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SAIGON ARTS, CULTURE & EDUCATION INSTITUTE



To Research, Document & Promote Vietnamese-American

NEWSLETTER # 102

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Vietnam 1964

**TOPEKA ARMY VETERAN FOUGHT, ATE, AND LIVED WITH SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS:
STEVE FRY**

Cjonline.com, Nov 11, 2016 Provided by Bill Laurie



More than 40 years after the Vietnam War ended, veteran Bob Dalton doesn't know whether the South Vietnamese army troops he fought with — including his best friend — survived the war. Does he wonder what happened to them? "Absolutely," Dalton, 73, said this week. "I have no way of knowing." Dalton was in his 20s when he last saw infantry officers Maj. Nguyen Nhung and Lt. Nguyen Nam, the best friend. "I don't know what happened to my friends," Dalton said. "I assume they were killed. I don't know." Dalton, of Topeka, has read that some South Vietnamese troops were executed when the war ended in April 1975. Others were placed in "retraining camps," which were concentration camps, and others were restricted to working in menial labor in post-war Vietnam. Still others may have moved to the United States after confinement for 15 years.

Civilian to soldier

Born in Independence, Dalton graduated from Independence High School and attended the junior college for a year before he transferred to Utah State University. He graduated in 1965 with a degree in conservation and wildlife and worked at the university lab before he enlisted. After graduating from Officers Candidate School, Lt. Dalton was a mortar platoon leader at Fort Carson, Colo., for five months. "Vietnamization" started to shift the fighting to South Vietnamese troops as American troops were withdrawn from the war. Dalton underwent training to become an adviser to a battalion in the South Vietnamese army's 25th division. From 1969 to 1970, Dalton was a 25-year-old U.S. Army lieutenant who was in Combat Assistance Team 99, a four-member unit. The team commander was a major or captain and other members were a lieutenant, a sergeant and a radio-telephone operator. "We ate what the Vietnamese ate," Dalton said, including rat, cat, dog and cobra. "I was trained in the (Vietnamese) language." When he met the Vietnamese major, "I greeted him in Vietnamese. Maj. Nhung just beamed and he came to me and shook my hand," Dalton said. The title "adviser" was something of a misnomer because the South Vietnamese troops Dalton fought with in the 25th Division were well trained and had been fighting for 25 years. They knew what they were doing, Dalton said. "I didn't advise them," Dalton said of the 4th battalion of the 46th Regiment. Rather, his job was to patrol with the South Vietnamese troops, then act as a liaison to call in American air strikes, helicopter gunships and artillery fire on enemy troops. They also radioed for medevac choppers to airlift out the wounded. Dalton thought highly of the South Vietnamese troops he served with.

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Vietnam 1964... “They were great troops,” Dalton said. “They respected Americans.”

Lt. Nguyen Nam, his best friend, “would lead from the front,” Dalton said. “He was a gutsy combat soldier.”

Dalton recalled when he and Nam were taking a break in a village called Cho Nui.

Dalton glanced at a small 16-year-old Vietnamese fisherman walking past them, and Nam poked Dalton in the ribs, motioned to the fisherman and said, “North Vietnamese.” Nam ordered some South Vietnamese troops to retrieve the youth.

The teen fisherman turned out to be a 24-year-old North Vietnamese Army lieutenant, who was a sapper, Dalton said. The sapper was scouting the village for a potential attack.

What tipped off Nam?

Nam noticed the sapper had a military haircut, and Nam hadn’t seen him in the village before, Dalton said.

Critters

Dalton has some vivid memories of animals in Vietnam. Before his tour, he had studied animals in Vietnam, but he missed the saltwater crocodile. In the field, he was taking a brief bath in a water-filled shell hole.

“I put my rifle up, jumped in and as soon as I got in there with my bar of soap, (the crocodile) popped up and was looking right at me,” Dalton said. “It was not a big one, but it scared the hell out of both of us. I did not know it was there.” Dalton leaped from the shell hole and lobbed a grenade in the water, but the crocodile had already fled.

