

The Vietnam War: A View from Vietnam

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Course Code: HIST-4700Y-A

When Taken: Fall/Winter 2022/2023

Week 1

08/09/2022 - Lecture

1. Today, and the next few weeks will be a lecture based overview of the war
2. Then we have the test?

Overview

1. Several names - vietnam war, second indochina war, the american war in vietnam
2. Indochina - three countries colonized by france, cambodia, laos and vietnam
3. First indochina war - war were vietnam gained independence
 - a. This gesture to the fact that this war is a continuation of the first war
4. Vietnam today is ruled by the communist party and they call it the resistance against american imperialism, or the american war in vietnam

Court time coverage

1. Pre Colonial and french colonial periods - discussed next week
2. Main focus - 1954-1975
3. No declaration of war, so start of war is dependent on interpretation
4. Americans date in 1965-1973 as that is when americans were in vietnam
5. Vietnamese perspective argue it started earlier
6. Some argue 1949 when there was a competing state created - competing for power
7. 1960 - when the national liberation formed within south vietnam

Themes

1. Political, social and cultural aspects of the war
2. Not overly focused on the military aspect of the war
3. Experience of ordinary people in the war
4. Approach from vietnam's perspective
5. Get acquainted with historiographical issues
6. Explore the social memory of war - ways they think about it and express it through art

Topics

1. Next 3 weeks - overview of the war - lecture based
2. Building of socialism and capitalism
3. US intervention
4. The National Liberation Front - Viet Gung
5. The role of the soviet union and china
6. Impacts on cambodia and laos
7. My Lai and other massacres
8. Social and personal experiences of war
9. Role of women in war

Basics

1. Americans had to leave before the war ended - left in 1973
2. The north communists won the war

3. The name is the socialist republic of vietnam ruled by the communist party
4. During the war the communist party was the lao dong party, workers party
5. 1985 onwards they turned towards a market economy, but it is still a one party country
 - a. Market socialism
 - b. Similar situation to china
6. The person with the most power is the general secretary of the communist party - not a government official, but the head of the party

Language

1. Before late 19th c predominate use of chinese script
2. 15-19c they created sino vietnamese within based on chinese script with special characters for local words and sounds
3. 20th c started using a latin based alphabet influenced by the French
4. First name is placed at the end of their name
5. Monosyllabic with diacritical marks
6. Pronouns related to family - by their age and gender, doesn't mean they are actually related

Syllabus

1. Weekly seminar - only seminar after the first 3 weeks
2. 2 turns to lead discussion
3. Write a major research paper in stages
4. Discussion leader needs to facilitate discussion as well as come with 3 questions and answers for class
 - a. Balance among the readings
 - b. Submit questions 24hrs before class (2pm on Wednesday)
 - c. Address main themes and arguments of the readings
 - d. Elicit discussion rather than a right or wrong answer
5. If you need to miss class submit 3 short questions and answers related to the readings
6. Next week sign up for discussions leading

15/09/2022 - Week 2

Lecture 15/09/2022

1. Lecture 1
 - a. Early vietnamese history
 - b. French colonial period
 - c. First indochina war
2. Origins of vietnamese society
 - a. 3000 BCE there were settlements along the river deltas
 - b. Chinese han dynasty colonized in 111 bce - 938 ce
 - i. Colonie known as Giao Chi
 - c. Vietnam absorbed a lot of cultural and social practices from the chinese
 - i. This included philosophies such as confucianism
3. Chinese colonization
 - a. People of Giao Chi rebel against the Han Rulers

- b. Often assumed to be a racial aspect of this, but they might not have seen themselves this way
 - i. Were they rebelling for other reasons, like taxation or policy reasons
 - ii. There was a lot of mixing, and would have been significant intermarriage
 - c. Spectacular rebellion was the Trung Sisters 40-43 CE
 - i. Led 80,000 troops
 - ii. Were successful in driving out the overlords of their region
 - iii. Established rule for about 3 years
 - iv. Then the Chinese came back with reinforcement and conquered them
 - v. The sisters committed suicide rather than giving up
 - d. These sisters continue to be celebrated as national heroes, and the first patriots
 - i. These symbols were used in the war to mobilize
 - e. Another heroine as Trieu Au 248 CE
 - i. 20 years old
 - ii. Fought 30 battles
 - iii. Also committed suicide
 - iv. A lot of women who fought with her as men
- 4. Tang dynasty
 - a. It was losing power and weakening
 - b. Rebellions erupted throughout China
 - c. Vietnamese rose up against the rulers in Vietnam
 - d. Ngo Quyen 939 CE led a successful rebellion
 - i. Decisive battle on the Bach Dang river
 - ii. Used iron tipped stakes to damage southern Han ships
- 5. 939 Vietnam gained its independence
 - a. The Mongols tried to conquer Vietnam three times, all three times unsuccessful
 - b. Chinese tried to invade in the 15th century - successful for 15 years then driven out
 - c. Last imperial dynasty was the Nguyen dynasty from 1802-1945
 - d. A lot of external invasions, and internal instability
 - e. There was a significant amount of turnover
- 6. The ethnic Vietnamese moved south between the 10th and the 18th century
 - a. Fought off those who lived there - close to India
- 7. Vietnam during the Nguyen dynasty was at its largest
- 8. It remained a tribute state to China
- 9. Names under this dynasty included
 - a. Kingdom of Viet Nam 1804-1839
 - b. Empire of Dai Nam 1839-1945
- 10. It remained within the Chinese sphere of influence
 - a. This is how it remained politically independent
 - b. Received a lot of benefits from this as well
 - i. Allowed it to trade with China
 - ii. Have military protection
 - iii. Affected by cultural and intellectual influence

