

LAND, PEOPLE AND HISTORY

ĐẤT TẠO nên người

● By Elizabeth S.H. Hoffman

(9)

I THIS IS OUR EARTH
The word decay does not suggest life, but the decay of these dead plants and animals helps to make possible the life of the soil. Through decay these dead things are taken apart, and their parts are used in the growth of plants and in the soil. The death of living things through their decay, brings life to new things. Thus life on earth continues.

The decay in the soil is carried on through the action of hordes of small living creatures. Without these creatures the soil would not be butts of lifeless rock and debris.

These tiny creatures belong to both the animal and the vegetable kingdoms. The largest number of them is bacteria and fungi (such as moulds). Billions and billions of these live in the soil, together with a variety of tiny algae, insects, worms, and protozoa (microscopic animals). All these creatures depend on one another, through a most complicated system of relationships.

In a thumbful of soil there may be two billion bacteria, about thirty million bits of fungi, and one hundred protozoa. They are a lovely sight under the microscope, colorful, odd-shaped, some of them whisky-

(to be continued)

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● Bản dịch của NXB

(2)

Danh

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