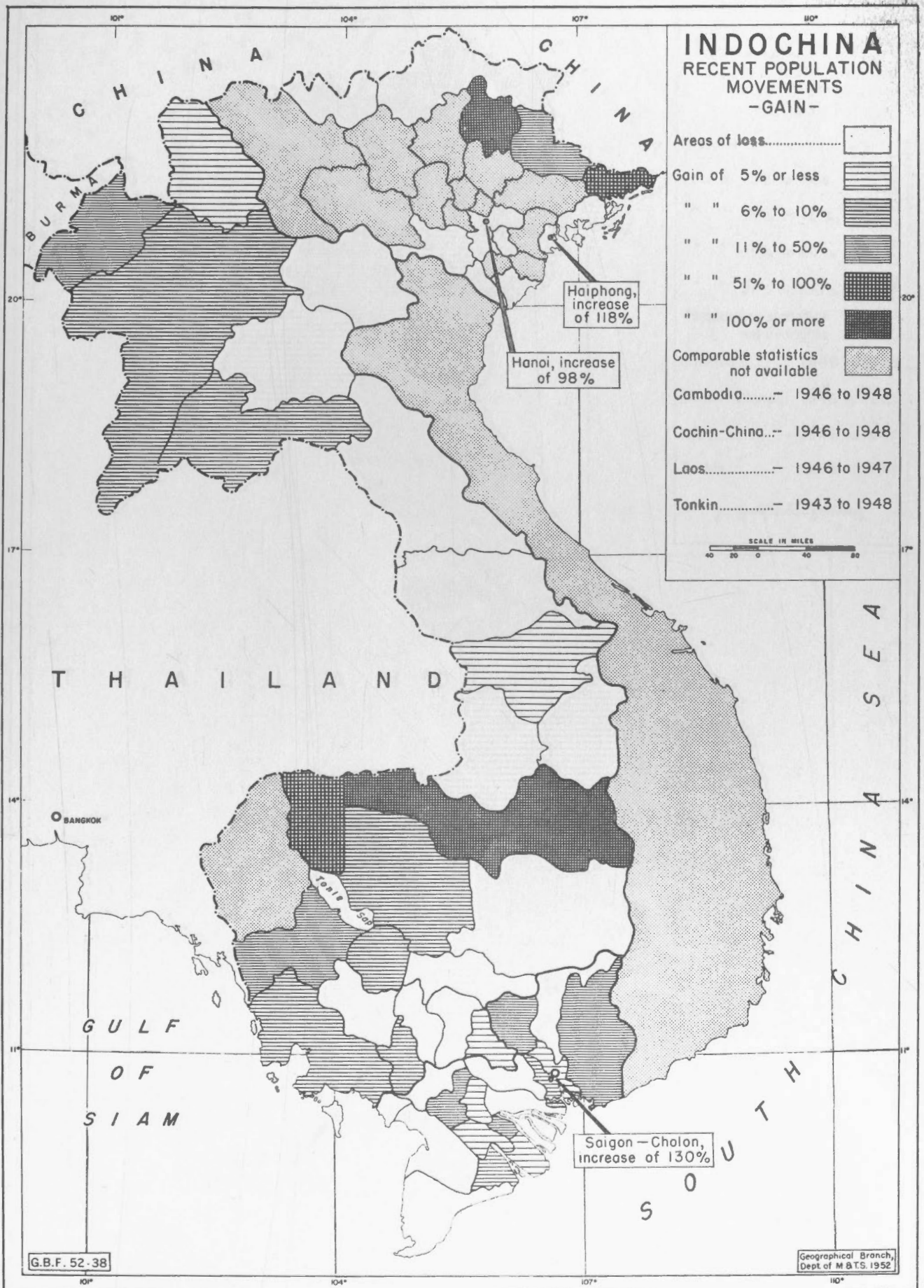


FIG. 21(A)

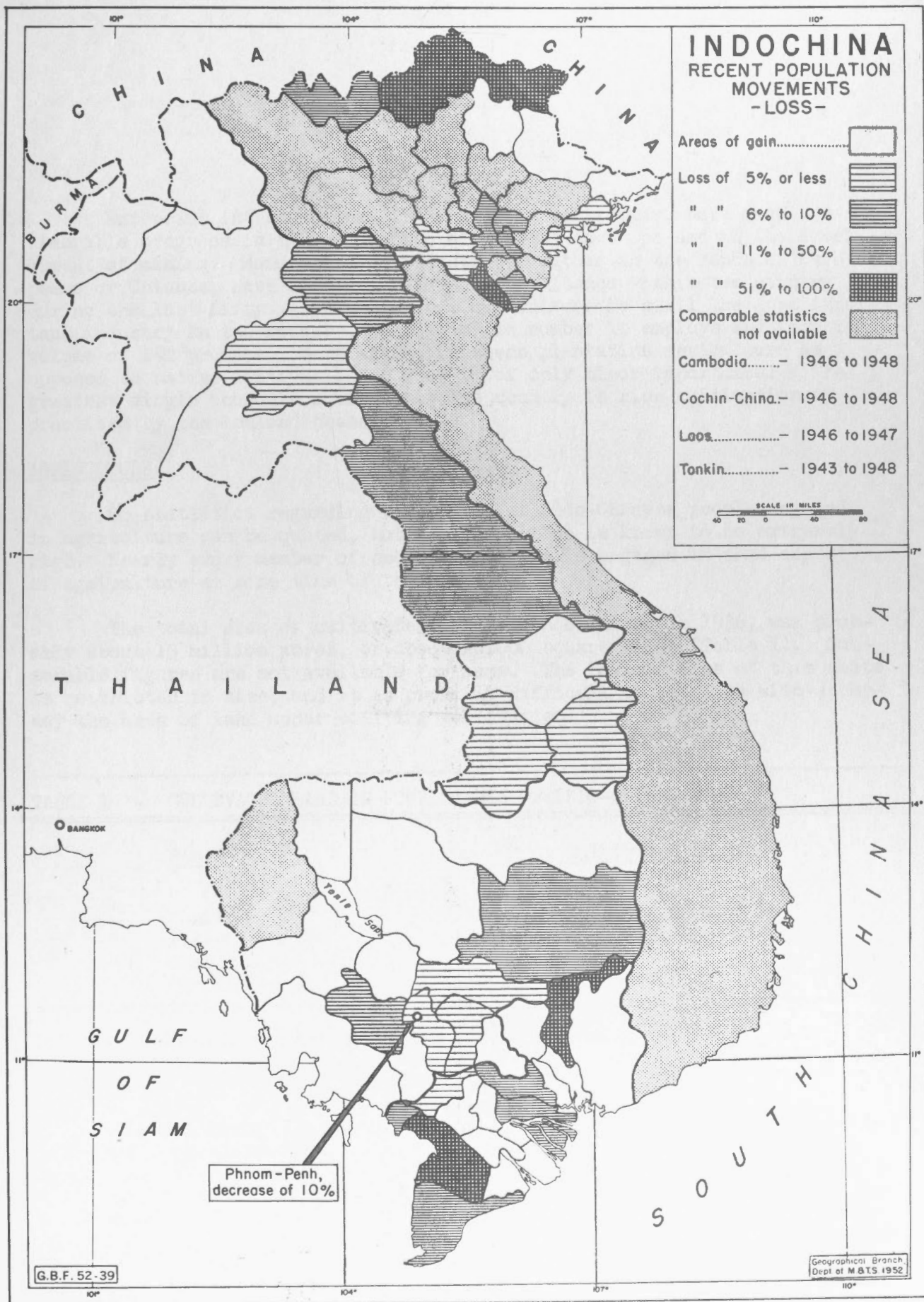


FIG. 21(B)

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

Europeans in Indo-China, the French in particular, have made considerable progress in the production of plantation crops and in the development of mining. Manufacturing industries, either in the hands of Europeans or Chinese, have also attained some prominence within the country during the last fifty years. However, agriculture is still the most important industry in the country, both from the number it employs and from the volume of its produce. Here again, European plantation agriculture as opposed to native cultivation of rice is of only minor importance. The greatest single economic activity in the country is rice cultivation as practised by the lowland peasants.

AGRICULTURE

No statistics regarding the number of Indo-Chinese people engaged in agriculture can be quoted, but the proportion is known to be extremely high. Nearly every member of peasant families is engaged in some aspect of agriculture at some time of the year.

The total area of cultivated land in Indo-China, in 1936, was probably about 13 million acres, or about 20,000 square miles (Table 1). Comparable figures are not available for Laos. The lowland area of this state is restricted in size, and it is probably difficult to estimate with accuracy the area of land under shifting cultivation.

TABLE 1 - CULTIVATED LAND IN FOUR STATES OF INDO-CHINA, 1936

<u>State</u>	<u>Cultivated Area</u> (acres)
Tonkin	2,915,000
Annam	1,878,000
Cambodia	1,947,000
Cochin-China	5,579,000

Source: International Labour Office. Labour conditions in Indo-China. Studies and Reports, Series B, No. 26. Geneva, 1938, p. 217.

The importance of the cultivated land in each state can be judged by its nutritional density; that is, the number of persons supported by each square mile of cultivated land. In 1936, the average nutritional density in Tonkin and Annam was almost 2,000. In Cambodia and Cochin-China, where the population was comparatively low, the nutritional densities were about one-half and one-quarter as great, respectively. These are the areas from which surplus crops, particularly rice, can be obtained. The gravity of the population problem in parts of Tonkin can be seen by the nutritional densities

obtaining in some of the provinces (Table 2). In the province of Quang Yen, nearly 6,000 persons were supported by each square mile of cultivated land. In this area, of course, coal-mining and dependent industries supported part of the population. However, in several other provinces the nutritional densities were between two and three thousand. Although nutritional densities have not been calculated for 1943, comparison of the population figures for 1936 and 1943 gives some conception of the growing seriousness of the problem. These provinces are all located in the Red River and adjoining deltas where areal expansion of agriculture is approaching its limits.

TABLE 2 - NUTRITIONAL DENSITIES AND POPULATIONS OF SOME TONKIN PROVINCES, 1936 and 1943

<u>Province</u>	<u>1936 Nutritional Density</u>	<u>1936 Population</u>	<u>1943 Population</u>
Quang Yen	5,957	100,000	188,500
Yenbay	2,960	76,000	107,600
Hadong	2,916	807,000	964,400
Backan	2,136	53,000	69,500
Nam Dinh	2,033	1,013,000	1,233,400
Thai Binh	2,033	960,000	1,139,800

Source: Labour conditions in Indo-China. p. 217. *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1931-1932 and 1943-1946.

The problem of rural over-population is further complicated by the system of land tenure. In Annamite communities, it is customary for property to be divided equally among all children of the family.¹ In densely populated areas, such as the Tonkin delta, this custom leads to the development of minute farms. Over 60 per cent of the farms in Tonkin are considerably less than one acre in extent, and another 30 per cent are less than five acres (Table 3). Not even the most intensive and efficient utilization of such farms could produce an adequate standard of nutrition for many people. In Annam itself, nearly 70 per cent of all farms are of about 1.2 acres in extent, or less. In Cochin-China and Cambodia, most of the newly developed rice lands are bought in fairly large blocks, and the average farm size is larger. The proportion of small-size farms appears to increase with the proportion of the Annamite population in a state, a reflection both of the proprietary customs and of the prevailing high birth rates of these people.

Although individual land holdings in Cochin-China are relatively large, most farms of more than 25 acres are subdivided into lots of from 12.5

¹ Pelzer, K.J. *Economic survey of the Pacific area*. Part 1, Population and land utilization. International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York. 1941. p. 136.

TABLE 3 - SIZE OF LAND HOLDINGS AND NUMBER OF FARMS

	No. of Farms	%
<u>Tonkin</u>		
Less than .89 A. (approx.)	594,000	61.6
.89 to 4.45 A.	288,000	29.9
4.45 to 8.9 A.	60,000	6.2
8.9 to 44.5 A.	21,000	2.2
44.5 to 89 A.	800	.1
Over 89 A.	200	--
<u>Annam</u>		
Less than 1.2 A.	450,000	68.7
1.2 to 6 A.	165,000	25.2
6 to 12 A.	31,000	4.7
12 to 60 A.	8,500	1.3
60 to 120 A.	300	.1
Over 120 A.	50	—
<u>Cochin-China</u>		
Less than 2.5 A.	86,000	33.7
2.5 to 12.5 A.	97,000	38.0
12.5 to 25 A.	38,000	14.9
25 to 125 A.	28,000	11.0
125 to 250 A.	3,600	1.4
250 to 1250 A.	2,400	.9
Over 1250 A.	200	.1
<u>Three Provinces of Cambodia</u>		
Less than 2.5 A.	25,000	20.9
2.5 to 12.5 A.	72,000	60.2
12.5 to 25 A.	18,000	15.0
25 to 125 A.	4,400	3.7
125 to 250 A.	100	.1
250 to 1250 A.	40	—
Over 1250 A.	10	—

Source: *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1931-1932.*

to 25 acres in size and leased to tenants.¹ Thus, over 35 per cent of the farms in Cochin-China are operated by tenants.² These tenants, or *ta dien*, are expected to clear the land themselves, to dig the necessary ditches for drainage and irrigation, to erect the farm buildings and to supply all implements. As rent, the landlord receives 40 to 50 per cent of the harvest.

¹ Pelzer. *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

² *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1931-1932.*

The tenants are usually forced to borrow money from the landlord, against the harvest, at high rates of interest. These circumstances cause widespread poverty and perpetual indebtedness among the tenant farmers.¹

The proportion of farms operated by tenants is much lower in the other states. However, even in Tonkin, where less than two per cent of the farms are recognized as being tenant-operated, many of the peasant proprietors are actually tenants. The peasants are constantly in arrears, and have to make annual payments to the money-lenders. Furthermore, many farms are registered as the property of the operators which are actually controlled by large land-owners.² The necessity for contracting debt results from the small size of the farms and, in turn, from the population pressure within the area.

The economic difficulties of the peasant farmers constitute one of the greatest problems in Indo-China and, at the same time, present the greatest obstacles to any satisfactory solution of that problem.

Rice: About 86 per cent of the cultivated land is devoted to rice.³ Apart from areas where plantation crops are grown, it seems probable that cultivated lands and rice lands are almost co-extensive.