French Colonization

1. Lost its political independence
2. French indochina was created = laos, cambodia and vietnam
 - a. Thought it would be a good foothold for them to travel north to china
 - b. Using pretext that their missionaries were being abused and executed (which they probably were because this was banned in the dynasty) and they attacked the southern part of vietnam
 - c. They signed over the southern part to france, but they just took the whole thing over
3. Vietnamese called to the Chinese for help
 - a. Chinese did send forces, but they were unsuccessful
4. The French became protectorates of the countries
 - a. The emperor was left on the throne and the french offered guidance, and had some control
 - b. The person with the most power was the governor general of indochina
 - i. They actually ran the country
5. The French created different regions
 - a. Tonkin
 - b. Laos
 - c. Cambodia
 - d. Cochinchina
 - e. Annam
 - f. They were like little countries within indochina
 - g. A divide and conquer strategy
6. Buddhism was the main religion in vietnam
 - a. The French introduce roman catholicism
7. Class response to french colonial rule
 - a. Some immediately started resisting this, and went into hiding in preparation for an attack
 - b. Also collaborated with the french
 - c. Some left, or did not participate in government
 - d. A lot of educated vietnamese were used in the bureaucracy in laos and cambodia
 - e. Some people thought resistance was futile
 - f. Others wanted to take advantage of the modernizations that france was offering
 - i. In several decades then try and win back independence
 - g. France was stronger than they were
 - i. All the countries around them were being taken over
 - ii. Even china was being semi-colonized
8. By the 1920s colonial rule softened a bit
 - a. They had control, didn't need to be a military colony any more
 - b. Switched from an assimilation policy to an association policy
 - i. Show the locals how brilliant french civilization is, and they they wouldn't want to resist
9. Wanted to modernize

- a. Built more schools
- b. Modernized and westernized curriculum
- c. Created a romanized alphabet
 - i. Created by portuguese jesuits and refined by Alexandre de Rhodes
 - ii. Way to spread literacy and transmit french ideas quicker
 - iii. Problem was it made it easier for rebels to spread their ideas as well
- d. Created a generation of westernized intellectuals
 - i. Grew up learning about western topics
 - ii. They then often went to university in europe
 - iii. They learned about the ideas of liberty and freedom
- e. These westernized intellectual elites are the ones who started to mobilize a resistance movement
 - i. Recognition of a racial glass ceiling

10. Others

- a. Peasants and urban cookies had a very hard life
- b. Heavy and indirect taxes over them
 - i. This taxation efficiency was something they were not used to
- c. Colonial government had a monopoly on opium, alcohol and salt
 - i. Couldn't get salt from the sea, had to get it from a government dispenser
 - ii. The alcohol monopoly was most hated - a lot of people made their own alcohol and it was very localized. Used for a lot of rituals. Villages had to buy a certain quota of alcohol
- d. The traditional moral order was overturned
 - i. The kings now have very little power, and the french colonists are now the ones that have power

Anti-colonial movements and responses

1. Scholar patriot responses
 - a. People like Phan Chu Trinh and Phan Boi Chau
 - b. Steeped in confusian learning
 - c. Were reformists - wanted to make changes to improve society and have the vietnamese take learning from the french
 - d. Enamored with liberalism wanting them to be a republic
 - e. Other ideas was to bring back monarchism
 - f. Organized different groups to raise money to send young men to japan to study
 - i. Place to see what a modern society is in east asia
 - g. Very influential in the first wave of anti-french resistance
 - h. They didn't achieve anything, but were symbolically important
2. Vietnamese nationalist party
 - a. Founded in 1927
 - b. Nguyen Thai Hoc leader of the party was guillitied along with 12 others for the mutiny in 1930 which failed
 - i. Mutiny was not lead by them, the people were just associated and the French destroyed the party
 - c. Modeled on the guomindang

- d. 3 principles were nationalism, democracy and livelihood
- 3. Quasi religious movements
 - a. Number of religious movements considered to be anti-french
 - b. Cao Dai
 - i. Fusion religion
 - ii. Created in 1920s in southern vietnam to compete with christianity
 - iii. By the 1930s there was ½-1 million followers
 - iv. The structure was similar to catholicism, had weekly masses which was very different to the traditional religions in vietnam
 - v. Worship a variety of different deities - Jesus, mohammed, buddha, victor hugo, joan of arc ect
 - vi. Underlying message was that the end is coming and we can save you - underlying critique of french colonialism
 - vii. Later they established their own military force
 - viii. They at one point linked up with the japanese to get military support
 - c. Hoa Hao Buddhist Sect
 - i. Millenarian movement - thinks the world is going to end fairly soon
 - ii. Huynh Phu So - reincarnation of the Buddah
 - 1. He had charisma, and people believed he had healing powers
 - iii. Fusion religion - encorporate buddist religion, islam, as well as local religions
 - iv. Also linked up with the japanese during WW2
- 4. Indochinese communist party
 - a. Communist had different groups in southern vietnam
 - b. Indochinese communist party started in 1930
 - c. Ho Chi Minh is an alias
 - d. In 1919 Ho and other chinese naioanlist petitioned the allies for independence
 - i. This is the time where they were signing the treaty of Versailles
 - ii. Wilson had advocated for self-determination, so countries wanted to get recognized at this time
 - e. Ho left vietnam when he was a teenage and he worked throughout europe and the US
 - f. Ho went to the soviet union to be trained in communism and socialism
 - i. Communist revolution had a significant impact of the colonized world

World War Two

1. These groups were working, but they weren't getting anywhere
2. France surrendered to Germany 22 June 1940
3. France and japan became co colonizers of indochina
4. By the spring 1942 Japan occupied all of southeast asia
5. Vietnamese nationalists of all political ideologies formed a coalition - revolutionary leave for independence (viet minh)
 - a. Top leaders were communist
 - b. Coordinated with the US and China to fight Japan

- c. They tampered down on the class messaging - they turned it into a nationalism message