In troop bunkers, soldiers kept a Burmese python, a constrictor, to eat the rats infesting the quarters. Dalton recalls waking to find a cobra — a venomous snake — curled next to him to stay warm.

“It was spooning with me,” Dalton said. “We ate the cobra for breakfast the next day.”

During the war, Dalton received the Bronze Star, the Air Medal for more than 20 combat insertions, the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star. Why did he receive the Cross of Gallantry?

Dalton and Nam “were facing a machine gun, and we took it out,” Dalton said simply.

After the fall

The Vietnam War ended in April 1975 when the North Vietnamese army overran South Vietnam.

Dalton said South Vietnam was betrayed when the United States broke the Paris treaty and didn’t provide support and supplies to the South Vietnamese military to continue fighting as promised.

In short, the U.S. Senate “defunded” the war, Dalton said.

“We lost the war we never lost (before),” Dalton said. “We lost it politically, not in arms. If you don’t plan to be victorious, don’t get into it.”

The victors bull-dozed the South Vietnamese soldier cemeteries, which was devastating, Dalton said. In the predominantly Buddhist South Vietnam, a big emphasis is placed on ancestors, Dalton said.

“The North Vietnamese bulldozed all the soldiers’ cemeteries. It was (done) to destroy their ancestors,” Dalton said.

The return home

After returning from Vietnam and three years in the army, Dalton joined the National Guard in 1973 and retired as a colonel in 1999 with 29 years in the service. He was the Army National Guard chief of staff for Gen. Jim Rueger in the Kansas National Guard and was inducted into the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame at Fort Benning, Ga.

INDOCHINA IN THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON-1964

Indochina In the Year of the Dragon--1964, is the second volume in a planned series looking at key events during the Second Indochina War. Each book of the multi-volume series will cover a single year and delve into political, military and cultural aspects of a war that still sharply divides America. Written primarily by historians, academics and Vietnam veterans, the series will challenge long held orthodox views of academia and show how myths, falsehoods and distortions have perpetuated the myth that Vietnam was unwinnable and without purpose. In this volume, topics ranging from the DRV’s military intentions, to the peace movement, in 1964, are covered.



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THE FATE OF THE CHIEU HOI DEFECTORS

After April 30, 1975, ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) officers and South Vietnamese officials were sent to communist reeducation camps for various periods of time ranging from three to 20 years where they suffered from “barbarous treatment, ferocious torture, and unscrupulous executions...” The legacy of this era was painful enough for those who survived these camps that the first thing they did was to try to escape out of the country as boat people as soon as they could. It then made many of them into stronger anticommunists than before.

But what happened to the chieu hoi or returnees who were former communists who later rallied to the Republic of Vietnam during the war? There were 200,000 of them. According to Nguyen Cong Luan, many defectors (“no less than 1,000 and no more than 10,000”) were executed by the local communist security after the fall of Saigon. Ex NVA Lieutenant Colonel Phan Mau was detained on May 5, 1975 and was executed not long afterwards.

All other defectors were ordered to report for incarceration. They were thrown into regular prisons or military jails before being sent to reeducation along with RVN officers and officials. Many were tried at courts-martial as deserters and traitors and given specified sentences.

A few former North Vietnamese officers including former Lieutenant Colonel Le Xuan Chuyen, former 66th NVA Regiment CO, and ex-Senior Captain Phan Van Xuong, NVA Army Corps were sentenced to death by a communist court martial. Xuong's sentence was commuted owing to his wife's faithful services to the communist cause in her home village in South Vietnam. Communist authorities were too busy to deal with the hundreds of thousands ARVN soldiers and officials to worry about the additional 200,000 defectors.

The fate when they returned to their home villages depended on local party authorities' decisions. Some of them were tolerant, some were not. However, they were all classified as third class citizens. A small number escaped abroad by boat or through the Orderly Departure Program.