There are two main rice-growing areas: the deltas of Tonkin and northern Annam, and the delta and plain of the lower Mekong (Fig. 22). In the latter area, cultivation does not extend below the high-water level of Tonlé Sap. Smaller areas lie along the Mekong and its tributaries, and on the discontinuous delta lands of the Annam coast. Within these areas, not all the land surface is cultivated, and the intensity of cultivation varies greatly from region to region. The proportion of rice lands within each state is similar to that of cultivated lands as a whole (Table 4).

TABLE 4 - AREAS OF RICE CULTIVATION IN INDO-CHINA

(thousands of acres)				
State	An Average Year ¹	1942- ²	1943-44 ³	1945-46 ³
Annam	1,977	2,337	2,581	2,831
Cambodia	1,977	2,939	2,125	2,330
Cochin-China	5,683	5,690	5,446	4,910
Laos	988	1,102	--	--
Tonkin	2,965	3,674	3,424	4,526
Approx. Total	13,590	15,242	--	--

¹ From *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1931-1932.

² From *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1941-1942.

³ From *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1943-1946,

¹ Pelzer. *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

² Jacoby, E.H. *Agrarian unrest in southeast Asia*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1949. p. 143.

³ Wickizer, V.D., and M.K. Bennett. *The Rice Economy of Monsoon Asia*. Food Research Institute, Stanford University, California, 1941. p.31.

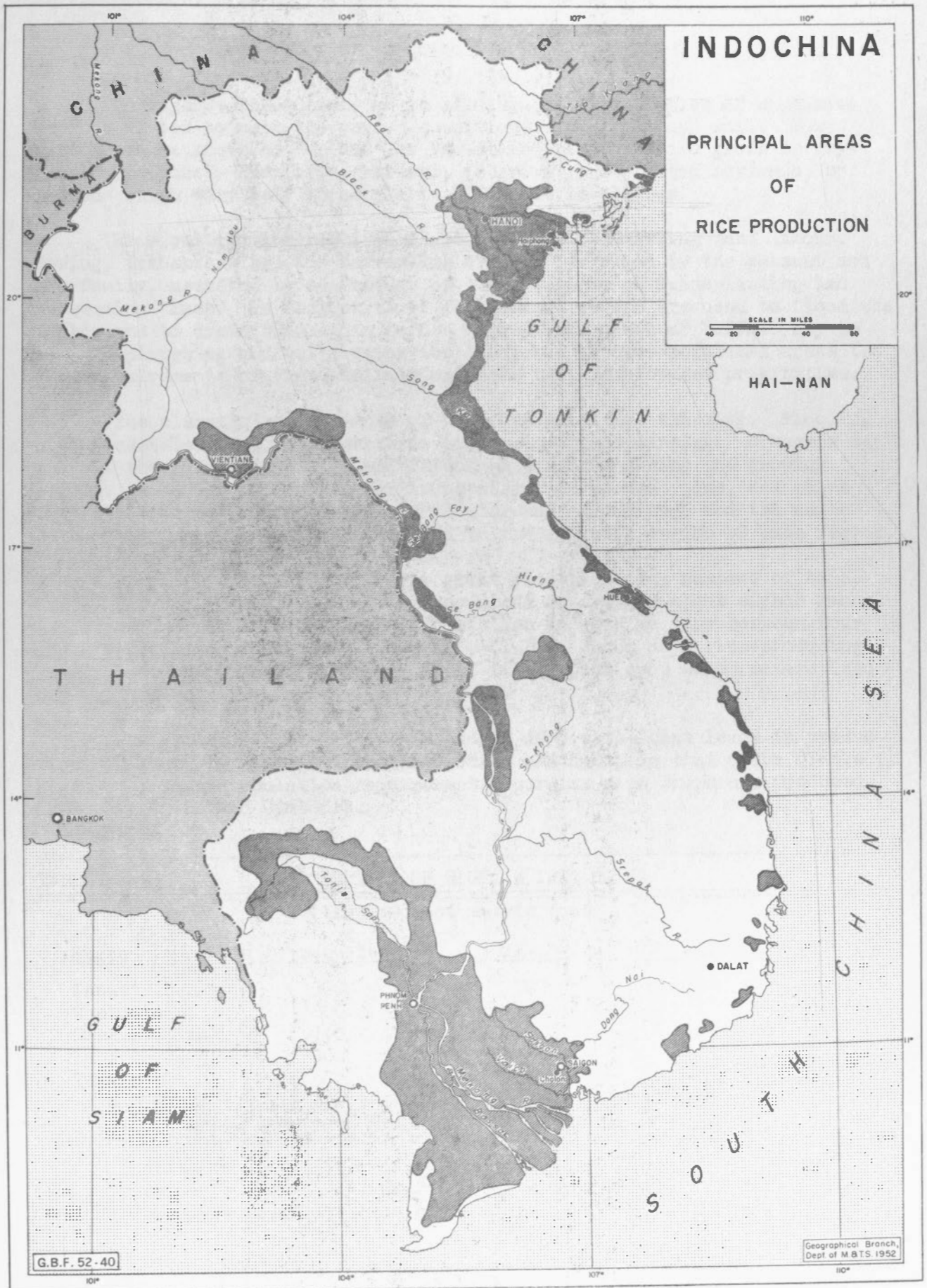


FIG.22

Throughout Indo-China, as in all Asia, many varieties of rice have been developed to meet the varied conditions of climate and soil. Some varieties are known as "upland" or "mountain" rice, and are grown by dry-farming methods. Most rice, however, is grown in irrigated lowlands, by methods which vary only in detail in different localities.

Rice cultivation requires a great deal of exhausting hand labour. Sowing, transplanting, and harvesting are all performed by the peasant and his family, assisted by neighbours or hired helpers at transplanting and harvesting times. In most parts of Indo-China, scoops are used to flood the fields and to drain them again before harvesting. Oxen or buffalo may be used in ploughing and cultivating the land, but in over-populated areas the food requirements of these animals may make their employment prohibitive.

The climatic requirements of the rice plant are exacting. Flooding of the seed-beds and fields retards sowing and transplanting. Droughts may prevent the maintenance of a sufficient water-level during the growing period. A period of dry weather is necessary at harvest time, and rains can ruin the crop. The periods for sowing and harvesting, and the number of crops grown in a year, are adapted to the climatic regime of each region.

Indo-China is not one of the great rice-producing nations of Asia. Since 1947, production of rice in Indo-China has ranked about eighth among Asiatic countries.¹ Gross annual production appears to vary between four and eight million tons. The importance of Indo-China as a rice-producing country, however, lies in the volume of its surplus crop which enters into foreign trade.

Within Indo-China itself, the state of Cochin-China leads in production, followed by Tonkin, Annam, Cambodia, and Laos, in that order (Table 5). Because of lower population requirements, surplus rice crops are produced in Cochin-China and Cambodia.

TABLE 5 — PRODUCTION OF RICE IN INDO-CHINA

(thousands of metric tons)

State	An Average Year ¹	1942-43 ²	1943-44 ³	1945-46 ³
Annam	900	983	1,178	1,011
Cambodia	800	838	651	1,054
Cochin-China	2,700	3,179	2,612	2,214
Laos	300	386	—	—
Tonkin	1,600	1,882	1,762	1,680
TOTAL	6,300	7,268	—	—

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1931-1932.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1941-1942.

³ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1943-1946.

Crop yields in Indo-China are among the lowest of Asia, and are apparently declining.¹ Within Indo-China itself, yields appear to increase with intensity of cultivation (Table 6). The highest yields are obtained in Tonkin, and the lowest yields in Laos, where a greater proportion of rice is grown by extensive methods.

TABLE 6 - YIELDS OF RICE IN INDO-CHINA

(metric tons per acre)				
State	An Average Year ¹	1942-43 ²	1943-44 ³	1944-45 ³
Annam	.48	.40	.44	.36
Cambodia	.40	.32	.32	.44
Cochin-China	.48	.56	.48	.44
Laos	.28	.36	—	—
Tonkin	.52	.52	.52	.48
TOTAL	.48	.48	.44	.44

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1931-1932.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1941-1942.

³ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1943-1946.

Other Food Crops: Rice forms about 90 per cent of the diet of the Indo-Chinese peasants, but other crops are grown as supplementary food sources and as cash crops.

Maize or corn is the chief supplementary crop grown by the peasants. In 1936, the area devoted to corn totalled 1,235,000 acres, but by 1944 it had declined to about half that area, and production had declined from about 600,000 tons to about 200,000 tons. The area used for growing corn varies greatly from year to year within each region, depending upon the volume of the rice harvest. Usually, about 50 per cent of the corn acreage is in Cambodia, along the Mekong, and about 30 per cent in the Tonkin delta. None of the other states has large areas devoted to corn. In recent years, corn has constituted a cash crop for the natives, and a fairly important item of export.

Other food crops grown by the natives include sweet potatoes, haricot beans, soya beans, taro, manioc, yams, and millet. Few are produced in quantities sufficient for export, but are used as subsistence food crops. Vegetables are grown in the vicinity of Dalat for the Saigon-Cho-lon market. Citrus fruits are grown in Cochin-China, and bananas in Annam.

Cash Crops: Certain crops are grown in Indo-China to supplement the farmers' income from rice, but few are of great importance, or are cultivated as successfully as they might be.

¹ Wickizer and Bennett. Op. cit., Table III, p. 318-9.

After the failure of cotton as a plantation crop, encouragement was given to native growers in an attempt to supply the French demand for cotton.¹ However, cotton is grown by the natives as an off-season crop during the dry months. Its quality is poor, and it cannot compete with imported fibres.

In Annam, Cambodia, and parts of the Tonkin delta, some families grow mulberry trees either to feed their own silk-worms or to supply leaves to neighbouring villages. The government has provided experimental stations and supervisory personnel for the industry, but the silk is produced under poor conditions and remains of low quality.

Coconuts are grown on the coastal plains as far north as Tourane. In Anna, typhoons damage the groves, and the most important producing area is in central Cochin-China. The fall in prices of copra during the depression halted the development of new plantations, so that most trees are now over age. Both copra and coconut-oil are produced, but the quality is poor.

The Indo-Chinese natives prefer a dark, strong tobacco which is grown locally. The soil requirements for this type of plant and the large labour force needed to grow tobacco are both found in the lowland areas. The light tobacco preferred by Europeans grows best in the upland regions, where the Moi produce some low-quality leaf.

Between 80,000 and 90,000 acres of sugar are grown in Indo-China annually,² but the yield is very low, averaging about two tons per acre. Little sugar is used by the natives, but even so some has to be imported.

Other cash crops include peanuts, sesame, and anise, grown for oil, lac and tung used in varnish, kapok, and jute. Natives also grow coffee, tea, and rubber, but these crops are chiefly produced on European plantations.

Livestock

Livestock do not form an important part of the agricultural economy of French Indo-China. The hot, moist summers are not well suited to the healthy development of domestic animals, and also encourage the spread of many diseases. Natural grassland is rare, and the grass which grows in savanna areas is too coarse for pasturage. Most important of all is the need for land to produce food crops rather than fodder and pasture. Only pigs and fowls are much used in the native diet. There were about five million pigs in the country in 1942, over twice the number in 1931 (Table 7). Cattle also were more common in 1942 than in 1931, but the number of buffalo declined.

Cattle and buffalo are used as draught animals in the rice fields, and are less important as food. Annam and Cambodia have the greatest number of cattle and Tonkin has the greatest number of buffalo. Pigs, the chief food source, were reared in greatest numbers in Tonkin and the other lowland areas.

¹ Robequain. Economic development. p. 232.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1943-1946.

TABLE 7 - LIVESTOCK IN INDO-CHINA, 1942.¹

(thousands of head)							
Country	Cattle	Buffaloes	Horses	Pigs	Goats	Sheep	Elephants
Annam	630	320	13	1,000	22	9.5	.7
Cambodia	850	300	40	1,000	20	--	.4
Cochin- China	230	280	10	750	7	.4	--
Laos	130	175	6	250	3	.4	.9
Tonkin	185	455	21	2,000	23	.9	--
TOTAL	<u>2,025</u>	<u>1,530</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>11.2</u>	<u>2.0</u>
.....							
TOTAL 1931	<u>2,185</u>	<u>2,070</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>2,040</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>8.9</u>	<u>1.6</u>

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1943-1946.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1931-1932.

Plantation Crops

The term "plantation agriculture" implies large-scale production of a single commodity for sale, and usually for export. In Indo-China, plantations are generally financed and managed by the French, employing Annamite labour. Only one crop, pepper, is almost exclusively produced on Chinese, rather than French plantations.

Although the earliest plantations were on the margins of the Tonkin delta, most are now in the southern parts of the country. The prevailing narrow annual temperature range favours the growth of the tropical plants usually cultivated on plantations. Furthermore, the soil conditions are also more favourable. The grey soils of northeastern Cochin-China were first used for plantation purposes, but it was not until the red basaltic lands were opened up that plantation agriculture developed greatly (Fig. 13).

The advantages of soil and climate found in southern Indo-China are partially offset by the greater difficulty of obtaining labour. The newer plantations were located on the sparsely populated Moi plateaux, whose people were unaccustomed to working long hours for wages; this necessitated the importation of Annamite labourers from Tonkin.¹ The workers were recruited under contract, usually for a period of three years. Although living conditions on the plantations were sometimes superior to those of their homes, the Annamites disliked being absent from their homes, and desertions were common, sometimes when the workers were in receipt of wages in advance. Most of the plantations were developed in upland areas, where the prevalence of malaria added to the difficulties of the planters and the misery of the labourers.²

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 213.

² Labour Conditions in Indo-China. pp. 300-309.

For the protection of both owners and workers, government regulations have been introduced from time to time. These regulations govern the recruiting of labourers, medical inspection and preventive measures, living and working conditions, and the fulfilment, by the natives, of their contract obligations. These regulations have helped to improve conditions under the contract labour system.

Rubber: Rubber has become the most successful plantation crop in Indo-China. The soils of the red lands are particularly suitable for the cultivation of rubber, and the dry season appears to save the trees from some of the diseases prevalent in more humid climates. Furthermore, France has generally provided a good market for Indo-Chinese rubber. The comparatively late development of the industry in Indo-China has allowed it to take advantage of previous research carried out in other rubber-producing countries.