End of the war

1. The collaboration between France and Japan fell as Vichy France fell
2. The Japanese had a coup and took over in terms of the military aspects of the colony
3. They allowed Emperor Bao Dai to rule
4. The emperor asked Tran Trong Kim to be PM and form government
5. March 1945 they had a Vietnamese government
6. Japanese still controlled the military aspect of the country
7. It was a semi-independent polity
8. Responses varied from people thinking it was a sham, and others thinking that it was a good first step
9. Japanese surrender in August 1945, they stepped aside
10. Within days of the atomic bomb there were plans for a military uprising
11. The emperor abdicated and handed the power to the Viet Minh
12. This was considered the August Revolution of 1945
13. Ho Chi Minh made a declaration of independence on September 2nd 1945
 - a. Called the country the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV)
14. Bao Dai willingly abdicated, so it wasn't much of a fight
15. When the allies entered Indochina to accept Japan's surrender the British took the south, and the Chinese took the north
16. British rearmed the French military in August 1945
 - a. The French took revenge and started slaughtering a lot of people
 - b. They wanted their colony back
17. French Indochina War in 1946-1954
18. VM strongholds were the northern region, near the Chinese border
19. Took a doctrine from Mao and fought a people's war - meaning they use guerilla warfare

Week 3

Finish last week's lecture

1. There was tension within the Viet Minh
 - a. Non-communists realized the communists were dominating
 - b. Assassinations were happening against the non-communist members and groups
 - c. Non-communist nationalists started to defect - left movement, went to the cities, joined the French side
2. French then established a semi-independent state - Associated State of Vietnam
 - a. Established 1949 under rule of Bao Dai
 - i. The same person that formed a government for the Japanese
 - ii. Not full rule
 - b. Did the same thing for Laos and Cambodia
3. 1949 - role of the US
 - a. Started to fund the French

- b. Before this the americans had taken a neutral stance on this - felt they shouldnt be involved in colonial wars because rhetoric did not support colonialism
 - c. American officials had been critical of french rule in vietnam
 - d. By the end of the war they were covering 80% of the french's expenses
 - e. Supported in an anti-communist way - reframed the war in an anti-colonial way
 - f. The US want to create a european defense community, but france couldn't afford to do this because of this war, so the US helped to fund it
- 4. By 1953 french casualties as 150,000 and it took 50% of their defense budget
 - a. Public was tired of this war, and wanted it to end
 - b. French wanted a big win so they could be in a position to negotiate
 - c. Henri Navarre was appointed to get this win, and forced north vietnamese to the negotiating table
 - d. This was going to be the battle of Dien Bien
- 5. Battle of Dien Bien Phu 1954
 - a. This was a big loss for the french
 - b. Put the fortress under siege for 2 months
 - c. Forced the french to surrender
 - d. Met at Geneva to talk peace terms

Week 3 Lecture

- 1. One of the reasons behind the victory was because they had the support of ethnic people in the highlands
 - a. Transported supplies and munitions to the fighters
 - b. French believed that they would be fighting a small army, and did not take into account that this transport would be possible
- 2. Geneva
 - a. Conference was already scheduled to talk about Korea and Berlin
 - b. Added it to the agenda - peace talk between the French and the DRV
- 3. Viet minh wanted
 - a. International recognition of independence
 - b. Withdrawal of foreign troops
 - c. Elections to determine political nature of new country
- 4. The associated state of vietnam was not a party in the negotiation, but its concerns were heard
 - a. This was led by Bao Dai
 - b. Recognised by the US and other western countries
 - c. Lobbied so the DRV didn't gain control of all of vietnam
- 5. Geneva Accords
 - a. Vietnam divided at the 17th parallel
 - b. North would be the DRV
 - c. South could be the associated state of vietnam
 - i. They changed their name of the state of vietnam and then to the republic of vietnam
 - d. North was communist, south was non-communist

- e. Plan was for this separation to be temporary, and in 2 years there would be an election of uniting
 - f. International control commission of Canada, Poland and India to make sure the terms of the condition were met
- 6. People had 300 days to move to the area that you would like to live in - people could choose to move to either north or south vietnam
 - a. Government would provide transportation
 - b. About 1 million people went from the north to the south
 - c. They gave you free transportation, and the southern government would give some stipends to help them establish themselves
 - d. A lot of the middle class went south
- 7. In the south
 - a. Leader was Ngo Dinh Diem
 - b. He was appointed PM by Bao Dai and then in 1955 he became president in 1955
 - c. The RVN did not hold elections for unification (against geneva accords)
- 8. Ngo Dinh Diem
 - a. Elite catholic family from Hue
 - b. Stern patriarch of the nation
 - c. Celibate, single, highly religious
 - d. Anti-french and anti-communist
- 9. Ho Chi Minh
 - a. Projected a very friendly image
 - b. Either dressed in maoist type of suit, or normal peoples clothing
 - c. He had a chinese wife, but this was hush as he promoted himself as devoted to his country
 - d. He supposedly hated his palace
- 10. Division of the country
 - a. Even though the north entered the negotiations with a win, but still accepted the division of the country
 - b. They were tired, and out of resources like the french, and the soviet union and china said that they were not able to back them anymore either
 - c. The soviet union was creating a peaceful coexistence policy
 - d. Pushed them to take the deal they got
 - e. Hope that they could unify vietnam in a peaceful way - not all historians agree with this
- 11. Challenges for Ngo Dinh Diem
 - a. Cao Dai (20,000 troops), Hoa Hao (15,000), Binh Xuyen (25,000)
 - i. Three different military groups in south vietnam
 - ii. These controlled areas, troops, and millions of residents of south vietnam
 - iii. Binh Xuyen - more like a mafia group, emerged in the 1940s
 - iv. Had to somehow neutralize these forces
 - b. Also had to deal with viet minh members that were left behind
 - i. Drv left agents behind in order to try to eventually mobilize