Nguyen Cong Luan: *Nationalist in the Vietnam Wars*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2012: 509-510.

PROF. NGHIÊM THẨM: A HEROIC SCHOLAR

Bạch Diên Thư Sinh
(Translated by SACEI)

After April 30, 1975 [fall of Saigon], many professors in South Vietnam were dismissed from their universities [by the new communist government]. A few tried to escape by boat, a few categorically refused to cooperate, and a few others would cooperate, either willingly or by force. The harsh reality was that, whether they cooperated willingly or by force, they were discriminated against and not trusted. Besides, they were told to write slanted reports or perform "scientific" experiments for political purposes. These events were confirmed by excerpts of announcements made by Huỳnh Kim Báu, the secretary of a group called "Patriotic Intellectuals" of the city of Hồ Chí Minh City in Huy Đức's recently published book *"The Winning Side."* The secretary reported, "During these years, Saigon intellectuals would often receive phone calls from the office of the city board asking them whether there was any scientific project done to welcome March 2 or May 19 [holidays]. Professors like Phạm Biểu Tâm and Lê Văn Thới scolded them right away, "There is no such a thing as a welcoming scientific project." On the other hand, others did have a few projects: some produced detergents, named 'pentonic,' others argued that 'a few pounds of cassava are as nutritious as a pound of beef,' while for others, 'eating bobo is more nutritious than rice.' These projects, however, were not trustworthy (1).

Among all the remaining professors who reluctantly cooperated with the communist government, was a hero who dared using his life to protect the honor of scholars and true scientists. He was Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm, Director of the Saigon Archeological Museum, Professor of the Saigon School of Letters and also Professor of all South Vietnamese private and public universities at the time.

Life

Born in 1920, at Đông Anh County, Vĩnh Yên Province (presently part of Hanoi) Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm was the fifth son of Nghiêm Hoàn Luyến, from the village Hòa Xá, Ứng Hòa suburb, Hanoi.

His forbears included a lot of laureates and mandarins. His relatives in North Vietnam included minister, ambassador, and businessmen; in South Vietnam, his brother Nghiêm Đăng was deputy dean of the Vietnam School of Administration and Nghiêm Mỹ was South Vietnam's Ambassador to Malaysia, Jordan, and New Zealand (2).

After graduating from a Hanoi high school, he was sent to the Paris School of Louvre for training in Museology. Returning to Vietnam in 1956, he directed various cultural organizations.

- He worked at the Saigon Archeological Museum, in charge of unearthing prehistoric artifacts at Ốc Eo (Ba Thê, An Giang) and directing research groups to unearth artifacts in various places.
- In 1961, he was elected member of the board of directors of Far Eastern Prehistory Association. He was named Professor of Anthropology at the Saigon School of Letters and the Gia Định College of Arts.
- In 1964, he was named Director of the Saigon Archeological Museum and professor of the newly established Vạn Hạnh University.
- In 1966, he was invited to teach at the Dalat School of Political Sciences.
- In 1969, he was member of the Anthropology section of the National Scientific Research Committee of the Republic of Vietnam.
- After the fall of Saigon, he remained in Vietnam and on the teaching staff of the School of Art (although it is not known what he was allowed to teach). In November 1979, he was murdered in his home at 29/27 Nam Kỳ Khởi Nghĩa (old Công Lý Street), Saigon.

Research work

Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm left many anthropologic and archeological works to posterity.