Rubber was first produced in Indo-China by natives who collected it from a variety of species and sold it to Europeans; the methods used were destructive of the plants exploited. In 1897 *Hevea brasiliensis* from Malaya was planted in the Saigon Botanical Garden. Interest in *Hevea* grew slowly, and it was not until 1915 that rubber from this plant out-ranked the production of wild rubber.¹

The earliest rubber plantations were established on the "grey lands", the ancient alluvial terraces of northeast Cochin-China. These lands were close to the populous Saigon area, and were covered only with light brush. For these reasons, little capital was needed. The first plantations were, therefore, small and were usually operated by persons who had some other occupation. The more southerly red lands, those in Cochin-China (Fig. 13), were used for rubber plantations before the First World War,² but those in the vicinity of Dalat were not opened up until 1924. The world demand for rubber encouraged the development of the new areas to the north until 1928. In that year, the Stevenson Plan, an international agreement regulating rubber production, broke down, and prices fell abruptly. The Indo-Chinese government assisted the planters with subsidies and other financial concessions. The London Agreement of 1934 allowed Indo-China a production quota in excess of her output at that time. As the output increased, world demand permitted the upward revision of the Indo-Chinese quota, and the industry enjoyed a fairly prosperous period prior to the Second World War.

Since 1934, few new areas have been planted, but grafted or budded trees are used to re-stock the old plantations. The new stock is from superior strains, and has returned the highest yield per unit area of any country in the Far East.³ However, the grafted trees are not resistant to wind damage, and may be shorter-lived than non-budded varieties.⁴

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 202.

² Ibid., p. 187.

³ Miller. Industrial Resources of Indochina. p. 406.

⁴ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 210.

Methods of cultivation have been changed in order to protect the soil from erosion after clearing. The trees themselves are subjected to less destructive tapping than formerly, and are allowed to rest during the dry season. On the large plantations, especially, the most modern methods of processing and handling the rubber are employed. The quality of rubber produced is good.

The industry in Indo-China is almost entirely in the hands of a few large companies. In 1937, there were 1,005 rubber plantations; of these, 701 were of less than 100 acres, their total area amounting to six per cent of the land planted to rubber. The remaining 304 occupied 94 per cent of the area, and of these, 27 controlled 68 per cent of the total land in rubber plantations. Each of the large rubber companies owned many plantations.¹

Of some 300,000 acres of rubber plantations, over two-thirds are in Cochin-China and about one-fifth in Cambodia. There are a few thousand acres in Annam and a few hundred in Laos. Until 1938, international agreements prevented any great increase in acreage, but a steady increase took place both before and during the Japanese occupation. Although new areas were not always planted, the stock was rejuvenated through the introduction of budded and grafted trees.

Production of rubber amounted to over 10,000 tons in 1930, but increased rapidly after the signing of the London Agreement in 1934. In 1941, production totalled more than 76,000 tons. Production declined to 12,000 tons in 1945 and increased slightly in the years following.² In 1949, it was still less than 45,000 tons.³

Tea: Tea is indigenous to Indo-China, and was cultivated in their gardens by the natives before the arrival of Europeans. Since 1924, tea plantations have been developed on the red lands of Annam. In 1943, there were about 40,000 acres of plantations in Indo-China, and production amounted to about 10,000 tons of tea; this figure included both plantations and gardens.⁴

Coffee: Coffee has been less successful as a plantation crop in Indo-China. Difficult natural conditions have had to be overcome, and the product has to compete for the French market with that of other French colonies.

The first coffee plantations were begun on the borders of the Tonkin delta but did not spread to the Annam red lands plateaux until after 1924. Towards the south, coffee can be grown at greater elevations.

Coffee exhausts the soil so rapidly that it is usually grown in conjunction with cattle-rearing; a supply of manure is thus ensured. All the

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

² Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

³ Bulletin Economique de l'Indochine. 1950.

⁴ Annuaire Statistique, 1943-1946.

difficulties of the latter industry, therefore, limit coffee-planting.¹ In addition, typhoons on the Annam coast and hot, dry winds in the interior further restrict and hamper the cultivation of coffee.

In 1937, about 2,500 tons of coffee were produced from 25,000 acres. In 1943, about 4,200 tons were produced from 30,000 acres.

Pepper: Pepper is cultivated as a plantation crop on the Gulf of Siam coast of Cambodia. Sloping lands well protected from winds are used. The vines require constant and careful cultivation, so that pepper-growing has been left almost entirely to skilled Chinese. However, excessive production has led to marketing difficulties both on the French market and in competition with pepper from other countries.² In 1943, about 2,500 tons were produced from an area of approximately 5,000 acres.

FORESTRY

Forest industries in Indo-China include the cutting of wood for constructional purposes and for fuel, the manufacture of charcoal, and the collection of some wild forest products. Nearly all these activities are in the hands of natives or Chinese, for there are few European lumbering companies.

Lumbering for export is not a profitable activity in Indo-China. The forests have been replaced by secondary growth in which there are few valuable species, and the virgin stands are in inaccessible areas. Some plantation companies engage in lumbering to defray the costs of clearing, and to provide work for their employees in off seasons,³ but this is not a large-scale activity.

The deterioration of the forest cover, which has been accelerated in recent years, has led to the establishment of government forest reserves where cutting is prohibited except under government supervision. In sections of Cambodia, the natives are permitted to cut or burn the poor species in the process of shifting cultivation. This adaptation of traditional agricultural practice to the needs of forest conservation appears to be fairly successful.

All wood-cutting in Indo-China is done with axes, and because many of the species have very broad bases, stumps of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 feet in height are left. The wood is rough-hewn, cut into lengths of about 5 to 25 feet, and hauled to the nearest river or surfaced road. For large logs, trucks hauled by great teams of buffalo are employed. Smaller logs are carried in two-wheeled carts drawn by oxen or buffalo. On some of the Annam plateaux and in parts of Cambodia elephants are used.

The cheapest method of transporting logs to market centres is by water. On small streams, the wood is allowed to drift with the current,

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 195.

² Thompson. French Indo-China. p. 142.

³ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 274.

but on larger rivers, rafts are built of the logs. On the Mekong and Red Rivers tow boats are used to prevent the rafts from interfering with navigation. The periods of the year when logs are floated downstream vary considerably. On the Red River, logs are floated all year, but the periods of greatest traffic are in September and May. On the Mekong, the logs move during the high water period, from July until December. Logs launched on the upper Mekong in July reach Saigon in October.¹ On the main tributaries, the logs are moved just after the period of maximum rainfall.

Where no rivers are accessible, the logs must be transported by road or railway, making necessary the building of roads and bridges. Commercial forest exploitation is limited by accessibility to road, rail, or water transport facilities.

A variety of tree species are utilized. The more valuable woods cut include rosewood, (Dalbergia cochinchinensis), mahogany (Melanorrhœa laccifera and Sandoricum indicum), ebony (Diospyrus mun), and sandalwood (Dysoxylon Laureiri). The species used for common construction are known by native names, such as Sao (Hopea odorata), lim (Erythrophlaeum fordii), and dau (Dipterocarpus). Some native woods are particularly useful in ship construction, but most are used for charcoal, the manufacture of matches, and as firewood. Mangroves provide a great supply of firewood, and are extensively used in Cochin-China for charcoal. Rattans are used in making furniture and other articles, and bamboo is used extensively for house construction.

Various other forest products are collected, most of which are used locally for food and to supply home industries. Cinnamon is both cultivated and gathered from the wild plants. The wild product is of better quality, but is scarce. Spices such as cardamoms are collected, but cultivated aniseed is of greater importance than the wild variety. The lac tree is also utilized. Sticklac, from which shellac is refined, is the excretion of certain insects. Both products, collected in Indo-China, are used in the manufacture of varnish, as is oil from the abrasin tree (Aleurites montana), which resembles tung oil. Quinine, nux vomica, strychnine, and other medicinal products are gathered. The nut of the Areca palm and betel leaf are collected for preparation into a chewing mixture. The tuber of cunau is collected for use as a source of brown dye. Rubber from wild lianas and other plants is no longer gathered. In the swamps of the Mekong delta, honey and beeswax is collected by the natives.²

The most important use of wood in Indo-China is for fuel. The quantity cut for this purpose usually exceeds that cut for lumber (Table 8), and in some years is nearly three times the volume cut for construction. During the period of the Japanese occupation, 1941 to 1945, the quantities of wood cut increased very rapidly. Since that time, however, wood cutting has been disrupted, and the annual volume cut has been less than in the depression years (Table 8). This latest trend has been more noticeable in the cutting of construction wood than in the cutting of firewood.

¹ Miller. Industrial resources of Indochina. p. 406.

² Sion. Asie des Moussons. p. 452.

TABLE 8 - FOREST PRODUCTION¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Construction Wood</u> (thousands of cubic feet)	<u>Firewood</u> (thousands of cubic feet)	<u>Charcoal</u> (tons)
1930	29,100	67,800	— ²
1931	19,600	42,600	59,300
1932	16,000	41,300	61,200
1933	13,000	37,800	61,000
1934	16,000	45,000	65,000
1935	18,200	48,200	65,900
1936	21,200	51,500	65,700
1937	24,800	59,500	86,200
1941	31,600	73,000	85,400
1942	30,400	90,600	89,100
1943	42,900	115,700	97,100
1944	35,800	111,000	— ¹
1946	8,100	36,100	29,100
1947	7,200	32,600	19,400
1948	9,700	37,000	20,100

¹ Adapted from *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine* for various years.

² Not available.

FISHERIES

The fisheries of Indo-China are of great value to the country. Fish supply proteins and vitamins otherwise lacking in the native diet, and comprise one of the exports of the country. However, the greatest proportion of the fish caught does not enter trade, and no statistics are available on production, apart from the quantities of fish products exported.

Fresh-water and inshore fisheries are most important. Although both the Gulf of Tonkin and the Gulf of Siam contain considerable quantities of fish, the people lack the equipment to exploit them and are not maritime by inclination. The most important coastal fisheries are in southern Annam, where less violent monsoons, salt manufacturing plants, and fairly dry winter weather encourage the industry.¹ During the winter and spring fishing season, about 30,000 people, Annamites and Cambodians, congregate on the banks of the Tonlé Sap. Fish are caught by nets on the lake, and in weirs on the tributary rivers. The fishing is done at night by the men, who rest during the day while the women and children prepare the catch for sale. Other fishing communities are found along the Mekong, such as those established at the base of the cliffs in the Kemmarat rapids.

The buying and selling of fish is almost entirely in Chinese hands. Fish is sold fresh, dried, or smoked, or in the form of various sauces to be eaten with rice. Because of the difficulty of transportation across the mud

¹ Sion. *Op. cit.*, p. 460.

flats at the mouth of Tonlé Sap all fish from this source is sold in dried or smoked form. Lower down the Mekong, the fish is sold fresh on the Saigon-Cho-lon market. The products exported are chiefly dried, salted, or smoked.

Other marine products utilized include shrimps, sea-salt, and various marine plants.

MINING

The mining industry of Indo-China is concentrated in French hands, through the operation of a few large companies. The natives seldom have the capital available to undertake the great financial risks involved. Foreigners may invest capital, but are prohibited from owning or operating mines. Many mining companies have obtained concessions, but few have been successful in overcoming the many difficulties which beset the industry.

Mining is regulated by the Service des Mines located at Hanoi. The granting of concessions to prospect is in the hands of local authorities. If the necessary regulations are fulfilled, permanent possession of the concession is obtained, and the state takes a small proportion of the mining profits. Since 1937, heavy penalties have been exacted for the holding of concessions without active exploitation.

Most of the mining activity is confined to Tonkin, although tin mining is now of greatest importance in Laos. Tonkin has the most favourable geological conditions; both metals and coal are located comparatively close to the sea-coast, and to the labour source in the Tonkin delta.

Coal-mining is the most stable activity. Metal mining has been sporadic in character, because of the many natural and financial difficulties and the price fluctuations on the world metal market.

From about 1938 to 1941, employment in the mines totalled about 50,000 persons, of whom only about 250 were Europeans. From 1941 to 1944 employment dropped steadily, and in 1945 political unrest caused many mining operations to be abandoned. In that year, only about 4,000 persons were employed in the mines, and by 1948 the total labour force had only increased to about 8,000.¹

Coal: The coal output until 1942 fluctuated between one million and 2½ million tons annually (Table 9), of which over 90 per cent was produced by two large companies in Tonkin. Both in quantity and value, coal is the most important mining product in the country.

Open-pit mines now produce less than the shaft mines, but even in these latter there is little mechanization, and most of the coal is cut by hand. Narrow-gauge railway lines run from the larger mines to Hon Gay and other ports, where screening and washing facilities are located near the coal wharves. From some of the smaller mines, the coal is loaded into junks for transportation downstream to the Tonkin delta.

¹ Employment statistics from Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine for various years.

TABLE 9 - PRODUCTION OF COAL, IRON ORE, AND NON-METALLICS¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coal</u> (thousands of metric tons)	<u>Iron Ore</u> (metric tons)	<u>Crushed Phosphate</u> (metric tons)	<u>Salt</u> (metric tons)
1930	1,955	--	26,565	237,335
1931	1,726	--	3,858	249,749
1932	1,713	--	6,500	251,178
1933	1,591	--	30	145,493
1934	1,592	600	4,060	160,457
1935	1,775	275	5,900	206,778
1936	2,186	4,870	10,336	192,209
1937	2,308	16,368	20,252	179,981
1938	2,335	71,881	37,341	179,968
1940	2,500	17,255	22,270	189,356
1941	2,329	27,920	40,310	316,624
1942	1,243	34,009	29,050	275,910
1943	--	43,787	19,888	205,127
1944	--	14,117	6,845	148,139
1945	230	5,450	--	--
1946	262	--	--	--
1947	260	--	--	41,788 ³
1948	355 ²	--	--	65,352 ³
1949	378 ²	--	--	113,575 ³
1950	503 ³	--	--	75,721 ³

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

² Bulletin Economique, 1950.

³ Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam 1949-1950. Identical figures for coal production are given in Bulletin Economique de l'Indochine 1950, and in Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam 1949-1950, for the years 1946 to 1949, inclusive.

Given favourable marketing conditions, the coal companies, on the basis of their reserves and of their present equipment, could greatly expand their output.¹

Other Minerals: The output of zinc has been consistently of the greatest volume among the metallic minerals (Table 10). However, recent production has fallen far short of the 1926 peak, owing to the decline of prices on the world market. One company produces all the zinc, lead, and silver, the last two metals being found in association with the zinc ores.

Although the volume of tin produced annually is much less than that of zinc, tin is much the most valuable metal produced in Indo-China.² The

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 256.

² In 1942, it comprised 63 per cent of the total value of metals produced. Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine, 1941-1942.