- ii. Led a “denote communists” campaign where people called each other communists
- c. Had a poorly equipped military
 - i. Poorly trained, bad weapons
- d. The US didn’t really like him
 - i. The relationship was full of distrust

Major Benchmarks

1. Fifteenth plenum of the Lao Dong Party in Jan 1959 (workers party)
 - a. There were communists left in the south, and were told to not doing anything, but they were being hunted down
 - b. Le Duan (first general secretary 1960) lobbied for the party to give a green light for these people to use force in the south to defend themselves
2. Re-opening of the Ho Chi Minh Trails - started to be rebuilt so that the north could start supplying the south with arms and supplies
3. Creation of the national liberation front (NLF/viet cong) - supposed to be a democratic movement, non-partisan organization, but in the end it was conceived, organized, and decisions were made by the communist party
 - a. They had their own flag, and military command
 - b. Female commander was Nguyen Thi Dinh
 - c. Military wing - liberation army of south vietnam
4. The Liberation Army of South Vietnam (LA)
 - a. Established and directed by the communist party
 - b. Component of the people's army of vietnam - part of the army of north vietnam
 - c. Fiction that it was controlled by the NLF
5. Buddhist crisis of 1963
 - a. Diem became more dictatorial in vietnam and isolated more people in south vietnam
 - b. Clashed with the buddhist
 - c. Diem was a catholic, and people suspected he discriminated against buddhists
 - d. He banned the buddhist flag during a ceremony, and this flared tensions
 - e. They were met with brutal force by the government
 - f. Buddhist monks agreed to set himself on fire in protest
 - i. Thich Quang Duc’s immolation
 - g. Making the world know that his leadership was not popular
6. Coup D’etat against Diem on Nov 1 1963
 - a. He and his brother were overthrown, and then killed a few days later
 - b. Brother - Ngo Dinh Nhu - also hated so he was killed
 - i. He didn't have an official position in the government, but had a lot of influence on Diem
 - ii. He ran secret organization, and this was used to spy on civil servants, and intellectuals
 - iii. Thought to be the evil mastermind behind Diem
 - c. His brothers wife was also hated and hated by the press
 - i. Infamous “Buddhist Barbeque” comment

- ii. Because diem didn't have a wife she became like the first lady, and hosted events
- 7. Resolution 9 1963
 - a. Communist party resolution
 - b. Proponents were Le duan and Le Duc Tho (later one of the negotiators to end the war)
 - c. Plan to attack south vietnam using conventional style warfare
 - d. Shortly after Diem was overthrown, before the US got involved they thought they had a chance to win
 - e. The US was still supplying SV with aid and support, but did not have troops there yet
 - f. Anticipated that the people would rise up and overthrow the government
 - g. Lots of people in the party and in the north who disagreed with them, but they repressed these opponents
 - i. Ho was not a fan of this plan either
 - h. As a result, the party sent down regiments to the south
- 8. Gulf of Tonkin incident
 - a. US military ships and south vietnam ships were carrying out secret military operations in the sea near north vietnam, and were shot at by a north vietnam ship
 - i. USS Maddox
 - b. US claimed that there was another ship that was shot at
 - c. Using this as an excuse the US passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution August 7 1964
 - i. Gave the president unlimited freedom to protect the interests of the US in southeast asia without going through congress
 - d. The second incident never happened
 - i. People on the ship thought something had happened, but this wasn't indicated
 - e. US took retaliatory airstrikes on August 5th
- 9. Other us military campaigns
 - a. Bombing campaign - rolling thunder - Feb 1965- Oct 1968
 - i. In retaliation for NLF attack on the US in SV
 - b. Mar 8, 1965: Two US Marine battalions sent to SV
 - c. End of 1965: 181,000 troops
 - d. End of 1968: 500,000 troops
 - e. Prior to 1965—tens of thousands of 'advisors' in VN
- 10. People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) or North Vietnamese Army (NVA)
 - a. Army was sent south as well
- 11. General Nguyen Chi Thanh was sent south to command the Liberation Army of South Vietnam
 - a. Liberation army was another branch of the north vietnam army
- 12. Texas tech archive is a good source for the war - some material is available online
- 13. The trail

- a. Became very large for trucks
 - b. They also created large caves for storage, gas, and bunkers
- 14. The General Offensive or Tet Offensive in 1968
 - a. Use their military to disable things and hope the people would rise up
 - b. This was arranged for the lunar new year when typically fighting would take the day off
 - c. Started amassing troops
 - d. Americans noted that the troops were amassing, and did not want a siege so sent troops to the Khe Sanh
 - e. While the north vietnamese army was in Khe Sanh the NLF attacked in the towns and cities
 - i. First time a lot of people in the towns and cities saw the war
- 15. Occupation of the US embassy
 - a. NFL did not breach the embassy itself, but did occupy the garden in the compound
 - b. This really shocked americans who believed that things were going really well
 - i. Made them distrust their government, and made them realize that the war was hard to win
- 16. Offensive was not a success
 - a. The people did not rise up, the people actually defended the government and their cities and towns against the NLF
 - b. After this the american government started scaling down and looking for a way out of the war
 - c. A political win for the communists
- 17. What were some of the impacts of the Tet Offensive
 - a. The NLF lost 80% of their force, 50,000 casualties
 - i. Devastating loss for them
 - ii. NLF lost popularity and power
 - iii. Lost significant amounts of south - they had worked to get people in the south to trust them, and then they were attacked
 - b. NVA became more dominant in the south
 - c. US public support for the war was eroded
- 18. Quiz
 - a. Lecture and reading material
 - b. Follows the reading quite carefully in lecture
 - c. More information coming about this next week
 - d. Define some terms, understand basic things, who are people, what are their formal names, alternate names, how do they connect