1. "Cham religion in Vietnam," *Quê-Hương* vol 2, issue 1, April 1962, pp. 108-123 (article has been cited by Pierre Bernard Lafont in "Contributions à l'étude des structures sociales des Chams du Việt-nam." *Bulletins de l'Ecole française d'Extreme-Orient*, No 1, vol. 52, pp. 157-171, 1964).
2. "Summary of stores of artifacts of the Cham Kings" *"Việt-nam khảo-cổ tập san"*, số 1, 1960, Saigon.
3. *"Esquisse d'une étude sur les interdits chez les Vietnamiens"* (in French), Ministry of Culture and Education of the République of Vietnam, 1965, 240 pages.
4. "Tương quan giữa Sử địa và Nhân chủng học." *Tập san Sử địa* vol. 1, Jan-Feb-Mar, 1966.
5. "Công trình sư Trần Văn Học." *Tạp chí Văn hóa*, vol. 61, 1962.
6. "Tìm hiểu đồng bào Thượng." *Tạp chí Quê-hương*, vol. 31, Jan 1962, pp. 130-150; English translation by Voth Donald E. "Seeking to understand the highlanders: the two tribal kingdoms of the Vietnamese

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Court in the past, King of Fire (Po Tau Pui) and King of Water (Po Tau Ea)". *South-East Asia*. An international quarterly, vol 1, pp 335–363, 1971.

7. "Kĩ thuật Bảo tàng học và giáo dục căn-bản." 96 pages, UNESCO, Saigon, 1959 (dịch).
8. "Persistence culturelle du substrat indonesien chez les Vietnamiens." Sep 11, 1961.

Personal Life

Three women had shared their lives with Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm. While studying in France, he lived with Ms. Gerda Meta Nielsen, an accordionist from Denmark with whom he had a daughter. The latter was born in 1956 and was named Ester Bondo Đan Tuyết Thẩm Nghiêm.

On his return to Vietnam, he married Ms. Đỗ Thị Thuần Bích, a pharmacist who taught at the School of Pharmacy in Saigon. They had two sons named Nghiêm Thẩm Đan Nghị and Nghiêm Thẩm Đan Đại. In 1977, Mrs. Thuần Bích escaped by boat and immigrated to the US. She passed away in Sacramento, California in 2010.

After Mrs. Thuần Bích left, Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm lived with Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung who taught Japanese language at the University of HCM (formerly School of Letters).

Behavior

Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm was a true scientist who lived a simple and upright life. He was a natural, self-confident, and good-natured person who smiled with his mouth and eyes. He smoked pipe, which was his close buddy. Prof. Đỗ Khánh Hoan, the Chair of the English section of the School of Letters before the fall of Saigon, a long-time colleague of Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm, made the following observation about him. "He was a good-natured person who did not hold grudge or compete against anyone" (3). Although the salary of a university professor at that time was not that big, he was seen moving through the streets of Saigon, year after year on his bicycle, with his Samsonite bag attached to the back seat. Thieves on many occasions had taken aim at his Samsonite that was filled with educational documents. All these factors have made Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm a respectable person to deal with.

His most prized belonging was probably the house that the First Republic of Vietnam gave to him and where he lived for almost two decades and where he was murdered.

Although his life was clean materially, his house was a priceless cultural museum. He just had to put on auction a dark silvery statue or an antique ax and could get a large sum of money. This did not include his rare book collection. I remember when Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm decided to sponsor my dissertation, he took me to his upstairs house to show me his book case full of rare books that could not be found anywhere in South Vietnam. For many years, he had spent vast sums of money to have these rare old books rebound. Of course, these books are priceless in the world of culture and letters.

The brave death of a scholar, a true scientist

Prof. Đỗ Khánh Hoan told us that Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm only did research and teaching and never got involved in politics (4).

Everyone thought that after April 30, 1975, someone who shunned politics like Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm would be safe under the new regime. This turned out to be false. Because under the communist regime, everyone should serve its political and propaganda tools. If one resisted the government, one will be crushed by it. If one does not resist the government, but is unwilling to be subservient to it, one will also be crushed by it.

