This paper aims to examine to what extent and how the government of South Vietnam (1954-75) institutionalized “Eastern medicine (Dong Y)” that is, traditional medicine, in its medical system. It also analyzes the social background of the significant Chinese influence, which prevented South Vietnam from institutionalizing Vietnamese traditional medicine as was the case of the North.

Today, Vietnamese traditional medicine, which consists of Thuoc Nam (medicine of the south) and Thuoc Bac (medicine of the north), is institutionalized in the medical system. This has been attributed to the North Vietnamese policy to improve Vietnamese medicine, whereas South Vietnam purportedly did not take the initiative to make the most of Vietnamese traditional medicine. This paper reveals that South Vietnam did try to promote traditional medicine and to integrate it into the public health care system. However, due to the large population and influence of the Chinese, Eastern medicine in South Vietnam was not represented by traditional Vietnamese medicine but by its Chinese counterpart. In order to incorporate more of Vietnamese traditional medicine, the government had to restrict Eastern medicine practices to the Vietnamese. South Vietnam also attempted to institutionalize traditional medicine. However, it was premised on a more complex principle than the North’s.

Keywords: South Vietnam, traditional medicine, Thuoc Nam, Dong Y, the Chinese

キーワード：南ベトナム, 伝統医学, 南薬, 東医, 華僑・華人