Week 4

Housekeeping

1. Sign up for 2 seminars for the winter term
2. Next week we have 1 hr of discussion - no leader

3. Topic is establishing north vietnam - 2 readings
4. 30 mins quiz - get an hour
5. 5 definitions and 5 fill in the blanks - worth 5% of grade
 - a. Know proper names of N and S vietnam
 - b. Know the names
 - c. Go over the slides
 - d. Readings as supports for the slides
 - e. People, events have choice
 - f. No choice for the fill in the blanks
6. Start discussion at 3 - can leave after quiz and come back

Questions

1. Diem had a presidential election and a referendum - happened close together
2. DRV was established in 1945 after japan left
3. During the war, the viet minh was the organization that existed before the DRV and also the thing running the military
4. DRV - ho was the president
5. After the first indochina war ends refer to the DRV for the state
6. Lau do party - had several names, communist party or workers party
7. Resolution 9 - party agreed that they were going to undertake a major offensive, decision to do in in the party
8. We call it the tet offensive in the west, they call it the general offensive and uprising, the actual event

Lecture

1. Tet offensive
 - a. One of the cities was under siege for over a month
 - b. People found mass graves - people who had connections to the government or the americans who the NFL went after
 - i. Eye opener for the people who had sympathy for the NLF
2. President Lyon johnson would not run again
 - a. American public was increasingly against the war
 - b. View that their own government was against them
3. Richard nixon - peace with honor
 - a. This was his campaign
 - b. Get americans out without being seen to be losing the war
4. Policy of vietnamization
 - a. Handing over things to the ARVN - army of the republic of vietnam
 - b. Policy became prominent under Nixon
 - c. Americas withdrew from vietnam, trained the ARVN to take over fighting and gave them more weapons
5. What did vietnamization mean
 - a. Main thing was withdrawal of the US and expansion of ARVN
 - b. Expansion of programs to win over the population - expansion of pacification or battle for hearts and minds
 - i. Focus on development and livelihoods

6. Peace negotiations

- a. Nguyen Van Thieu was the president of SVN
 - i. He took over in 1965 after a series of military coups
 - ii. 1967 he organized elections, and got elected and became the president
 - iii. Leader until 1975
- b. Talks began in 1968 before Tet under Johnson
 - i. Continued more robustly after the Tet offensive
 - ii. Vietnamization was happening and were pulling troops out of Vietnam
- c. North wanted - US withdrawal, Thieu government replaced by coalition that included the NLF
- d. US wanted - withdrawal of both sides, SVN government to be left intact
- e. Early in the negotiations neither side was serious about it - did it just so they could appease their domestic and international observers
 - i. Neither side was willing to compromise
- f. Thieu and South Vietnam was not included or invited to the talks - he was not happy about this

7. Sino-US rapprochement

- a. International change allowed for breakthrough in the negotiations
- b. China and the US became friendly again - US began to try to establish diplomatic relations with China
- c. In 1972 using the table tennis tournament the Americans and Chinese started talking - ping pong diplomacy
 - i. China had pivoted and had told North Vietnam to be more flexible in its negotiations
 - ii. Soviet Union at the same time was also advocating for peace and détente
- d. Soviets and Chinese were telling them that they were not going to be supported forever, and needed to make peace
- e. Hanoi was frustrated with their allies

8. Hanoi launched the Easter Offensive in March 1972 - out of frustration and anger with their allies

- a. March 30 1972
- b. PAVN crossed the DMZ (demilitarized zone at the 17th parallel)
- c. Followed within days by attacks across the Laos and Cambodian borders into Vietnam
- d. First time troops from the North attacked across the DMZ - all other attacks had been by troops already in the South
- e. Number of troops were impressive - 14 divisions and 120,000 troops
- f. Coordinated attack with PLAVN - People's Liberation Army of Vietnam, the military wing of the NLF
- g. When this happens most of the American troops had been withdrawn - test to see if the South could fight off the North
 - i. In the beginning it seemed that they were going to lose, and they lost the northern province

- ii. With american help and american air power they were able to recover most of the territories that had lost - except the top part of the northern provinces
 - iii. ARVN did well to recover
- h. Part of US response to this attack, and to get them back to the negotiating table they launched a bombing campaign called linebacker 1
 - i. May to october 1972
- i. This got the north back to the table, and reached a peace agreement
 - i. This was not received very well by the republic of vietnam - south vietnam
- j. The NLF also did not support it
- k. Linebacker II was from December 18-29 1972
 - i. Aimed some of the bombs at Hanoi
 - ii. 2,000 civilians killed
- 9. Peace agreement
 - a. Signed by Le Duc Tho and Henry Kissinger - both nominated for nobel peace prize
 - b. Terms were
 - i. Complete US withdrawal
 - ii. Ceasefire for all vietnamese forces
 - iii. Establishment of electoral commissions that included the SVN government, the NLF and a neutral group
 - 1. Plan was to establish a process to bring a government to power
 - iv. But there was no withdrawal of the PAVN from SVN - north allowed to leave troops in designated areas, not required to leave south vietnam
 - v. Basically peace agreement between the north and americans
 - vi. Treaty wasn't really about getting peace for the vietnamese, but was instead against getting a station where the US can leave with honor
 - vii. North got what they wanted because the US was leaving already
- 10. Complete US withdrawal by 1973 but the war continued to go on
 - a. The ceasefire was not followed
 - b. South vietnam and the military was really angry and pushed them back into conflict
 - c. Fighting started again almost right away
 - d. Leaving the troops there was because they had anticipated that the war was going to start again - they were thinking that they were still going to fight to unify the party
 - e. Party told the troops in the south to not do anything to restart the war
 - i. The south was angry and restarted it, so then they responded to restart the war
- 11. President Nguyen Van Thieu resigned on April 12 1975
 - a. Accused the US of abandoning SVN
- 12. War ended April 10 1975
- 13. Cost of war
 - a. 1 million combinations in the APVN and people's liberation army died