That was the case of Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm,

Back in late April 1975, I remember meeting with Mr. Chấn at the Saigon School of Letters; after walking out of the cafeteria, I met Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm. He was carrying his Samsonite as usual but had a sad look on his face. After saluting him, I asked him about the overall situation. He told me, "That's the end. Saigon will be like Phnom Penh. (Phnom Penh surrendered on April 17, 1975). He then predicted, "Ambassador Martin (Graham Martin) will step on a helicopter to get away like Ambassador Dean (John Gunther Dean) did in Phnom Penh." I asked him, "Would you leave?" In a sad tone, he confided, "I won't go. I'm old. What will I do if I leave?" That was the last time I met Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm.

After I returned from the reeducation camps in 1988, I overheard that Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm had been murdered. I then invited Nguyễn Văn V. to visit Prof. Toan Ánh and to learn more about Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm's death (Nguyễn Văn V. was a schoolteacher who was sent to reeducation camps for opposing the school system under the communist regime). According to Prof. Toan Ánh, Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm continued to visit him as usual. One morning, after he rode his bicycle home from Prof. Toan Ánh, as he was climbing the stairs, a stranger hit him in the head with an antique ax. What was surprising was that Prof. Toan Ánh thought this was a love murder. However, when I immigrated to the U.S., I had the chance to read

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the book *Rồng Xanh Ngục Đỏ* (published in Vietnamese in the US in 1986) by Fr. Vũ Đình Trác that discussed Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm's death.

Fr. Vũ Đình Trác and Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm had been friends since 1978 when both, like others university professors who had remained in Vietnam, joined the scientific groups that popped up after April 30, 1975. Due to his great interest in archeology, when he overheard Fr. Vũ Đình Trác mention that he owned a book called *Bách Việt Tiên Hiền Chí*, an excerpt of the *Đại Bộ Dã Sử Trung Hoa Lĩnh Nam Di Thư*, he immediately tried to contact Fr. Vũ Đình Trác. From exchanging books and archeological artifacts, the two became close buddies.

When Fr. Vũ Đình Trác first visited Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm, he was surprised to learn that Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm had been living with Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung, who after April 30, 1975, taught Japanese language at the Saigon School of Letters. By coincidence, Fr. Vũ Đình Trác knew Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung when both of them studied in Japan. Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm said that he and Mrs. Dung had been legally married in order to reunite with their parents in Canada.

In the roguish period after April 30, 1975, under the greedy and terrible eyes of cultural managers, owning expensive ancient artifacts or books could be detrimental to the health of its owners. That was the reason why Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm carefully counseled Fr. Vũ Đình Trác, "Please keep these books confidential, otherwise they would cause you problems should they hear about it. Since they knew about my antique ax, they always came by and asked me to show them the ax" (5).

Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung suggested, "As a true scientist, Thẩm is not at all flexible in his dealings with the công an (secret police)." She also added, "Because of his deep respect for you, he has revealed all these secrets to you."

In addition after conquering South Vietnam, with a stunning victory in their hands, Lê Duẩn and Lê Đức Thọ greedily planned to take over the whole Southeast Asia. In fact, by that time they had conquered Laos and Cambodia and were preparing to "liberate" Thailand. To achieve that goal, they aggressively plotted everything including using the brain of all scientists to fight a psychological war and to unleash the fighting will and the pride of the nation. This was the beginning of all the misfortune that would fall on the heads of scientists like Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm.

True to this, Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm had confided to Fr. Vũ Đình Trác that the Secretary General of the communist party of Vietnam (CPV) Lê Duẩn accompanied by Nguyễn Tuân had flown down to South Vietnam and invited Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm to the Majestic Hotel so that he could greet, feast him and "place some orders."

After a simple meal, Lê Duẩn told Prof. Nghiêm Thẩm, "Mr. Nghiêm Thẩm, you probably know that the whole world considers Vietnam as the "cream of the human race" and you also share that honor. Vietnam should be the masters of all Southeast Asia. All the elements have been put in place, except for one..."

