Vietnam’s Lost Revolution

*Vietnam’s Lost Revolution* employs newly-released archival material from Vietnam to examine the rise and fall of the Special Commissariat for Civic Action in the First Republic of Vietnam, and in so doing, reassesses the origins of the Vietnam War. A cornerstone of Ngô Đình Diệm’s presidency, Civic Action was intended to transform Vietnam into a thriving, modern, independent, noncommunist Southeast Asian nation. The author juxtaposes Diệm’s revolutionary plan with the conflicting and competing visions of Vietnam’s postcolonial future held by other indigenous groups; in doing so, he shows how the government failed to gain legitimacy within the peasantry, ceding the advantage to the communist-led opposition and paving the way for the American military intervention in the mid-1960s. This book provides a richer and more nuanced analysis of the origins of the Vietnam War in which internal struggles over national identity, self-determination, and even modernity itself are central.

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Vietnam’s Lost Revolution

Ngô Đình Diệm’s Failure to Build An Independent Nation, 1955–1963

GEOFFREY C. STEWART
University of Western Ontario
For Michelle
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Province Map of THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, ca. 1959–60

MAP 1  Province map of the Republic of Vietnam, ca. 1959–60