- b. 240,000 ARVN
 - c. 2-3 million civilians on both sides
 - d. 58,000 americans
 - e. Legacy was Agent Orange, land mines, undetonated ordnances
14. The socialist republic of vietnam - this was their new name, 1975-present
- a. US sanctions
 - i. Imposed sanctions on the new regime as the north had broken the agreement
 - ii. Economically isolated from its neighbors due to this
 - b. War with cambodia
 - i. December 1978 it had border conflicts with them
 - ii. They had also become communist, just a bit before they did (early april vs late april)
 - iii. Vietnamese invaded in 1978, occupied until 1989
 - iv. Communist regime in cambodia was the Khmer rouge was genocidal - one of the reasons the vietnamese said they were coming in
 - v. Did remove the Khmer rouge from power
 - c. War with china in 1979 from Feb to March - lasted longer but this was the main fighting
 - i. This was because china supported the cambodian communists
15. Post war reconciliation
- a. People who used to work for the south vietnamese government were put into re-education camps, given lessons to rewire them, had to perform hard labor, some tasked with removing land mines
 - b. Post war refugees "boat people" - a lot of ethnic chinese also left during this time as well, 1979 there was a wave of refugees
 - i. US ships were told to pick anyone up who wanted to leave
 - ii. The boat people who left after were in lots of camps around south east asia until they got sponsorships to other countries
 - c. Socialism in the south was a failure - there was famine like conditions
 - d. People in the north collectivized their farms
16. Doi Moi (renovation) = market socialism in 1986
- a. Change to the new
 - b. Collective farms were dismantled
 - c. Creation of market socialism, following the lead of the soviet union and china
 - d. Move to the market economy, people were allowed to participate as individuals
 - e. Allowed to farm as family units
 - f. A lot of joint public and private enterprises, now move to mostly private
 - g. Market based economy, but still under control of the communist party
 - h. Renovation changes brought prosperity to most people, but disparities have grown
 - i. Government funded programs still often exist, but are very basic so people need to pay for additions to these like extra healthcare or schooling

- i. After the war the population was very young - starting to even out now
 - i. In 1975 ½ the population was under 18
- 17. Irony of the communists winning the war and within 10 years capitalism was welcomed back
- 18. Historiography
 - a. Orthodox - american involvement was wrong, tactically and strategically they shouldn't have, involvement was a mistake
 - b. Revisionist - american involvement was essential, defend war on the american side, involved because anti-communism, didn't actually lose, became more prominent in the 80s under reagan
 - c. Vietnam perspective
 - d. Typically historians start off with supporting the war, and only later question it, however for this war the orthodox writers started writing first

Week 5

Seminar

1. Conflicted about the history of land reform, pushbacks about positive portrayals
2. Look at when things were pleased as people had limited information available to them during some periods
3. Land reform started with okay intentions, but it did take a radical turn
4. In phase one there were lots of mistakes which led to people being misclassified, and some deaths came from these misclassifications
 - a. This also happened in china's land reform
5. South the assistance of china
6. Vietnam in the north did not have big plantations which communism seriously objects to, but the south did have these big farms
 - a. Big landlords left with the french
7. Racialized to get support from china and the soviets in the war
 - a. Show support to the party and at that they support peasants to get their support
8. Chinese strategy used where they lived with peasants to get people to rise up and state the movement
9. General people had a lot of respect for Ho but party people saw him as moderate
10. Ho is revered today
 - a. Became a cult/deity in the sense of a religion

Week 6

Nation building in Republic of Vietnam (SVN)

1. Diem had a vision - Hamlet program, more than just a puppet or dictator
2. Debates about the degree to which he was influenced by communism
3. They felt the overwhelming presence of americans
4. Ignorance of americans - not a good attitude when entering, trying to export viewpoints on SVN
5. Refugees often saw the move as temporary
6. Historiography has only recently given SVN and Diem agency

7. Modernity classified in American lens even though SVN people wanted modernization, but potentially not in the American way
8. American goals sometimes contradict themselves - can't have control and democracy
9. Amerinaas play a passive role in state building
10. Sects - mafia, 2 religious, problem for Diem's rule
11. Refugees - housing and relocating them was difficult
12. Called all rivals communists
13. Local population believed Diem was favouring Catholic refugees
14. As time went on Diem became nepotistic, communist campaign went out of control and there was an increase in dissatisfaction
15. Chinese ordinance - gave Chinese living in SVN citizenship
 - a. Lack of enthusiasm for this
 - b. Coerced him into becoming citizens though preventing non-Citizens from working in some industries
 - c. This citizenship was to connect them to the state and modernity - have control over them
 - d. Some refused and went to Taiwan
16. Hamlet system did not work until the NLD decided to storm the villages
 - a. Social goals never materialized
 - b. In theory made a good program, exclude foreign intervention and was an anti-colonial institution
17. The local leaders didn't understand purpose, just meeting quotas, hard to build democracy and community

Week 7

Housekeeping

1. Prepare 4-5 minutes to talk about proposal on December 1st
2. Larger presentation in February
3. Have topic by the end of reading week
 - a. Needs to be on the Vietnam war
 - b. Preferably on the Vietnam perspective
 - c. Topics on Cambodia and Laos are okay as they were affected by the war
 - d. Likes on blackboard for help with finding sources

Overall Thoughts

1. RVN connected to race - a lot of non-communists had always within the French, left over from being a semi-French colony
 - a. Made it hard to be portrayed in a nationalistic way
 - b. also dependent on US aid
 - c. Easier for the DRV to represent nationalism
2. Looking at run-up to escalations - DRV and US
3. Nguyen's book is based on a lot of good sources which were not previously accessible
4. Ho had a lot of personal power