Up to now, the "peanut" historians have proclaimed that all Southeast Asian races derive from Malaysian or Indonesian stocks. However, the Great Soviet Union has recently found elements suggesting that the Vietnamese were the ancestors of all the Southeast Asian races. We are therefore revising the history of Southeast Asia. Since our anthropological and archeological fields have made significant progress, you should use this occasion, with the prestige you have earned, to write a paper suggesting that, "the Vietnamese are the ancestors of all southeast Asian races. This would fit the idea of Vietnamese being the "cream of the human race" and reflect the rare talent you have."

I remained silent for a minute before responding to him, "My prestige is based on the correctness and truthfulness of my statements. According to present scientific documents, based on archeology and anthropology, that are correct, I cannot write anything differently. To write things as suggested by the secretary general would be unscientific."

He smiled and told me, "To say such a thing is to be beholden to books, to imperialism, to fogginess, and not to realism at all."

I was so upset that I did not mince words, "If I write such a thing, all the archeologists and anthropologists in the world would call me and the government I serve, dead meat. I would never do such a depraved thing."

Lê Duẩn did not seem upset at all. He curtly asked, "Are you determined not to do such a thing?"

I suddenly recovered my footing and told him, "I cannot positively respond to the request of my brother in this situation."

Lê Duẩn threw an ugly look toward me and curtly said, "You would not do it, would you? I hope you change your mind."

Looking directly toward him, I resolutely answered, "I never change my mind."

He walked out without saying a word.

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I consider this as a failure in my life under this awful regime. But it is better be physically destroyed by this organization rather than witnessing the destruction of my country, my vision, my research pride (6).

After his meeting with Lê Duẩn, Prof. Nghiêm Thấm lived a worried and abnormal life, as if he was expecting something bad to happen to him. But suddenly, he was again invited to another meeting. The invitation came from the Minister of Culture of the communist regime Nguyễn Văn Hiếu who was accompanied by Prof. Phạm Huy Thông, the director of the Archeological Institute and a few other ministers. The meeting took place at Hữu Nghị Hotel over a period of three to four days. He was driven back and forth in a Mercedes. The food was fantastic. The goal of the meeting was to prepare for the archeological meeting to be held in Moscow. They asked Prof. Nghiêm Thấm to contribute documents and ideas; they said that he might be invited to be part of the delegation.

In response, Prof. Nghiêm Thấm decided once for all not to contribute any idea other than to respect the impartiality of archeological documents. He also declined the invitation to participate in the delegation to Moscow because he “had many adverse ideas that could be detrimental to the convention. (7)

Facing Prof. Nghiêm Thấm’s resolute decision, the director told him, “It is up to you. You are not frank enough.” Prof. Nghiêm Thấm told Fr. Vũ Đình Trác, “That sentence struck me like a condemnation. From that time onward, I no longer wanted to live. Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung told me that my attitude was not good. They will consider us like their opponents. It would be better to be flexible with them” (8).

The interaction between Prof. Nghiêm Thấm and the communists was also documented by Prof. Đỗ Khánh Hoan who confirmed in an email he sent to me on February 2, 2013. He wrote, “...In my many meetings with him [Prof. Nghiêm Thấm], he only said, ‘They want to “touch” me, but I don’t want it. I feel icky and uneasy to have relationship with them. It is a disaster not a favor, Hoan. I just want them to come and ask for the keys of the institute and I will tell them...bye, bye.’

In early November 1979, Prof. Nghiêm Thấm appeared to be pessimistic and dispirited; at times, he would tell Fr. Vũ Đình Trác that he would like to become a Catholic, to hide under God’s shadow and be protected by Him.

The specter of death began to obsess Prof. Nghiêm Thấm day by day. Although he sympathized with his friend’s sadness, Fr. Vũ Đình Trác did not know how to help him. As he had to depart to Cần Thơ to teach Chinese medicine, he sadly bade good-bye to his friend and told him, “Our future under the communist regime is just like that.”