TABLE 10 - PRODUCTION OF METAL CONCENTRATES¹

(metric tons)				
<u>Year</u>	<u>Zinc</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Tin</u>	<u>Tungsten</u>
1930	15,891	20	1,009	132
1932	5,000	—	1,017	147
1934	4,967	—	1,152	182
1936	5,221	32	1,403	302
1938	5,162	—	1,625	327
1940	6,900	—	1,496	234
1941	7,600	110	1,316	200
1942	6,167	92	1,046	128
1943	4,908	199	663	64
1944	1,405	7	363	50
1945	360	5	97	5
1948	—	—	32 ²	—
1949	—	—	4 ³	—
1950	—	—	54 ⁴	—
.....				
<u>Year</u>	<u>Chrome</u>	<u>Manganese</u>	<u>Antimony</u>	<u>Bauxite</u>
1930	740	—	—	—
1932	—	—	—	—
1934	—	—	—	—
1936	—	1,613	47	—
1938	—	1,114	104	2,800
1940	—	320	11	—
1941	—	462	4	5,092
1942	1,607	644	1	6,352
1943	2,930	620	11	—
1944	1,033	3,444	23	11
1945	—	—	—	—

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

² Bulletin Economique de l'Indochine, 1949.

³ Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam 1949-1950.

⁴ Annuaire Statistique du Laos 1949-1950.

cassiterite ores of Tonkin are associated with wolfram, and tungsten also is produced by the tin mining company. Concentrating was formerly done in Cao Bang, Tonkin, but some ore is now washed and sent to Singapore for mixing with lower-grade Malayan tin.¹ The ore is moved by truck and railway to the seaport of Haiphong. The cassiterite deposits of Laos, from which the major part of the Indo-Chinese output comes, contain no wolfram and require more complex

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 260.

smelting processes. Washing and concentrating is done in Laos, but lack of coal prohibits smelting on the spot. The ore is taken either by road to the Annam coast or down the Mekong, from which points it is exported.

Antimony and chromium ores, both intermittently extracted, are found in northern Annam. Chromium was produced during the period of the Japanese occupation after a lapse of ten years (Table 10).

Iron is produced in two mining areas in Tonkin, one of which is operated by a large coal company. The manganese produced originates from the northern Annam iron mines.

Bauxite production was stimulated during the Japanese occupation, but has not been continued. Crushed phosphate (18%-25% P_2O_5) is produced for fertilizer. This industry, also, was expanded during the Japanese occupation, but has since declined (Table 9).

Mining has been seriously hindered by the shortage of labour and supplies and the disruption of communications resulting from the internal disturbances in the country. Re-establishment of greater mining activity must await the restoration of stable political conditions.

MANUFACTURING

On the basis of numbers employed, the traditional industries as a whole comprise the greatest manufacturing activity in the country. In 1937, it was estimated that 1,350,000 people were engaged in such industries.¹ This is a much greater number than the comparable total for modern manufacturing industries.

The traditional industries are carried on in the homes of peasants and supply the local needs for food, clothing, implements, buildings, and many other things. Although some have arisen because of the availability of raw materials, others are carried on, often under difficulty, in traditional sites where the original locating motivation has been forgotten.² Such manufacturing only supplements agriculture. There are few villages composed entirely of landless artisans. The crafts are usually pursued in the off-seasons for rice growing and during the scanty leisure time of the peasants. Most require elementary skills and little capital. Simple tools are used, and small reserves of raw materials are maintained.

In Tonkin and northern Annam, specialization in certain crafts has developed in many villages, and even specialization in some processes of a given craft. However, the Annamites have no conception of caste in relation to occupations pursued. The crafts of the lower Annam coast are of similar type, with the addition of certain industries based on products more readily available in this region. In Cochin-China and Cambodia native industries as a supplement to agriculture have not been so long established, and have lost ground in competition with modern industry. Village specialization is lacking in both Cambodia and Laos, for each community makes most

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

² *Ibid.*, p. 245.

of the articles it needs. Throughout the country, labour for traditional industries is supplied by the family, not by hired workers.

The preparation of foodstuffs is one of the major traditional industries, including such processes as the husking of rice, and the preparation of various types of food from rice. The distillation of alcohol is an important industry in spite of governmental efforts to control manufacture and sale. Sugar, molasses, and various oils, such as coconut oil, are prepared in Annam. On the southeast Annam coast, the preparation of fish sauce, nuoc mam, engages a labour force which raises the industry to the scale of modern manufacturing activity. At various points along the coast, salt is recovered for the fishing industry and general household use.

Textile-making employs one of the largest groups of artisans. In Tonkin, little spinning is done. Factory-made cotton thread is woven into coarse cloth for clothing. In northern Annam, both spinning as well as weaving are done by artisans. Silk is less important than cotton, but among the Indo-Chinese states, Annam has the greatest proportion of silk workers. Ropes and mats are prepared from coconut fibres on the Annam coast. In Tonkin, lace and embroidery are produced; these are bought by European merchants, some for export.

Basket-work has a variety of uses in Indo-China, and is an important craft in most parts of the country. Hats and capes to protect the rice-field workers from the rain, receptacles of all kinds, implements for irrigation and for fishing, are all woven of reeds, rattans, bamboo, or latania leaves.

A considerable body of artisans is engaged in the construction industries. In parts of the Tonkin delta where only one annual rice harvest is possible, wood-workers travel to many parts of the country and return to their homes in summer. The larger village buildings are all erected by specialists in various types of wood-work. Other craftsmen concerned with construction include masons, stone-cutters, and brick-makers.

Many workers produce jewellery, paper articles for religious ceremonies, and pottery. Some of their products are sold in small shops in the towns and cities, but the greater proportion is for use in the villages. Although little metal is used by the peasants, there are some workers in brass and copper. Primitive agricultural implements are forged from iron.

In such a predominantly agricultural country as Indo-China, industrial activity is of minor importance. Commercial manufacturing had not developed to any great extent before the arrival of the French. Today, the handling and processing of foodstuffs and other items of local consumption are still partly in the hands of the Chinese, who developed these industries. Processing of products for export, apart from rice, the production of electric power, and similar activities, are largely controlled by the French.

Indo-China is the most highly industrialized of the French overseas colonies,¹ and has considerable possibilities for future industrial develop-

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 269.

ment. Many of the natural resources and the raw materials which could provide a basis for industry are present. The power resources, still largely undeveloped, are capable of considerable development. In addition, the dense lowland population provides a large potential labour supply. The industrial future of Indo-China is related to that of Southeast Asia as a whole, and depends upon the raising of standards of living and purchasing power of the people.

In 1948, there were 255 industrial enterprises in Indo-China; of which 125 were located in Saigon-Cho-lon and 50 in Hanoi and Haiphong. These figures include plantations but exclude mines. The approximate number of labourers and skilled workers employed totalled 21,500; of whom 12,600 were employed in Saigon-Cho-lon and 3,700 in Hanoi-Haiphong.¹ In June, 1950, there were 245 enterprises in Saigon-Cho-lon and 46 in Hanoi-Haiphong.² The number of workers employed totalled 11,043 and 5,311, respectively.

Electric Power:

Virtually all electrical energy in Indo-China is produced in thermal-electric stations from Tonkin coal. The hydro-electric resources of the streams and rivers are thought to have great potential production, but the irregularity of the river regimes and the absence of large mountain lakes suitable for reservoirs will present obstacles to their exploitation.

The state of Tonkin and Cochinchina lead in output of electrical energy. Most of the power produced is used for transportation and domestic use in the larger cities, but some is privately generated, particularly in Tonkin, for use in mines and factories.

The capacity of electrical installations increased from 80,100 horsepower in 1935 to 105,900 in 1948.³ In 1949 and 1950, the total installed capacity in Vietnam and Laos was approximately 90,000 horse-power.⁴

Mine Products:

Nearly all the metallic ores of Indo-China are concentrated within the country, but exported for smelting. The zinc output of Tonkin is smelted in the vicinity of the Quang Yen coalfield. However, some of the tin produced in Yunnan is smelted near Haiphong.

Some of the local anthracite is mixed with bituminous coal and tar, imported from Japan, in the production of briquettes and other fuel products. The largest factory of this kind is located at Hon Gay.⁵

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Union Francaise Outre-Mer, 1939-1946. Paris, 1948.

² Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam, 1949-1950.

³ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

⁴ Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam 1949-1950 and Annuaire Statistique du Laos, 1949-1950.

⁵ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 256.

The processing of various non-metallic mineral products is an important industrial activity in Indo-China. Most of these industries are located in Tonkin, where raw materials, such as limestone, clay, and sand, are found in proximity to labour and fuel supplies, and to cheap water transport.

Cement is one of the most important manufactured products. One large French company dominates the industry. Its main plant is at Haiphong, where the company also operates a power plant and a variety of equipment shops. The cement produced is of high quality, and a considerable quantity is normally exported. This industry was severely disrupted during and following the Second World War. Pre-war annual production was about 200,000 to 300,000 tons. In 1944, there was no production at all, but in 1949 about 150,000 tons were manufactured.¹

The sands and clays of the Mekong and Tonkin deltas are used as raw materials by brick, tile, and glass plants situated in the vicinity of the large cities. Goods are produced for general construction, irrigation and drainage projects, and plantation requirements. Chinese and native proprietors operate many small glass factories within the larger cities, but the only large factory manufacturing bottles is located at Haiphong.

Crockery and insulators are manufactured at two plants in Tonkin. The natives manufacture their own supplies of household crockery.

Apart from small-scale factories operated by Chinese and natives, therefore, almost all the mineral processing industry is located in Tonkin and northern Annam.

Forest Products:

Considering the deterioration of the forest cover, and the proportion of the annual cut consumed as firewood, it is not surprising that the forest products industries of Indo-China lack great importance.

Lumber and charcoal are the most important products of wood processing in Indo-China. Sawmills and charcoal kilns are usually operated by Chinese and Annamites. Cochin-China has a large output of charcoal, much of which is used in Saigon and Cho-lon. Small sawmills are located throughout the country.

Paper-making is a common native industry, but only one French firm produces paper. Two plants are operated in the Tonkin delta area, using bamboo as raw material. Various qualities are produced, but the output in 1937 totalled only about 3,500 tons.²

There are three match factories in the country, two of which, in northern Annam, are operated in conjunction with sawmills. The third factory is located at Hanoi. The chemical raw materials required are imported from Europe.

¹ Bulletin Economique, 1950. p. 15.

² Robequain. Op. cit., p. 275.

Agricultural Products:

Processing of rice and rice products dominates the industries based on agricultural commodities as greatly as rice-growing dominates agriculture itself.

In order to save transportation costs, rice is husked and polished before being exported or sold within the country. Rice mills are located principally in the areas of surplus production, particularly in the Saigon-Cho-lon region. Until 1940, the number of rice mills using more than 100 horse-power in their plants averaged about 27 per month,¹ all of which were located in the region of those cities.² The number of large rice mills in operation declined slightly after 1940. In 1945 the monthly average was only three and by 1948 had increased to sixteen only. This represents a serious decline in the preparation of the principal food and export commodity.³

Rice-milling is almost exclusively in Chinese hands, and is carried on in conjunction with the trading and inland transportation of rice. Four rice mills, two of which were in Cho-lon, were operated by French companies.

The number of rice mills in operation and the output of processed rice fluctuate seasonally. Normally, the period of greatest activity is from December to June, but this trend has not been noticeable during the post-war years.

Small Annamite mills operate to prepare rice for local consumption. They are in production during the transplanting and harvesting seasons, when the peasants do not have time to prepare their own rice.⁴

One of the principal industrial uses of rice is in the manufacture of alcohol. When the manufacture and sale of alcohol was regulated for taxation purposes, one French company became the chief producer. Alcohol may now be manufactured by anyone who pays the necessary taxes, and there are now many small firms, but the French company still dominates the industry. Three factories of this firm are located in Tonkin, one in Cho-lon, and one in Phnom Penh. Besides producing alcohol from rice, the company makes rum from sugar cane.

Some alcohol is prepared for mixing with gasoline. Fuel alcohol and other by-products are prepared, but the major part of the output is produced for human consumption.

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

² Robequain. Op. cit., p. 275.

³ Saigon had "60 large, fairly efficient rice mills in 1940". The mills were targets for destruction, and in April, 1948, there were only 12 of the original 60 left.

Efferson, J.N. The market outlook and prospective competition for United States rice in Asia, the Near East, and Europe. Foreign Agricultural Report. Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington. 1949. p. 18.

⁴ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 276.

The output of alcohol increased steadily until the war years. In 1942, over 15 million gallons were produced. However, in 1946 production dropped to less than two million gallons, but by 1948 had increased to slightly over three million gallons.

Sugar refineries are located in the southern parts of the country, where the commercial production of cane is more common. It is only since the First World War that French capital has been invested in this industry. The imposition of a protective tariff enabled the industry eventually to become established.¹ Production of refined sugar exceeded 20,000 tons in 1941, declining slightly until 1944. In 1945, no sugar was produced in the factories of the country; in 1948 the annual output was just over 100 tons.²

Processing of tobacco in factories has developed only since 1930. There are four factories, all located in Saigon-Cho-lon. The finished product is chiefly in the form of cigarettes. In 1941 and 1942, annual production was almost 5,200 tons, but the output declined to about 700 tons in 1946. This industry has made a fairly rapid recovery, and in 1948 the annual production was over 3,100 tons. The amount of imported tobacco used varies greatly from year to year. In 1934, only two per cent of the supplies were imported, in 1945 about 20 per cent; but in 1947 and 1948 over 90 per cent of the tobacco used came from outside sources.

Various other agricultural products are processed, none of which are of great importance. The oil-bearing plant products are processed for vegetable oils and soap, mostly in factories operated by Chinese or Annamites. Many products such as beer, ice cream, and other luxury items are manufactured from imported raw materials. Originally, these were sold only to the European inhabitants, but they are now finding a market among the Asiatic inhabitants as well.

The textile trade has always depended upon outside sources. Even before the French occupation, European textiles were imported into Indo-China.³ A French company now has two factories; one at Haiphong, and a larger one at Nam Dinh on the Red River delta. The latter mill is the largest factory in Indo-China.⁴ The raw cotton for the mills is imported from India, China, or the United States. These plants supply yarn for the native weavers, and produce some fabric as well.

There are two silk factories. One is at Nam Dinh, the other is in Annam, where raw silk was at one time produced; this is now obtained from spinning mills in China. The fabrics produced are not exported. Other textile manufactures include rugs, and coconut fibre products.

