



**A COUNTRY  
STAYS ALIVE  
WHEN ITS CUL-  
TURE IS ALIVE.  
HOPE NEVER  
DIES IN THE  
INDOMITABLE  
VIETNAMESE  
MIND**

- **SACEI Newsletter** updates you on the latest news about Vietnamese-America.
- It serves as a **LINK** between **SACEI** members and those who are interested in the Vietnamese or Vietnamese-American culture.

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## **SAIGON ARTS, CULTURE & EDUCATION INSTITUTE**



**To Research, Document & Promote Vietnamese-American Culture**

**NEWSLETTER # 103**

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## **Conference on Vietnam - In the Year 1963**

This is Volume one of this series, titled Our Pre-Sponse--A Supplement to the TTU-NARA Conference on Vietnam-- In the Year 1963. It is the first volume in a planned series looking at key events during the Second Indochina War. Indochina In the Year of the Dragon--1964, the second volume, is now available through Amazon. 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.

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—  
**A SUPPLEMENT TO  
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1963**  
By  
**Vietnam Veterans  
to Correct the Myths**

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## **Remembering ARVN Veterans**

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

More than four decades after the war ended, many veterans are still here with us: the youngest of them would be sixty today. If the above link to Youtube depicts their military training, struggles, and ordeal during the war, the photos below display their faces and physical conditions today in Vietnam. They are the neglected ones because the southern Vietnamese government is no longer there to support them. Being on the losing side of the war, they not only did not receive any material support from the communist government during the last four decades, but they also continued to be harassed by the communist government through strict regulations.

Their physical scars visible to the naked eyes are there for everyone to see: single, double, triple, quadruple amputees can be seen in the crowded, low income quarters of the cities. Their psychological scars are barely hidden under the surface of the skin. Their children have to properly mention in their files that they are former ARVN soldiers' children, which means that they cannot go to public colleges or get a government job. Due to lack of education and training, they are forever kept impoverished, generation after generation. This vicious cycle is designed to keep generations of southern Vietnamese poorer and poorer while communist officials and their children grow richer and richer. This continuing discrimination suggests how cruel the communist government

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### Remembering ARVN Veterans...

could be: it will kill you sooner or later until there is no more trace of the Vietnamese of the old South Vietnam. They either have moved abroad or pass away.

In the absence of government support, ARVN soldiers have survived on their own or with the help of their families and friends. The lucky ones at least get wheelchairs to help them move around, the unlucky ones try to survive as best as they can. This double-amputee moves around with the help of stools, which he advances or backtracks with his two hands. In the land of Ho Chi Minh, he is physically less than a man: he is half-a-man for the last four decades because he stands as tall as other people's navels. This is the true tragedy of the former South Vietnamese society.

The double-forearm amputee in the third photo drinks from a glass which he raises to his mouth with the stump of his left forearm. Despite his disabilities, he has to raise sheep for a living. They are kept in a stall on the side of his house, which he feeds with grass cut by his wife who cannot go very far because she is old too. His children are supporting him as much as they can, because they too are ostracized by the Hanoi government and cannot get a decent job. They live in a house, the walls of which are made of straw with three generations under the same roof. The floor is most likely an earthen floor.

We would like to pay tribute to these former ARVN and southern people who fought against the communists to preserve their freedom and now are poor and disabled under a communist regime.

It has been said that in the land of Ho Chi Minh, if they could, even the **lampposts** would walk away.



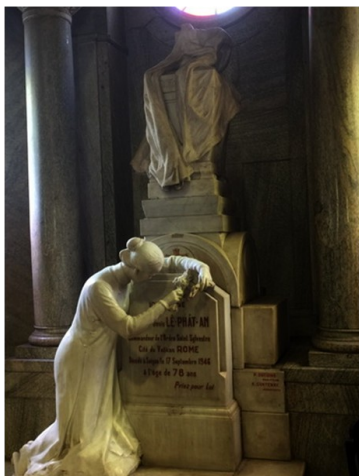
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ulhnQWYg2w&feature=youtu.be>





## The Love Story Behind the Two Statues of the Richest Son of the South

**Two statues, a wife mourning in front of her husband's tomb, and a husband mourning in front of his wife's tomb.**



In both aisles of the Hạnh Thông Tây Church in Gò Vấp, Saigon stand two magnificently crafted statues that look very much alive.