After a few weeks of teaching in Southwest Vietnam, Father Vũ Đình Trác returned to Saigon and visited Prof. Lê Tôn Nghiêm (former priest, professor of Philosophy) who told him that Prof. Nghiêm Thấm had been murdered two weeks earlier, toward the end of November 1979. According to Fr. Vũ Đình Trác, the event occurred in broad daylight at around 11 a.m. Two strangers swung the door open and threatening Prof. Nghiêm Thấm with their guns they ordered him to hand over to them the antique ax. Once in possession of the ax, one of them struck the professor’s head three times with the ax and escaped with it. Prof. Nghiêm Thấm laid dead in a pool of blood. Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung was not home that day, although her niece surreptitiously witnessed the whole tragedy behind a door. After the event, she ran away looking for Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung who contacted the police. The latter came to make the report and secured the professor’s library.

Mrs. Ngô Thị Dung took care of Prof. Nghiêm Thấm’s funeral. And a few colleagues led the procession to the cemetery. After the ceremony, a few close colleagues sat down to remember Prof. Nghiêm Thấm. According to them, he had expressed his worries and skepticism to six confidants ten days before the murder. Prof. Lê Tôn Nghiêm and Prof. NTN (could not guess the name of this person) asked them to raise their glasses while Prof. NTN grandiosely eulogized Prof. Nghiêm Thấm:

*Nghiêm Thấm! Nghiêm Thấm!
As the exquisite flower of Giang Son
You have departed from this world with a lot of resentment
If you could be appeased, please come back and witness
The respect and trust
of your colleagues under the sky of South Vietnam.
Please be the wind that sweeps clean the fiendish gang
the rain that soothes the country*

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*the sun that gives bright light to motherland
the moon that spreads peace.*

(Bạch Diên Thư Sinh)

NOTES

1. Huy Đức. *The Winning Side*. Vol. 1, Part 1: South Vietnam, chapter VI: Escaping by Sea. Bodoilambao.wordpress.com.
2. Nghiemchungtam.wordpress.com
3. email by Prof. Đỗ Khánh Hoan on 02/02/2013.
4. per phone conversation with prof. Đỗ Khánh Hoan on January 8 and 9, 2013.
5. Vũ Đình Trác. *Rừng Xanh Ngục Đỏ*. 1986, p. 253.
6. Ibid, 254-256.
7. Ibid, 256.
8. Ibid, 257.

USA 2017

DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST FORMOSA: MARCH 5, 2017

Throughout Vietnam and around the world, Vietnamese demonstrated against Formosa, the Taiwanese steel plant in the Vinh area, North Vietnam, which dumped toxic materials in the South China Sea causing a severe maritime ecologic disaster in 2016 and against the communist government that protected the Taiwanese interests by beating and jailing the protesters during the last 11 months.

The worldwide March 5, 2007 demonstration was organized by Fr. Nguyen Van Ly, who had previously been jailed by the Hanoi communist government for opposing the communists.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jc7f43vc5o> (Fr. Nguyen Van Ly)

<http://danlambaovn.blogspot.com/2017/03/tong-bieu-tinh-ngay-532017.html>

<https://youtu.be/83W9ltxaPow> (Saigon)

<https://youtu.be/83W9ltxaPow> (Nghe An)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j52gdRIOJB0>



Taiwan



California (North)

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USA 2017...



Ha Tinh



Saigon



As a follow-up to the March 5 demonstrations, Saigon people demonstrated again on March 14, 2017.

<http://www.vietpressusa.us/2017/03/saigon-ca-nghin-gioi-tre-bat-ngo-xuong.html>

EU PRESSES VIETNAM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

<http://www.voanews.com/a/eu-presSES-vietnam-on-human-rights/3744840.html>

Vietnam is coming under pressure from lawmakers in Europe to improve its human rights record before ratification of an EU free trade deal that the Communist government prizes after the loss of a major U.S.-led agreement.

European Parliament members voiced concerns in late February about Vietnam as its Subcommittee on Human Rights traveled to the Southeast Asian country. The committee recommended more debate in Vietnam on political rights and freedom of expression and religion.