Q1 - leadership style, how did this resonate with the party

1. Le Duan and Le Duc Tho - interested more in mobilizing for reunification, rather than a north-first policy

2. Haluks are the radicals who want war in the South
3. Originally the Chinese wanted war but the soviets were more constrained
4. In the 60s the soviet union was supporting conventional warfare - chinese wanted protracted guerrilla war
5. 1960s they did start to send support to the NLF in the south
6. The communist party was very fragmented

Q2 - the civil war, goals, how they played out

1. Perception that the window for insurgency was quite small
2. Question of ego of leaders over welfare of the people
3. Gave him a chance to create a police state in the north
4. Popular idea might be once the americans came into it war hard to argue for north first, discession of liberating the south

Q3 - role of the US in war, how it changed and why

1. Kennedy might have been a bit more gradual and secretive while johnson was more open and sent the army openly
 - a. Break argument vs continuity

Q4 - was the coup beneficial

1. Idea to recognize the government too liberal
2. Couldn't continued supporting Diem after the buddhist crisis
3. Diem did keep the US from getting involved, generals were much easier to manipulate in US interest

Q5 - what insights do the documents provide

1. Changing opinions as they get more information

Week 8

1. Underestimated the power of north vietnam
2. Americans view themselves as having the moral high ground
3. Resolution disregards and input from vietnam
4. Protecting the people of southeast Asia - very broad

TV show and discussion after

1. SV shops directed by the US shelled NV cities
2. Maddox was on an intelligence mission to collect information for further shelling
3. Maddox fires at NV shop near them, the NV responses with shelling back at them
4. US said that they would punish fighter unprovoked attacks - even though it was provoked
5. Mistranslation of message from NV lead the US to believe attacks were imminent
6. Second attack never happened, but soldiers thought it did so the US responded
7. Amercian pilots started to drop bombs on NV
8. No declaration of war so captured soldiers were not POWs
9. American public liked the presidents strong but measured response
10. Approved limited air response and retaliatory raids, not yet willing to send in ground troops
11. Resolution had already been written - they had been thinking ahead

Week 9

1. Don't submit papers for class so you can tweak it

2. Probennay uses vietnamese sources, the other two do not
3. US lacks a coherent strategy

Q1 - how was it a war of attrition and how was it helpful to frame it this way

1. Explains the death and destruction
2. Only thing that they were really doing
3. Vietnam and china also saw their strategy as a war of attrition
4. Obsessive with numbers - bombs, bodies

Q2 - johnson's goals with rolling thunder, did they achieve these goals

1. Relatiation for an attack, bombing cmapain lasted several years
2. Failed to scare off the north from supporting the south
3. Due to this failure the US had to send in ground troops
4. Soviets and china increase their support of the DRV as a result
5. SV lost trust in their US supported government

Q3 - why was it important to continue the bombings

1. Tacit understanding between china and the US to not make the war too big and not take it to the north

Q4 - would you increase bombings

1. Rise of china and russia getting involved
2. Stopping bombing gave the DRV the change to regroup and survive
3. Reduce the numbers of american deaths
4. Johnson had to bankace ideas of hawks and doves in order to get polices past

Q5 - NV responses and reactions to bombings

1. Bit of experience from french and elites
2. Human error in becomings and protecting from them
3. NV was able to shoot down planes
4. Moved a lot of people and industry out of cities
5. Learning curve after attacks, very adaptable

Week 10

Cambodia and Laos Q1 - difference in US involvement

1. Similar bombing campaigns
2. Involved in laos earlier, secret mission
3. US politically involved in all 3 countries
4. Laos disappeared from memory, cambodia turned to genocide because American used the thai military and forces to train
5. Obmbnn moved from border in cambodia into interior to bomb the KR
6. Pol Pot learned from china in the cultural revolution

China and the soviet union

1. When doesn't want to talk about this period
2. New enemies, didn't want to bring up that they helped enemies
3. Vietnamese side doesn't want to talk about china's involvement either
4. Soldiers appreciate opportunity to learn to read and write
5. Defensive approach dictated by rotation strategies
 - a. Dealt with a lot of attacks
 - b. Rotated soldier out

6. Mediators didn't want to be openly involved

Week 2

1. Prescriptive rather than descriptive approach, what was the party trying to promote
2. Who would be willing to speak - in turners reading the women are shyer to speak

Q1 - women's union and reflection of universal values on womanhood

1. Push govt policies "ideal" woman for war and society
2. Asked them to do a lot of tasks, but also highly critical of their actions

Q3 - did they take advantage of women's freedom issues to increase nationalism

1. Women as heroes for the war, using the narrative to increase nationalism
2. Not to promote gender equality but to create a new woman for the party
3. Communist party doesn't view feminism as legitimate but rather women's rights as an extension of human rights instead

Q3 - to what extent did they serve, and how were they viewed

1. Involved in all aspects of war, often on the homefront
2. Dual role - expected to do everything, expected to fight and nurture
3. Conflicting views between generations
4. Women's veteran's heroism was not celebrated, they didn't often serve in the regular army so they did not receive veteran's support

Q4 - male and female perspectives on military women

1. Emphasis on women doing support work and not actively fighting, or staying to protect village
2. Only when it is necessary may the women fight
3. The party's ideology was that men and women are equal but in practicality, people maintain their traditional values
4. Women in the south were not mobilized to fight, just axillary or stayed to work on the homefront
5. South did not have the ideology of promoting women's rights and equality

Presentation information

1. Thesis, information, historiography
2. Post a week before
3. Post on the discussion board
4. Presentation is marked, discussant is part of participation mark
5. Draft submission is its own assignment
 - a. Should have a thesis, body and historiography

Week 3

Q1 - what lead to the massacres, why here

1. Transition between south korea's control to the US or vice versa
2. Difficulty in determining who was VC and who was a civilian
3. 80-20 - identities were fluid

Q2 - My Lai in the american news was seen as an unprecedented atrocity, but this wasn't the case