Small factories produce a variety of industrial products. Hanoi and Saigon have rubber factories, and there is a French-owned leather factory at Hanoi. Buttons, candles, oxygen, paint and varnish, explosives, and fireworks are some of the products made.

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 278.

² *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1947-1948.

³ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 279.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

Industry is an important activity in only two regions of Indo-China. The textile and mineral-processing industries are almost all located on the Tonkin delta, from Hon Gay to Hanoi and south to Nam Dinh. The food-processing industries are concentrated in and around Saigon and Cho-lon. The location of the industrial areas is determined by the availability of power and labour, and the proximity of urban markets. The type of industry in each region has been determined by the accessible resources and products.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation difficulties have always hindered the development of Indo-China. Before the coming of the French, the waterways provided the principal means of inland transportation, in spite of all the obstacles which still hinder their full exploitation. Roads were primitive, and sea transportation was limited by the violence of typhoons and monsoons, and by the inadequacy of the vessels used. Attempts to improve transportation facilities have proved to be among the most costly projects undertaken by the French.

Terrain, climate, and malaria are the great natural obstacles which continue to hinder the development of transportation. In the populated lowlands, the prevalence of rivers and streams and the extent of marshy ground have necessitated bridging and building up road-beds. In the mountainous areas, deep gorges, steep slopes, and landslides have made penetration and maintenance difficult. Along the coasts, violent windstorms and torrential rains destroy road-beds and bridges. Flooding of inland rivers is a serious problem. Conditions are also unfavourable for the heavy work involved because the humid climate of summer is enervating. More serious is malaria, which has killed many workers on transportation projects and reduced the efficiency of others.

The period of early colonization in Indo-China coincided with that of great railway-building in many parts of the world. Railway lines were constructed through areas of Indo-China which were sparsely populated and not greatly productive. The great expense of construction could not be repaid, owing to the lack of traffic in the areas tapped. The greatest obstacle to inter-regional traffic has been the existence of rice culture in nearly all parts of the country, so that exchange of goods on a large scale has not developed.

The natural difficulties of railway construction, and the lack of traffic on the railways, have placed a great burden of debt on Indo-China. Similar difficulties beset the later road-building projects.¹

Railways: Before the colonies were united, a line was built from Saigon to My Tho in Cochin-China. This line has not been extended to Phnom-Penh (Fig. 23). The first railway built after the union of the states in 1887, was a narrow-gauge line from Phu Long Thuong to Langson, in Tonkin (Fig. 23).

The Transindochinois project was begun in the late 1890's. This line was expected to link the two deltas, with lines running into China and to

¹ Thompson. Indo-China. pp. 205-211.

the Siamese border via Phnom-Penh. Branch lines were to run from the Annam coast to the middle Mekong, and from Haiphong to Yunnan. This system, it was felt, would facilitate defence, give cohesion to the Union, increase the exchange of products, and encourage the spread of Annamite settlement beyond the Tonkin delta.¹

The Phu Long Throng-Langson line was widened and extended to Hanoi and Vinh by 1905 (Fig. 23). Construction along the Annam coast was slowed by the frequent necessity of building bridges and tunneling through mountain spurs. The line between Vinh and Saigon was built in sections, and it was not until 1936 that Hanoi and Saigon were connected by railway.

After incredible difficulties, the Haiphong-Yunnan line was opened to traffic in 1910. Because this line ran partly through Chinese territory, it was operated by a private company. All other railway lines are under government control.

The other branch lines of the system, as originally planned, have not yet been completed. The branch to DaLat, on the Annam plateau, was completed in 1933 (Fig. 23), but the steepness of the escarpment has made necessary the use of rack railways in two sections.² Phnom-Penh and Mongkol Borey were linked by rail in 1935 (Fig. 23). The line from Saigon to Loc Ninh, in the red lands, was completed in 1933. The projected railway to Laos has only been completed between Tan Ap and Xom Cuc (Fig. 23). An aerial tramway and a service road have been built beyond Xom Cuc to Ban Na Phao (Fig. 23).

The railways of Indo-China are of one metre gauge, narrower than the standard 1.44 metre ($4' 8\frac{1}{2}''$) width. The rail-lines of China are of a broader gauge, which would prove a hindrance to any eventual linking of the systems. Except in stations and sidings, all lines in Indo-China are single-tracked. In the vicinity of the large cities, gasoline-powered engines are in use (Fig. 23).

In the earlier days of operation, passenger traffic provided the major part of railway revenue, but since competition from automobiles has developed, passenger traffic, although showing a numerical increase, has produced less than half of railway revenue. The fourth-class accommodation used by the natives, has attracted many, but is used for short trips rather than for mass migration movements, as had been hoped.

Freight traffic is not great in volume, owing to the competition of roads and waterways for traffic. Lack of such competition, and the high relative value of products carried, made the operations of the Yunnan railway more profitable than those of the government lines. The volume of freight on the Indo-Chinese lines varies seasonally. In the north it is greatest during December to January and June to July, following the rice harvests. In Cambodia, rice is moved from the Battambang area in March, April, and May.

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

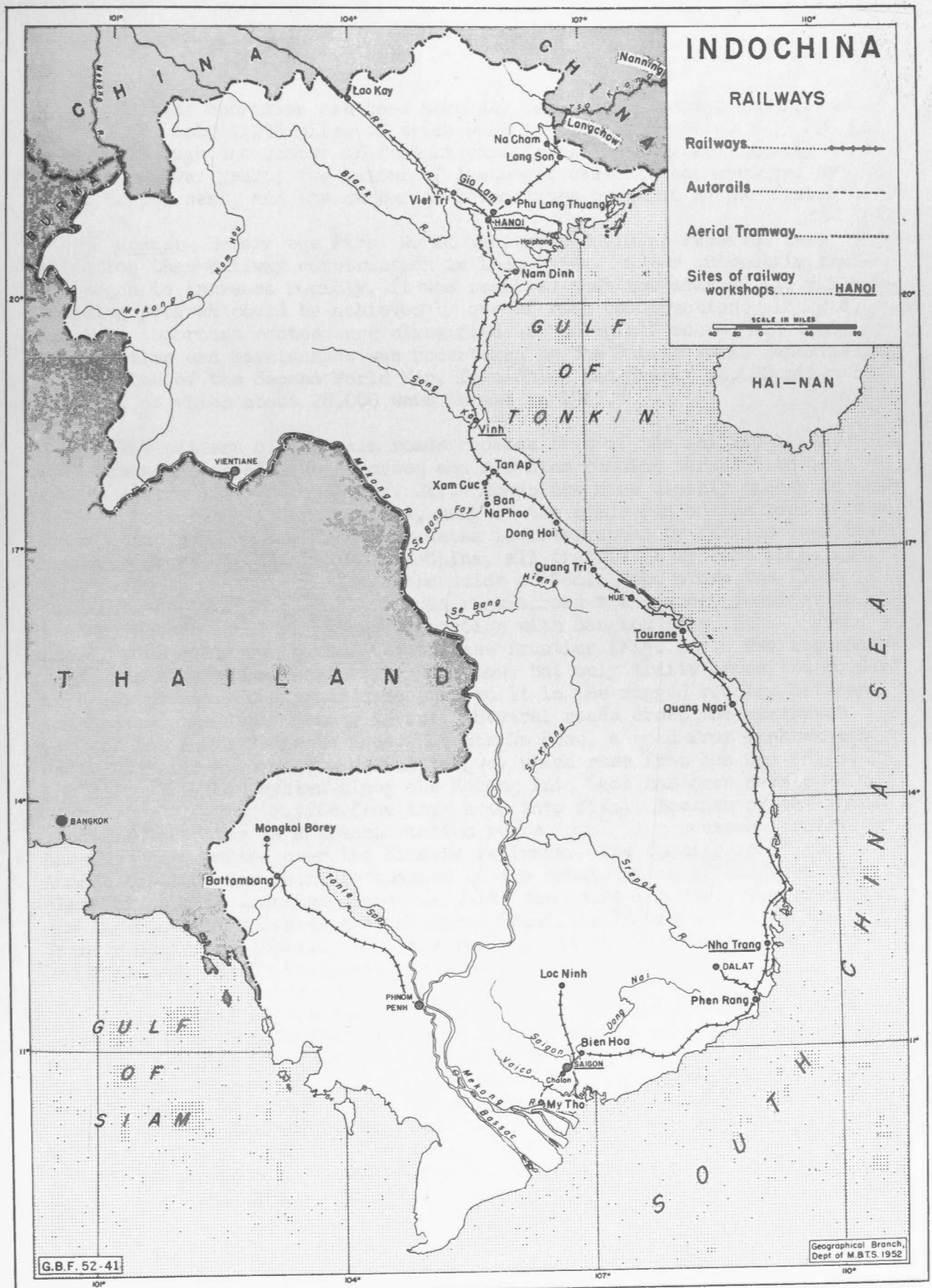


FIG. 23

Railway operation has been severely hampered by recent conditions. In 1947-48, only 1,236 miles of track were in use, as compared to 3,016 in 1938. Although the number of freight cars in the country is slightly more than in pre-war years, the number of passenger cars has been reduced by about 54 per cent, and the number of locomotives by about 42 per cent.¹

Roads: Before the First World War, road-building received less attention than railway construction in Indo-China. After automobile traffic began to increase rapidly, it was realized that the aims of the railway-building program could be achieved by one of road construction. In 1918, the more important routes were classified as "colonial" roads, and their construction and maintenance was undertaken by the Public Works Department. By the time of the Second World War, Indo-China had nearly 28,000 miles of highway, of which about 26,000 were in use in 1947.²

The pattern of the main roads repeats that of the railway lines, with the addition of many branches and a system running parallel to the course of the lower Mekong (Fig. 24). Roads are more closely spaced in the delta areas. In the Tonkin delta, many of the roads run on the tops of the dykes. The road system in Cochin-China is interrupted by ferries over the Mekong. South of Camau in Cochin-China, all traffic is by boat (Fig. 24). Main roads in Cambodia run on either side of Tonlé Sap, above the flood level of the lake (Fig. 24). A road runs across the Siamese frontier to Aronya, whence a railway gives connection with Bangkok (Fig. 24). From Hanoi, four roads run toward the Chinese frontier (Fig. 24). Two secondary roads run across the frontier to Longchow, but only trails cross the border at other points. Few roads have been built in the rugged country between the Red and the upper Mekong Rivers. Several roads cross the narrowest part of the Annam Range to Laos. At Ban Na Phao, a road from Thakhek connects with the head of the aerial tramway which runs from Xom Cuc (Figs. 23 and 24). The road system along the Mekong into Laos has been developed to divert the flow of traffic from that area into Siam. Because of the inadequacy of the river as a transportation route, much of the export traffic of Laos has been routed over the Siamese railways. The opening up of the Annam red lands has been accompanied by the construction of roads on the plateaux, and of branches connecting with the coastal route. The road along the Annam coast, known as the "Mandarin Road", is forced to follow the Transindochinois closely. Like the railway, it suffers from flash floods and typhoons, but is more easily re-opened.

About half of the road mileage of Indo-China is surfaced. The main roads are less than 20 feet in width, and the costly mountain roads are, in many places, about 15 feet wide. Most bridges are about ten feet wide, so that automobiles cannot pass on them. Road foundations are built of the available rock materials, and firm surfaces exist only in the vicinity of cities. During the wet season, many of the roads become impassable, and wood or bamboo bridges are frequently washed out. Beyond the network of primary and secondary roads, communication is maintained by native trails along the upland ridges.

¹ Economic Survey, 1948. p. 96.

² Ibid., Table 35, p. 102.

Methods of road transportation vary: pack animals are used in remote areas; elephants in the Cardamome Mountains of Cambodia and in the Annam Plateaux, oxen in upper Laos, mules and small native ponies in the north. Draught animals are used on the roads of the south and in upper Tonkin. In the mountains, and especially on the Tonkin delta, a great deal of freight is still carried by humans. Automobile traffic has increased greatly. The natives make use of the bus lines and commercial automobiles. By 1933, there were 17,800 motor vehicles in the country,¹ and in 1948, there were nearly 21,000.²

Trucking and bus lines compete in many places with the railway, but in others they are used to supplement the railway service. Both ends of the Phnom-Penh to Mongkol Borey railway are served in this manner (Figs. 23 and 24).

Waterways: Internal traffic, and the transportation of export commodities, are both conducted over inland waterways. Climatic and topographic factors limit the regional importance of water transportation, and the lack of communication between river systems prevents its greater development as a country-wide network.

Transportation on the Red River is rendered difficult by the irregularity of the river regime. The summer volume is ten or eleven times that in March. Silt brought down in the flood season forms unstable sand-bars and shoals in the river. However, dyking has stabilized the bed of the river to some extent. Sampans, junks, and launches carry traffic. Bulky and cheap, or fragile commodities are usually carried on the river, as well as a large number of passengers. The river and its tributaries are navigable by steam launch as far as Yen Bay, Tuyen Quang, and Cho Bo. Above these points, only sampans and junks can proceed (Fig. 25).

The short, steep valleys of the Annam coast are unsuitable for much steamer navigation. Only on the Song Ca is there any significant stretch of navigable water (Fig. 25), and the total length for the whole state during the summer months is less than 200 miles.³ The coastal lagoons, which were formerly utilized in preference to the pirate-infested seas, are now little used, owing to safer ocean navigation and rail and road competition.

The Mekong below Kratie (Fig. 25) is more widely used as a waterway than is the Red River. Differences in water level are less extreme. The influence of the tide extends for some distance inland, helping to keep channels clear of sediment. However, the opposing forces of the tide and current build ridges on the river bed which must be cleared by dredging.

Vessels used on the lower Mekong include junks, towed by coolies on the banks, motor barges, and small steam launches. Bulky cargoes, such as rice, corn, charcoal, and fish usually destined for Cho-lon, are carried. In 1937, the total tonnage of river traffic on some of the Cochin-Chinese

¹ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 105.

² *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1947-1948.