The deal, signed in December 2015 and due to take effect next year, must pass the European Parliament as well as the legislatures of the member countries. When lawmakers in Belgium deliberated the agreement in January, a number raised questions about Vietnam's socio-economic situation.



FILE - Protesters hold candles during a mass prayer for political dissident Le Quoc Quan at Thai Ha church in Hanoi June 30, 2013.

Vietnam was a member of the Trans Pacific Partnership or TPP, which would have dropped import tariffs in Japan and the United States. The deal effectively died after U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew the United States in January. EU-Vietnam trade comes to about \$40.1 billion per year. Vietnam counts the European Union, with a market of about 500 million people, as its No. 3 trading partner after China and the United States. Vietnamese authorities harass and imprison bloggers and political activists as well, American advocacy group Human Rights Watch says. Workers cannot form their own unions, it says, while farmers are losing land to development projects.

AMANDA NGUYEN, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF "RISE"

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/30-under-30-honoree-amanda-nguyen-fighting-sexual-assault-survivors-n715661>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/23/sexual-assault-survivors-rape-kits-us-senate-bill-white-house>

In what they hope will become a bipartisan bright spot, Democrats in the Senate introduced a sweeping new bill to guarantee and standardize certain rights for people who have experienced sexual assault.

The bill is the latest attempt to fix a system for prosecuting sex crimes that many public figures agree is broken. But where many bills focus on expanding resources for law enforcement, this is the first national proposal to focus so directly on improving legal protections for those who are sexually assaulted. And the bill has a unique driving force behind it: Amanda Nguyen, a 24-year-old State Department employee and in training to be an astronaut who helped craft the bill. Nguyen became an activist because of her own enormous struggles with a difficult legal system that nearly destroyed her rape kit. "Basically, I had to pen my own rights into existence," she said in a recent interview.



The Sexual Assault Survivors' Rights Act draws from legal rights that already exist in patchwork form in different states across the country. It requires steps to ensure that people who have been sexually assaulted have access to a trained sexual assault counselor and comprehensive information about victims' legal options. For individuals who submit to a rape kit, the bill would give them the right to know the location of the evidence, whether the kit has been tested, and the test results.

The bill guarantees these rights whether or not the person reports the crime to law enforcement or agrees to press charges. It also creates a task force to examine how well the changes are implemented, to include representatives from diverse communities and advocacy backgrounds.

"Too many survivors feel like the entire system has failed them," said Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, the bill's primary sponsor. "We need a basic set of rights for people who are sexually assaulted."

THE LAST OF THE ANNAMESE: TOM GLENN

A novel that transcends the limitations of "war fiction," Tom Glenn's *Last of the Annamese* is a book that examines the choices forced upon those who fight wars, those who flee them, and those who survive them.

The rare novel that eloquently describes the burden of loss, *Last of the Annamese* evokes a haunting portrait of the lives of those trapped in Saigon in April 1975 as the city, and surrounding country, fell to North Vietnamese forces. Drawing on his own experiences in the war, Tom Glenn tells the tale of Chuck Griffin, a retired Marine doing intelligence work for the United States in Vietnam; his friend, Thanh, an incorruptible South Vietnamese Marine colonel; and Tuyet, the regal woman whom both men love. As the grim fate of South Vietnam becomes more apparent, and the flight from Saigon begins, Tuyet must make a somber choice to determine the fate of her son Thu, herself, and those she loves. During the fall of Saigon as the North Vietnamese overwhelm the South, Tom Glenn paints a vivid portrait of the high drama surrounding the end of a war, end of a city, and end of a people. Reaching its harrowing conclusion during the real Operation Frequent Wind, a refugee rescue effort approved by President Gerald Ford, *Last of the Annamese* offers a glimpse at a handful of people caught in an epic conflagration that was one of modern history's darkest chapters.