1. Americans were told to suspect everyone

2. This wasn't an isolated event
3. Dehumanized the Vietnamese and communists
4. See anyone seen to be supporting the army in any way to be a combattant
5. Massacres as a preventative measure as it was believed that they would kill the americans later
6. The villages were seen as more secure and possibly revolutionary
7. Around the time of the tet offensive

Q3 - How did bombs affect people in Laos

1. Lives were uprooted, disease, economic disruption
2. Burial rituals and ceremonies were disrupted
3. Importance of people's personal memory

Q4 - politics of memory

1. When they pause, what is omitted, including voices not previously heard
2. Expanding stories beyond a linear teleological account

Q5 - how did the civilian pop react and act regarding the war

1. Had a lot of agency, valued philanthropy and charity
2. Lot of fundraising activities, coming together to help the community out
3. Taking in refugees - often religious groups played a significant role in this too

Q6 - complex personhood and agency

1. People get viewed as heroes or superheroes
2. Really a civil war - so giving them agency is crucial for understanding the events

March 2: Life in the NLF

1. Singular perspective - limiting but also humanizing
2. Also has a translator
3. Editing, self editing, publishers
4. Political memoir
5. Should he have known
6. Idea of a bigger enemy
7. Ho chi minh was the party and he trusted him, he was seen like other peasants, calculated image
8. Slow progression of unity - wanted things to take their time and for everyone to talk about it
9. Family unity to come back believed in liberal democratic ideas, not a shared belief with the DRV
10. Politics to support the military
11. High ranking politician in the jungle
12. Both NLF and DRV worked hard at politics and diplomacy
13. Prior to the jungle he had been a spy
14. Leaders were mostly elites
15. He was a fugitive in the jungle
16. People could send mail but it was a very slow system
17. Diem was disliked
18. When the lao dong party takes over they implant ideological homogeneity

19. Organization called themselves the NLF, they were called the VC by Diem and the Americans
20. Memoir is him saying he is not a communist and got misled and trusted the wrong people
21. Guy in charge of strategic hamlet program was a spy for NVN

March 9: Children and Youth in War

1. Using parts of ethnic minority music
2. A cleaner image for the RVN starts
3. Love is not a major theme in rock, whereas it is in other types of music and Americans rock
4. Effort to use songs to mobilize support
5. Rock music initially not supported by NVN
6. Critical of American influence on youth
7. An erosion of trust in the government
8. Children became a bigger part of society
9. Suppressed the students, this suppression turned them further against the government
10. High school students also involved and this was frightening to the government
11. High level of NLF initiation into the student movement
12. Punished and cracked down on student protesters which probably increased resistance to the DRV
13. Education in the south was more liberal and humanist, in the North there was a focus on love and hate
14. Didn't have to uphold decade of democracy in the North so the teaching of the children was more explicit
15. Children were evacuated into the countryside without family so the notion of Uncle Ho would have been very important
16. Children become involved in war activities
17. Always and ideology being pushed in schools
18. University students and bands were located in the cities - questioned the impact of them on rural areas

March 16: Ending the War and Vietnamization

1. Probably will cancel the class on April 9
2. Getting things back
3. South felt not included - left out of decisions that impacted them
4. North felt a sense of relief, incentive had gone to fight
5. Lost opportunity to spin it as an American war
6. Audience was Hanoi for the peace agreement, not the South
7. Also because they are pursuing a policy of rapprochement, no longer the existential threat of communism
8. Vietnamization was a way for America to dump their problems
9. Vietnamization was an expensive policy
10. First wanted to call it Americanization
11. Implying that the Vietnamese weren't doing enough fighting
12. More Vietnamese soldiers died than Americans as they were given more dangerous tasks

13. Corruption at a high level in ARVN and SVN
14. Had observer but they were political and did not do anything
15. ARVN - lack of experience, poorly trained, issues with the management
16. Inability to boost morale
17. Colonial element affected the soldiers - didn't want to die for the americans
18. Diem was fearful of being dependent on the americans but this dependency still developed

March 23: Post War Disenchantment

1. Humanness of the orangutans, desperation, message that the soldiers were reduced to it
2. She was a leader of a communist youth brigade, then in the 80s became an advocate for democracy
 - a. Not part of combat troops but she was on the Ho Chi Minh trail as an entertainer
3. Unknown what the stories are based on
4. His name means soldier
5. Details can help to understand motivation and emotions
6. Nobody is a theory, glory only lasts so long
7. Trainseeme is unrealistic - likely wouldn't happen
 - a. Laugh at, contrast to Ho, made out to be ugly, fat
8. Old girlfriend had been impregnated by a party official and had been exiled
9. State is like father - ready to sacrifice all the sons, and masculine
10. The nothing figures are seen in a sympathetic and caring way
11. Gendered critique of the state
12. By the end he felt that everything is a victim of war
13. Novel with a very strong political message

Mar 30: The Third Indochina War

1. Originally opposed, shift to cautious support
2. Start to see the soviets as the next imperial power
3. Rhetoric of peace
4. Tet offensive based on soviet line
5. Soviets and chinese had different war methods they were phishing in vietnam
6. War reflects the political climate
7. Anti-communist in order to rally people around the imperial effect of the h US
8. Sanook wanted to stay neutral, Lon Nol wanted to support the Americans, coup resulted
9. Chinese supported Sanook - brokered agreement with Cambodian communists under Pol Pot
10. When Vietnam invades china is angry because the Khmer Rouge are their protege
11. Chinese attacked Vietnam to teach them a lesson assert dominance, reach for more power
12. Vietnam kicked out ethnic chinese and took their property
13. Took Mao's strategy of horizontal line, absolute superior roce
14. Didn't use all of Mao's strategies
15. Deng was in charge militarily
16. Chinese chose to invade but not occupy

17. Would have lost international good will if they occupied because then they would have been the imperial power