³ Robequain. *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

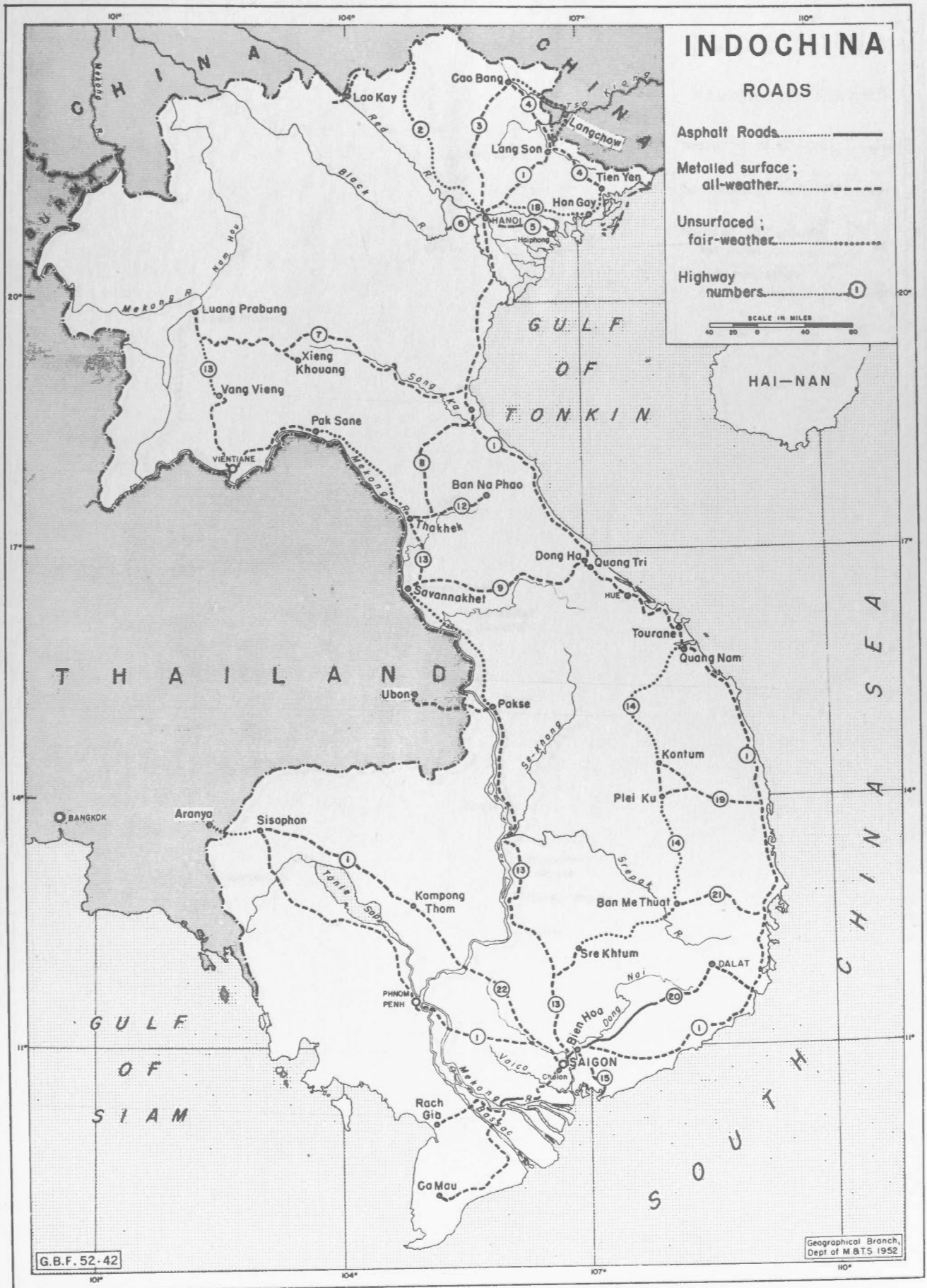


FIG. 24

G.B.F. 52-42

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waterways exceeded four million tons.¹ Phnom-Penh is a river port, handling mainly agricultural produce in transit from the interior of Cambodia to Cholon.

Between the Mekong and Tonlé Sap flows the river of Tonle Sap. The accumulation of sediments in this stream, and in the lake tributaries, is so great that navigation is only feasible during high water. At low water, even the smallest boats must be carried over the mud-flats at the south-eastern end of the lake.

The Mekong above Kratie is interrupted by belts of rapids or falls where the river is actively cutting through obstructions in its bed. Thus, the Mekong is not the great inter-regional route in might be. Rapids at Sambour and Preapatang, above Kratie, prohibit the passage of small steam launches except during high water (Fig. 25). Transshipment into small boats is necessary at other times. At Khone, the river widens and runs between small islands, dropping a distance of about 50 feet (Fig. 25). This section is always impassable, and is skirted by a short railway. Above the falls of Khone, the river is calm until, near Pakse, the Kemmarat rapids commence (Fig. 25). Here the river flows for some distance in a canyon, further interrupting traffic.

From Savannakhet to Vientiane, a distance of over 300 miles, the river is always navigable for small steamers (Fig. 25). Above Vientiane, the river is completely navigable only by motor canoes and native boats, but traffic in this area has never required more adequate facilities.

Traffic on the upper Mekong is of small volume. In 1936, the amount of freight passing Khone upstream totalled 5,286 tons, and that moving downstream, 4,644 tons.² Some teak logs from Siam are floated down the river to Saigon. The French have expended considerable sums on aids to navigation on the river, and have built vessels suited to the particular requirements of Mekong navigation.

Only on the lower reaches of the Srepok and Se-Khong is navigation possible at all seasons (Fig. 25). On the upper reaches, as on other Mekong tributaries, navigation for all but native boats is only feasible at high water.

Seaports: Indo-China has only two great ports, Haiphong and Saigon. Both are essentially regional in function, operating as import and export centres for the two deltas. Local conditions and regional factors in their hinterlands have combined to make Saigon the greater port of the two.

From the volume of traffic it handles, Hon Gay also ranks as a major port. It is not an important regional centre, however, but the main shipping point for a single commodity, coal.

Saigon. Although Saigon is about 50 miles from the sea, it has natural advantages not possessed by Haiphong. The sediments from the Mekong

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 112.

² Ibid., p. 115.

outlets nearby are carried southward by ocean currents. Two tides each day help to scour the river approaches. The main requirement for maintenance of the port is dredging in order to straighten the twisting river channels. Fog is seldom a hindrance to navigation.

Saigon is primarily an export centre, handling a great volume of outward-bound commodities, chiefly rice. The dominance of Saigon has become possible through the development of the lower Mekong as an area producing surplus crops of this cereal.

The port extends along the Saigon River for three or four miles. In addition to the river-bank quays and wharves, dolphins and buoys in mid-stream allow vessels to be moored and loaded on both sides from lighters. Thus, a total of about 40 ships can be accommodated at any one time.¹ The port has three functional areas. Downstream are the facilities for over-seas shipping, with the naval dockyard farther upstream. On the canals between Saigon and Cho-lon are facilities for local and regional river traffic. Other port facilities include a variety of harbour craft, coaling and oiling depots, two government dry docks and small repair workshops. Warehouses on the river banks provide over 300,000 square feet of storage space, and there is adequate dockside equipment for the handling of cargoes.

More deep-sea vessels enter and leave Saigon than the other ports, although the number of coastal vessels using the port is normally lower (Table 11). Before the Second World War, Saigon, like the others, was most important as an export centre. In recent years, the volume of outgoing cargoes has been slightly exceeded by the volume of incoming cargoes.

Haiphong. The second port of Indo-China, Haiphong, suffers from certain natural disadvantages. Silting from the nearby Red River is a problem, especially as the port has only one tide each day. Constant dredging is required, as well as dykes to maintain the width of the channel. Large ships which miss high tide must wait several hours before proceeding in or out of the port. At times, tidal and river currents produce changing sand-bars in the river bed, so that ships become stranded. When this happens, larger ships must be partially unloaded in Along Bay before entering the port. Haiphong is affected by the early typhoons in July and August. During the crachin period of early spring, fog also is a hindrance to navigation. Furthermore, the port is poorly located for construction purposes. Heavy buildings must be erected on mud over 160 feet deep,² making much piling necessary.

In spite of such natural deficiencies, the activity of the Tonkin region has enabled Haiphong to develop as a port. In years of good harvest, it may export rice, but this traffic may be reversed in poor years. Haiphong also exports cement and some coal. It is also the outlet for northern Anna, and the port for the Yunnan area of China. Haiphong is both a river and sea-port. It has been suggested that a new port, more advantageously sited, should be developed to replace Haiphong. The firms now located there, however, tend to stabilize the port in its present situation.³

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 122.

² Ibid., p. 119.

³ Ibid., p. 120.

TABLE 11 - TRAFFIC OF THREE PRINCIPAL PORTS ¹

Year	Number of Deep-sea Ships					
	SAIGON		HAIPHONG		HON GAY	
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
1931	571	528	253	300	235	236
1938	576	559	360	380	240	238
1941	270	298	318	296	287	280
1948	430	411	117	110	11	18
1949	650 ²	664 ²	3	3	3	3
1950	749 ²	731 ²	3	3	3	3

Year	Number of Coastal Ships					
	SAIGON		HAIPHONG		HON GAY	
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
1931	2,615	2,771	8,670	8,772	1,881	1,885
1938	2,134	2,231	9,946	9,913	3,440	3,130
1941	2,069	1,927	10,476	10,479	7,541	7,519
1948	1,182	1,233	89	89	4,562	4,570

Total Tonnage of Deep-sea and Coastal Cargoes
(1,000 metric tons)

Year	SAIGON		HAIPHONG		HON GAY	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
	1931	484	1,208	458	674	40
1938	555	1,762	528	1,168	27	1,452
1941	398	1,375	403	854	32	1,614
1948	715	571	137	103	16	177
1949	833 ²	503 ²	3	3	3	3
1950	892 ²	554 ²	3	3	3	3

¹ Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine.

² Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam; total of deep-sea and coastal vessels.

³ Not available.

Haiphong is situated on the Cua Cam, but, because of silting, is approached by way of the Cua Nam Trieu and a narrow canal connecting the two waterways. The port extends for about three miles along the right bank of the Cua Cam, nearly ten miles from the sea. Its facilities include wharves

for the handling of goods in transit. Immediately upstream are the wharves for large commercial ships, and beyond those, where the river is shallower, are facilities for barges and native boats. Oil depots are located on the same bank, upstream from the city. The adjacent warehouses are more capacious than those of Saigon. Railway lines from the warehouses connect with the main routes to Hanoi and other points. Haiphong possesses the usual harbour craft, cranes, floating docks and dry docks, as well as shipbuilding and ship-repair yards.

Haiphong was the principal centre for coastal shipping, but this traffic has been greatly reduced in recent years (Table 11). As the port of populous Tonkin, Haiphong is less important than Saigon as an export centre, and may serve as an importing point for rice, in poor crop years.

Hon Gay. The coal port of Hon Gay lies about 22 miles northeast of Haiphong at the entrance to a landlocked bay. It is approached through channels between the limestone islets of Along Bay. The port is connected by rail with the coalfields, and ships can load directly from railway cars. The only cargoes brought in are for local use, but the volume of coal normally exported gave Hon Gay a high place, in volume of total trade, among the ports of Indo-China. Deep-sea vessels loaded most of the coal, although considerable quantities were taken by coastal vessels. Recently, Hon Gay has become the chief port for coastal shipping, but the total volume of traffic through the port in 1948 was about one-sixth that of 1938 (Table 11).

A number of small ports lie along the Annam coast, of which Tourane is the most important. Ben Thuy is the port for the area around Vinh in northern Annam, and Qui Nhon is an outlet for southern Annam. Their limited hinterlands restrict the expansion of these ports, and road and rail competition hinder the development of coastal shipping. Cam Ranh Bay in southern Annam is an excellent harbour in a strategic military position, but has never been developed.

Air Lines: The establishment of airports in Indo-China has been made difficult by the lack of level sites in the interior, the swampy, canalized surface of the deltas, and the violence of monsoons and typhoons. In spite of these factors, there were in 1950, six airports in operation in Laos, and ten in Vietnam. Saigon is linked to the principal air routes of southeast Asia.

International passenger air traffic grew slowly before the war, but since 1946 about 20,000 passengers have arrived and departed annually by air; increasing in 1950 to 30,000.¹ Domestic air traffic has increased rapidly since the end of the Second World War. In 1949, there were 221,730 arrivals and departures on domestic flights in Laos and Vietnam; in 1950, 313,865.²

¹ *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine and Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam, 1949-1950.*

² *Annuaire Statistique du Vietnam, Annuaire Statistique du Laos, 1949-1950.*

FOREIGN TRADE

The value of foreign trade has increased greatly during the French administration, the average value for 1933 to 1937 being nearly double that of 1899 to 1903.¹ Until 1906, owing to the railway-building and other public works projects, Indo-China had an unfavourable balance with France, but this has been reversed in most of the succeeding years. However, Indo-China has had many "invisible" imports in the form of transfers of commercial profits, repatriation of bank savings, and interest and amortization on government loans.² The per capita value of foreign trade is very low. In 1937 it was higher than that of China and India, equal to that of Siam, but much lower than that of Malaya, the Netherlands Indies, and the Philippine Islands.³

Import Commodities: There have been some changes in the major import commodities since the Second World War. Petroleum products, and iron and steel continue to form the largest items, by volume, of imports. Fairly large quantities of foodstuffs are imported. Wheat flour, and liquors and wines, continue to be major import commodities, but in recent years sugar, fruits and vegetables, and milk products, have been imported in increased quantities. Whereas, before the war, wood and wood products and jute sacks were important items, they have been replaced in importance by paper and paper products, and a variety of metal goods. Other items which have been imported in greater quantities since the war include construction materials, asphalt and bitumen, raw calcium phosphate, various chemical products, and glass and china wares. Cotton, particularly in fabric form, continue to be imported in considerable quantities.

Export Commodities:⁴ The great export items from Indo-China, by volume, are rice and rice products (rice flour, etc.), coal, corn, rubber, and iron ore. Export items of smaller volume include fish, hides, and such vegetable products as oilseeds and oilcake. Since the Second World War, the volume of most of these items has declined greatly, in some cases as much as 90 per cent. Because of such decreases, other items, such as limestone and cement, have gained in relative importance as exports.

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 305.

² In 1937, these were as follows: Transfer of commercial profits 781,000,000 francs - Repatriation of savings by banks - 134,000,000 francs. Interest and amortization on government loans - 105,000,000 francs. Ibid., note, p. 307.

³ Loc. cit.

⁴ For the years 1949 and 1950, statistics are available for Laos and Vietnam, only. Lack of statistics for Cambodia does not make possible comparison with the total volume of exports for earlier years. In addition, corn, which is exported from Cambodia, does not appear as an important item.

Import-Export Markets:¹ France is Indo-China's chief source of supply and best customer, but since 1947 the value of goods imported from France has exceeded the value of goods exported to that country. About 75 per cent of the goods imported into Laos and Vietnam in 1949 and 1950 originated in France, whereas about 40 to 50 per cent of the goods exported by these states were destined for France. The rest of the French Union accounts for less than 5 per cent of the imports to these states, but takes from 10 to 15 per cent of their exports. In some years, these transactions have provided a favourable balance for Laos and Vietnam.

Trade with the other parts of Asia has declined in volume. In 1949 and 1950, other Asiatic countries supplied about 8 per cent of the imports of Laos and Vietnam, and took about 20 to 35 per cent of their exports. Chief among Asiatic customers are the entrêpôts of Hong Kong and Singapore, with which Laos and Vietnam usually have a favourable trade balance. The decline in the movements of coal and rice is the chief reason for the lowered volume of trade with other parts of Asia.

Trade between Laos and Vietnam and European countries usually involves the importation of manufactured articles and the exportation of raw materials, particularly rubber, and results in a deficit for the Indo-Chinese states. The value of this trade is not usually more than 5 per cent of the total imports or exports of Laos and Cambodia.

The value of trade with the United States fluctuates rather widely. In 1949, about 9 per cent, by value, of the imports of Laos and Vietnam came from the United States, but in 1950 this declined to 6 per cent. Exports to the United States in 1949 were valued at less than 2 per cent of the total, but in 1950 rose to 19 per cent of the total value of exports. Most of the imports are manufactured goods, and rubber forms the chief export. Both states had an unfavourable balance of trade with the United States which was reversed in 1950.

Geographical and historical factors have given Indo-China an agricultural, rather than an industrial economy and have had a determining influence upon her foreign trade. Indo-China exports heavy, cheap, raw materials, which can be sold profitably in the countries of Southeast Asia. She must import light, high-priced manufactured articles, which are most readily available in Europe and North America, but which can bear the higher transportation costs.

Rice, it is probable, will always find its market in Southeast Asia, but two other export commodities, coal and rubber, are in a different position. Both are required by industrialized countries, but the scarcity of coal in Southeast Asia ensures Indo-China a market in such places as Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Rubber is a more expensive item, able to

stand long-distance shipping costs. Before the development of synthetic rubber, also, it was available in extra-tropical countries only as an import. Rubber, therefore, formed the chief item of export to those countries from which Indo-China drew large imports. Finding alternate markets for rubber may prove to be a more lasting problem than the temporary decline in the rice trade.

CHAPTER IV

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

A country can be divided into regions according to the factors of its physical environment as they affect present and potential human settlement and development. Each region has a group of significant characteristics which prevail throughout its extent, and which distinguish it from adjoining regions. Within some regions, minor differences in the environment may occasion different human adaptations, so that sub-regions can be distinguished.

Regions are not usually separated by well-defined boundaries, but by transitional zones. If, however, many important factors such as topography, climate, and soils are superimposed upon a map, patterns of coinciding boundaries will emerge. After evaluation of the significance of such coincidental limits, the regional boundaries can be defined. This so-called "girdle" system¹ has been used to determine the regional divisions of Indo-China (Fig. 26).

FACTORS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCETopography

Because of its effect on climate, soils, and the distribution of population, topography is a basic factor in determining the regions of Indo-China. The chief distinction has been made between lowland, plateau, and mountain regions.

Hydrography

The varying character of inland water bodies affects the development of some regions. The necessity for flood control on the Red River as opposed to that for drainage and irrigation projects on the lower Mekong is an example. The seasonal change in the level of Tonlé Sap is an important factor in the development of the surrounding region.

Climate

Climatic elements help to define regional boundaries. They include heavy or light precipitation, the crachin rains, and autumn, rather than summer, rainfall maxima; cool winter temperatures, and the narrow annual temperature range characteristic of tropical climates.

Soils

The availability of useful soils is an important factor in limiting present and potential human exploitation of Indo-China. Major soil regions

¹ Shu-Tan Lee. Delimitation of the Geographic Regions of China. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 37, pp. 156-168. 1947.

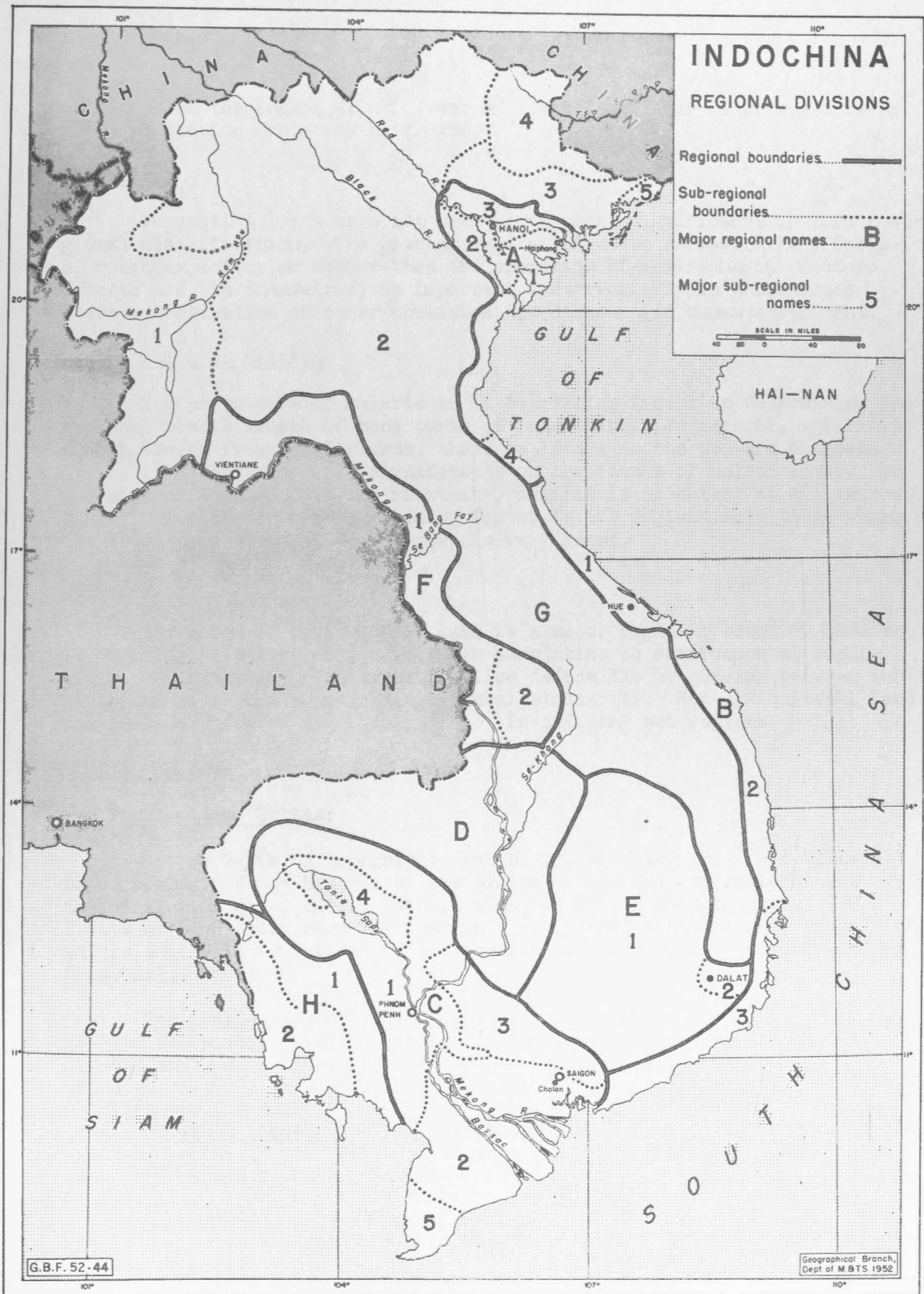


FIG. 26

are those of the recent alluvia, and of the red soils or laterized alluvia where plantation crops may be grown.

Vegetation

Vegetation types have not been given great significance in this regional classification. The present vegetation cover reflects the effects of human exploitation rather than the operation of environmental factors. Forests are, in themselves, an important factor chiefly in those areas where a combination of other obstacles has discouraged human settlement.

Distribution of Malaria

The prevalence of malaria is an overriding factor in determining the regional possibilities of many parts of Indo-China. In general, malaria is almost absent from the lowlands; there is little on the western plateaux, and it is of only seasonal significance on the flanks of upland areas. On the high plateaux and in the mountains, malaria is prevalent at all seasons. There, the disease is a determining factor in all regions save those where the attraction of certain resources is very great.

Land Use

The limit of agricultural land is a major regional boundary because it defines a distinct change in human adaptation to environmental conditions. Changes in agricultural practice define the boundaries between subdivisions of a region possessing general similarity. Non-agricultural land use in Indo-China is significant in defining sub-regions.

LOWLAND REGIONS

The Tonkin-Annam Deltas:

On the basis of topography, soils, and climate, this is a well-defined region. It is bounded by the limits of the deltaic lowlands with their alluvial soil, and by the distribution of the crachin rains. The limits of land under rice cultivation closely follow the natural boundaries. In the south, it is bounded by the topographic barrier of the Porte d'Annam (Fig. 26).

The double-harvest sub-region: Near the mouths of the Song Ma, Song Ca, and Red River, a well-developed system of embankments has been established, and modern hydraulic projects are common. In this sub-region, two crops of rice are harvested annually.

The June harvest sub-region: This area is affected by summer floods. It is not possible for the peasants to drain their fields for planting of a crop which would give them a winter harvest.

The November harvest sub-region: In the northern part of the delta, the land is slightly higher and is easier to drain (Fig. 26). Summer planting for November harvesting is practised, but there is no spring harvest.

The irrigated sub-region: This area is transitional in character between the Tonkin delta and the Annam coast. It is beyond the dyked area and the influence of the crachin rains, but, on the basis of local topography, it is linked with the former region (Fig. 26).

The great problem of the Tonkin delta region is the rapidly growing pressure on land already taxed to supply its cultivators. The extent of available uncultivated soil is extremely limited. Better drainage might enable two crops to be harvested in the single-crop areas, but the soil is so deficient in minerals that it needs to lie fallow part of the year. Improvement of yields through the use of fertilizers and improved farming practices would be valuable. The other alternative, removal of the excess population to other areas, depends upon solution of a variety of problems both within and beyond the Tonkin delta.

The Annam Coast:

Each delta along the Annam coast might really be considered a separate region, well defined by soil and topography. Human use has been adapted to the annual southward progression of the typhoon belt during the autumn and winter. For the purposes of this general discussion, the whole coastal fringe has been classed as one region, distinguished by the similar topographical character of each delta, warm winters, an autumn rainfall maximum, and prevalent typhoons during the autumn months.

The June and November harvest sub-region: Double harvests are reaped all along the Annam coast, but the harvest times are adjusted to the progression of the typhoon season. In the north, one harvest is in June, and the other in November, when the worst typhoon period has passed (Fig. 26).

The April and September harvest sub-region: The autumn harvest in this region takes place before the onset of the typhoons, so the spring harvest also takes place earlier than farther north.

The September and January harvest sub-region: This area in its southern half includes the driest portion of Indo-China. One rice harvest is gathered in January just after the close of the rainy season, the other in September just before its onset. This area is the most scantily populated part of the Annam coast.

Lack of space has caused local population problems as serious as those of Tonkin, and has also precluded the development of large urban centres which might absorb some of the population. Rice yields are low because of soil poverty, the extreme irregularity of the rainfall, and damage from tropical storms.

The Mekong Lowlands:

Although conditions on the Mekong plains are different from those of the delta, they are more similar than those on the outer plain, beyond the limits of recent alluvial soil (Fig. 26). The Mekong lowlands are characterized by freedom from malaria, fairly low precipitation but available water for irrigation, alluvial soils, and, consequently, rice cultivation.

Cambodian rice-lands sub-region: In this area, irrigation is carried on by primitive methods. Rice is harvested in the autumn, at the end of the dry season. Only one annual harvest is necessary, although a dry season crop may be produced in poor years.

Mekong delta sub-region: The Mekong delta lands are marked by the extent of drainage projects to bring land into cultivation, and by special practices to overcome the difficulties of the marshy ground (Fig. 26). Early-maturing varieties of rice are grown during the dry season, or "floating" rice is planted. In some areas, rice is twice transplanted to develop long stems for growth in deep water. In the eastern delta, farms are fairly small, but in the outlying areas of newly drained land, large farms operated by tenants are more common.

Lowland plantation sub-region: This area, topographically, belongs to the lowland, but is composed of ancient alluvial, or "grey" lands. Part of the area has red basaltic soils (Fig. 26). Although it receives more rain, it is well drained. Its soils, lack of dense forest, and accessibility to Saigon made it the first southern plantation area, and it is still used for that purpose in spite of its relative inferiority.

Tonlé Sap flood plain: Below the flood level of the lake, rice cultivation and permanent settlement are impossible (Fig. 26). Fishing is the principal occupation, but the area will become similar to the surrounding rice-lands when the lake fills up.

Bac Lieu marshes: A large part of the province of Bac Lieu is covered by undrained swamps supporting dense mangrove forests (Fig. 26). There are no roads in the southern part, and malaria is prevalent at certain seasons. Development of this area depends upon modern hydraulic projects.

Population pressure is not a problem in the Mekong lowland, but the region is not utilized to its full capabilities. Although many main canals have been dug in the delta, secondary waterways are not common, and settlement has not spread over all the areas between. Tenant farming is reducing many of the people to the living standards of Tonkin. In Cambodia, general improvement of farming methods would raise the yields, but, in this respect, the limitations of the Cambodians as rice-farmers would have to be overcome.

Cambodian plain: Beyond the central core of rice-lands, the Cambodian plain is level and monotonous, covered chiefly with savanna growth. The soil is principally that of laterized alluvial terraces and, although the region receives slightly more rain, there are few rivers for irrigation (Fig. 26). Malaria is slightly more prevalent, and it is a seasonal hazard on the inland margins of the plain. This region, therefore, supports little agriculture and few people. It might be used for plantations, in the manner of the Cochin-Chinese plantation lowlands, but it lacks the accessibility which is the chief attraction of that area.

PLATEAU REGIONSThe Red Land Plateaux:

The sloping red land plateaux have extensive areas of basaltic soils, higher rainfall than the lowlands, good drainage, and uniformly high temperatures. In spite of dense forests, lack of a local labour force, and the danger of malaria at all seasons, they have been utilized as plantation lands. The Dalat sub-region (Fig. 26) has a uniform yearly temperature also, but, because of its increased elevation, it is cool at all seasons. For this reason, it has been used as a resort area. The local type of malaria is not serious, and has been controlled by drainage projects. Market gardening is a feature of this sub-region.

The problem of overcoming malarial conditions is the greatest hindrance to the development of the red lands. Were this problem solved, the problem of a labour supply would have a much easier solution.

Central Mekong Plateau:

This region comprises the lower slopes of the western plateaux (Fig. 26). It is distinguished from the upper plateaux by its comparatively low rainfall, the better quality of its soils, the more open character of its vegetation, and its greater freedom from malaria.

Alluvial sub-region: In this area there are considerable deposits of alluvial soil along the Mekong, and rainfall generally exceeds 80 inches annually. Rice is cultivated, but by less intensive methods than on the lowlands.

Bolovens Plateau: This is a basaltic plateau which receives a heavy annual rainfall (Fig. 26). Some parts are marshy, but there are some natural grasslands in the area. The native Moi people rear cattle and grow coffee. There are also European coffee plantations.

The Mekong plateaux could support a greater population than at present, on the basis of their natural resources. Soil poverty and irregular, light rainfalls are natural obstacles in some areas, but the volume of yields might nevertheless be improved. The Bolovens plateau is seriously infested with malaria.

UPLAND REGIONSCentral Uplands:

This region includes the mountainous areas of Tonkin, Annam, and Laos, and those high plateaux where cool climate, the prevalence of malaria, the lack of good soils, and dense forests restrict human settlement (Fig. 26). Land use generally takes the form of shifting agriculture for the production of mountain rice and other crops, although small alluvial areas in river valleys may be used for irrigated rice cultivation. European penetration of the region is limited to mining, transportation, and defence.

Upper Mekong sub-region: This plateau area west of the Mekong (Fig. 26) has warm winters but a rather light rainfall. It contains some alluvial lands, and is fairly free from malaria, but its general lack of resources and its inaccessibility have discouraged exploitation.

Tonkin-Annam-Laos Mountains: The chief mountain ranges of Indo-China comprise this sub-region (Fig. 26). It is an area of rugged relief, generally dense forests, and constant danger of malaria, inhabited by less advanced peoples who practise shifting cultivation. There is little opportunity in this vast area for more intensive exploitation or for further settlement.

The Tonkin mining sub-region: In this foothills sub-region (Fig. 26), relief is less rugged, and malaria, on the lower slopes, is less of a menace. The valleys are broader and support greater agricultural activity than in any other upland area. In addition, the exploitation of coal, tin, zinc, and other mining resources has enabled the area to support a relatively dense population.

The Si-kiang drainage sub-region: This is an area of relatively low, arcuate mountain ranges, and valleys drained by rivers flowing into the Si-kiang, in China (Fig. 26). There is some cultivation in the valleys, but the rainfall is fairly light. Malaria is prevalent. Mining activity is limited to the western part, but it has been penetrated by Europeans, chiefly for defensive purposes only.

Northern rice lands: In spite of seasonal malaria, the narrow alluvial lands along the coast have been utilized as rice lands by the immigrant Hakka from China (Fig. 26). Fishing is subsidiary to rice-growing.

Coal or mineral resources will probably continue to be the chief attraction for European settlement in this region. Native exploitation is hindered by the effects of malaria. The practice of shifting cultivation causes forest deterioration, with effects on the river regimes which are detrimental to the lowland areas. In the mountains, shifting cultivation is, in itself, only harmful when increased population shortens the length of time that the land may lie fallow. In order to restrict the practice, satisfactory alternative methods of cultivation will have to be developed. Among some mountain tribes, smuggling and the opium trade can be suppressed only by the development of alternative means of subsistence.

Cambodian Uplands:

The coastal uplands of Cambodia consist of plateaux sloping steeply to the sea and more gently to the interior plain (Fig. 26). In the higher parts near the coast, extreme dissection has produced rugged relief. Throughout the region extremely heavy rainfall and the prevalence of malaria have discouraged settlement. Dense primary forests are found in the more remote sections.

Cambodian plateau sub-region: The less rugged slopes have a somewhat lighter rainfall. The plateaux nearest the Mekong are covered with ancient alluvial deposits (Fig. 26), and on some of their lower slopes orchards

are cultivated. From the point of view of human use and settlement, however, this area can be classed as a mountain region.

Cambodian mountains: Small alluvial deposits between the coastal spurs of this area have been cultivated, pepper being the principal product. The major part of the uplands is isolated and inhabited by a few elephant-hunting tribes.

At present, there is little prospect of much development in the Cambodian upland region. However, some use of the lower plateau as a plantation area might be made. The isolation of the small coastal deltas has restricted their settlement, because the Cambodians are not a maritime people. There are possibilities for greater development of the fishing industry in the coastal waters.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The three states of Indo-China, in common with other Asiatic lands, are passing through a period of profound change. Cause and effect relationships are difficult to separate; the geographic, economic, and social circumstances which have provoked political disturbances cannot themselves be improved until the political difficulties are resolved. Similarly, progress in Indo-China depends upon that in the other Asiatic lands, which may, in turn, reduce the opportunities for the Indo-Chinese to improve their position.

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

The area known as Indo-China has two great problems arising, to a considerable degree, from its geographic background: they are the lack of economic and demographic balance on the one hand and social divergence.

Economic and Demographic Balance:

The two great lowland regions of Indo-China, at either end of the Annam Range, have often been compared to two rice-baskets suspended at either end of a native carrying pole, or ganh. Such an analogy is not merely over-simplified, it is completely misleading. The concept implicit in the illustration is one of balance. It is precisely the lack of balance between the two "rice-baskets" that has caused many of the difficulties besetting Indo-China today. A similar disequilibrium exists between the upland and lowland regions.

The physical and social factors which have produced the inequalities between the population and resources of the lowlands and the uplands are still operative.

Mountains and plateaux cover about 80 per cent of the area of Indo-China, but they support only about 10 per cent of the people. In contrast, the lowlands, covering 20 per cent of the area, support 90 per cent of the population and produce 90 per cent of the rice crop.¹ Furthermore, the actual inhabited and cultivated area of the lowlands is even less than 20 per cent of the total surface. The poor soil, inaccessibility, and unhealthy conditions of the uplands which have produced this lack of balance, and the overcrowding and malnutrition on the lowlands which have resulted from it, remain the fundamental problems in Indo-China.

Further inequality exists in the distribution of population and resources within the lowlands. Table 12 gives the approximate areas, rural populations, and rice production of the Red River delta and the Mekong rice-lands in 1943.²

¹ Calculated from statistics, by provinces, on area, population, and rice harvests, as given in *Annuaire Statistique* for various years.

² *Annuaire Statistique*, 1943-1946.

TABLE 12 - REGIONAL RICE PRODUCTION

	<u>Area</u> (1,000 sq.mi.)	<u>Rural</u> <u>Population</u> (millions)	<u>Total</u> (millions of metric tons)	<u>Per</u> <u>Capita</u> (metric tons)	<u>Per Sq.</u> <u>Mile</u> (metric tons)
Red River delta	15	7.4	1.5	.20	100
Mekong rice- lands	44	7.5	3.0	.40	68

Source: Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine for various years.

Thus, although the populations of the two regions were nearly equal, the people of Tonkin were crowded within an area one-third the size of the Mekong rice-lands, and produced a rice crop only one-half as large. The dense population of the Red River delta made intensive cultivation both necessary and possible, so that the yield was about one-third greater per unit area than in Cochinchina and Cambodia.

The lower agricultural resources of Tonkin are partially compensated by the presence of coal and mineral resources, but it is likely to be some considerable time before industrial activity will be great enough to support a significant proportion of the population.

The total area of the Annam lowlands is approximately equal to that of the Red River delta. The 1943 population was about 6,500,000 and the yield of rice about 1,200,000 tons. Thus, although the yields were greater than in the Mekong region, they were lower than in Tonkin, and the per capita production was slightly lower than in Tonkin.

The average rice production per capita for the whole upland area is probably even lower than that of Annam, although the per capita rice production in some provinces may, in some years, be fairly high. However, the upland people depend on other crops to a greater extent than do the lowland peoples.

Thus, there arises the question of the redistribution of the Tonkin population. The red lands of the Annam plateau are accessible to the overpopulated coastal deltas, and some moderately successful small colonies of coastal people¹ have already been established there. Traditional Annamite colonization was a slow progress into contiguous areas, so that there was no sudden break with the original community. This resulted from the social, economic, and religious structure of Annamite civilization. The necessity for maintaining contact with Tonkin has prevented much permanent settlement among Annamite contract labourers, and has been an important factor in the

¹ Robequain. Economic development. p. 68.

failure of certain colonization attempts. Improved communications were expected to foster Annamite migration, but have facilitated the return of migrants to Tonkin as well as their original emigration. It has been suggested that a modern adaptation of the traditional migration might prove successful; groups of families from the same village moving to new locations, perhaps under individual leadership.¹

Further obstacles to Annamite migration must be considered. The Annamite fear of the uplands is a powerful force. Malaria is more prevalent in these regions because the surface conditions are favourable to some dangerous species of carrier mosquitoes and the climate lowers bodily resistance to the disease. Annamites are not acclimatized to the uplands and their susceptibility to malaria is further increased if they are undernourished.

The expense of colonization is high. Irrigation and drainage projects are required, as well as preliminary surveys of the soil, drainage, and drinking-water supplies. Provision must be made for support of the people before they become established.

The effects of Annamite colonization on the existing population of areas colonized must also be considered. The valley bottoms, in mountain areas, are already occupied and, although the upper slopes might appear to be unused and suitable for terrace cultivation, they are usually the fallow lands of the ray cultivators. It is said that in Cochin-China there is resentment against Tonkinese colonization, because it is felt that the lands now unused will soon be occupied by the increasing Cochin-Chinese population itself.²

This is but a brief outline of some of the complicated problems which must be solved before any satisfactory progress can be made in restoring the economic and demographic balance of Indo-China.

Social Divergence

The lack of unity which exists between the various ethnic groups of Indo-China is likewise a result of the combined influence of the geographic background and the history of the country. This problem is inextricably linked with that of population distribution.

The mountainous interior of Indo-China has prevented free communication and mingling of the inhabitants and has restricted Annamite expansion to the coasts and deltas. Furthermore, the general slope of the plateaux, and the trend of some of the river valleys has promoted closer relations with neighbouring countries than with the other states of Indo-China.

Within the Annamite lands themselves, there has always been a considerable consciousness of unity, but there appears to be little feeling of unity with neighbouring groups.³ The prevailing attitude of their neigh-

¹ Robequain. Op. cit., p. 73.

² Ibid., p. 72.

³ Thompson. French Indo-China. p. 494.

bours towards the Annamites appears to be one of resentment against Annamite expansion and infiltration.

In the mountains, the tribes have little contact with each other, including those living at different altitudes in the same area, nor is there more than the most rudimentary tribal organization. In the northeast, contact with China is perhaps more influential than contact with the lowlands.

The natural barriers between Laos and the rest of Indo-China are greater than those between Laos and Siam. Road and railway communications give Laos an outlet to Bangkok; the French highway-building program will provide an alternative route. The Laotians are a Thai sub-group, and Laos was one of the areas claimed by the followers of "Pan-Thaism" before the Second World War.¹ Since the defeat of the Japanese, Laotian territory ceded to Siam has been returned, and the Free Laos movement has been abandoned.

The Cambodians have always feared the encroachment of both Annamites and Thai, and have turned toward France for assistance in the maintenance of their identity.

Laos, Cambodia, and Viet-Nam have reached agreements with France regarding their status as independent states within the French Union. Both Laos and Cambodia are anxious to maintain their independence of Viet-Nam, and to remain independent of each other.

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

It is impossible to foretell what the future economic and political relationships of the three states of Indo-China with the rest of the world will be. Production within the country is at a low level, with a consequent decline in foreign trade. The pattern of future trade relationships will not be established until political stability is reached in Indo-China and the whole of the Far East and Southeast Asia.

Relations with the French Union:

Laos, Cambodia, and Viet-Nam are independent states within the French Union. As such, they have control over most aspects of their own government, although French assistance and advice is still provided in several fields. The status of all three has been recognized by the United Kingdom, the United States, and some other governments. The Soviet Union, the European satellites of the Soviet Union, and the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, have extended recognition to the communist authorities headed by Ho-Chi-Minh. Ho-Chi-minh's forces, known as the Viet-Minh, control parts of the territory of Viet-Nam, especially near the Chinese border, and carry on guerrilla activities in other areas. The forces of Viet-Nam, with French assistance, are engaged in military operations against Viet-Minh.

¹ Levy. French Far Eastern Affairs. p. 65.

Relations With Other Asiatic Countries:

The political relationships of the three states of Indo-China with other Asiatic countries are more difficult to define than the economic relationships. Future trends remain in doubt.

In the years immediately preceding the Second World War, Indo-Chinese exports to Far East countries declined as a partial result of increased sales to France. In 1938, the Far Eastern countries, exclusive of Japan, took less than 25 per cent by value of Indo-Chinese exports. In 1946, owing to large exports of rubber to France and the United States, the value of exports to the Far East, again exclusive of Japan, dropped to about 15 per cent of the total. However, these Asiatic countries in 1947 imported goods totalling more than one-third of the value of Indo-China's exports. Over half of the Far Eastern exports of Indo-China go to Hong Kong and China. Whether with the revival of export trade, the recent emphasis on Far Eastern markets will continue remains to be seen.

There is a possibility that Indo-China may attain a position of industrial importance in the Far East. This would depend partly upon an increase in purchasing power among her Far Eastern customers. However, as these countries themselves develop, they may become industrial rivals, rather than customers of Indo-China.

In the past, Indo-Chinese political relations with the Far East were associated with those of France. During the Second World War, Indo-China came under Japanese domination, but this relationship ceased with the defeat of Japan. Most of the countries of the Far East have not yet indicated their support for either the government of Viet-Nam or the rival regime of Viet-Minh.

Relations With Other Parts of the World:

Indo-China usually had a favourable balance of trade with most European and North American countries as a result of her rubber exports. Since the Second World War, and since 1947, in particular, the flow of equipment and supplies from these countries has given them a favourable balance of trade with Indo-China. Future economic relations between Indo-China and Europe, North America, and the Commonwealth countries, are likely to be more important. Indo-China is in the operational region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, from which body she has already received assistance.

There are few political contacts between the states of Indo-China and non-Asian countries.

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