If one walks in from the entrance, on the left side is the statue of a kneeling woman with arms around the headstone and hands holding flowers. Without a hat, her hair are seen twisted in chignon and her head is slightly tilted toward the tomb behind.

Dressed in a simple ao dai, she wears a jade pendant around her neck, and a pair of comfort shoes on her feet.

The statue that looks so much alive strikes me with surprise.

"Do you know who she is?" asked an old man behind me.

"She is Mrs. Trần Thị Thờ, the wife of Mr. Lê Phát An, the man resting in the tomb behind."

From there looking across the other aisle, is the statue of a kneeling man dressed in an ao dai with a turban around his head.

In front of his knees lays a bouquet of flowers. His moustache and eyebrows are dense. His fingers are woven together in a praying mode. With respect, he looks at the headstone as if to whisper something.



The man is Mr. Lê Phát An and resting in the tomb is his wife, Mrs. Trần Thị Thờ. The two statues were carved from white marble.

The sculptors of the statues and tombs were two well-known French architects and sculptors: A. Contenay and Paul Ducuing. Through their sculptures, they tried to characterize the South Vietnamese of Mr. and Mrs. Lê Phát An.

The two statues, wife praying in front of husband's tomb and husband praying in front of wife's tomb express the deep emotions these two people had for each other when they were alive.

Through the writing on the headstone, one could tell that the husband was four years older than his wife but died fourteen years after her death.

### Marrying her niece to the king

Born from the richest family in Indochina, Mr. Lê Phát An (1868-1946) was a well-known tycoon of the 1930-1940 decade in South Vietnam. His father was Lê Phát Đạt aka Huyện Sĩ, the first of the four richest men named in the sentence "First Sĩ, second Phương, third Xường, fourth Bưởi."

Mr. Huyện Sĩ brought his children up strictly. Whether male or female, they were smart, intelligent, and knew how to improve the family business's strength.

Mr. Lê Phát An was sent to France to be educated. On his return, he, his sister Lê Thị Bính and her husband moved to Dalat to open a plantation of tea and coffee. His sister had a beautiful and talented daughter.

According to many still existing documents, while in Dalat, he received an invitation from the then mayor of Dalat, Mr. Darle. The latter had invited him and his niece to a special reception at the Hotel Palace where Bảo Đại, the King of Vietnam was also invited. Although Mr. An's niece, Nguyễn Hữu Thị Lan, did not want to go to the reception, he insisted and she grudgingly accepted. She dressed up simply in a black silken dress for the occasion.

According to formalities, she came and present herself to the king who greeted her. At that moment, a tango song was played and the king asked her to dance. From that time onward, their relationship blossomed and by 1934, Nguyễn Hữu Thị Lan became Queen Nam Phương.



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**Love Story...**

On the wedding day, the queen's uncle, Mr. An gave her one million Indochinese piasters, which are equivalent to today's twenty million dollars.

Later, Bảo Đại bestowed to Mr. An the title of An Định Vương, the only and the noblest title the royalty had ever given to a lay person of the South.

Although he held a royal title, Mr. An remained at heart a landowner who was given by his father a large piece of land in Gò Vấp to develop and manage.

The region prospered rapidly under his able leadership. His decisions were heartily approved by the local people. Because of his title, he encountered good will while trying to improve the well-being of the residents.

In 1921, he used to own money to ask the contractors Baader and Lamorte to build the Hạnh Thông Tây Church, which took three years to complete. Mrs. Trần Thị Thơ passed away on January 18, 1932, fourteen years before Mr. Lê Phát An did.

To honor this couple for building the church, they were allowed to be interred right inside the church along with the exquisite sculptures.

Abstracted from the History of the Nguyen monarchy  
Translated by SACEI.

## Demonstrations Against FORMOSA

On April 9, 2017, people in Ha Tinh, North Vietnam demonstrated again against Formosa, the Taiwanese plant that discharged toxic materials into the South China Sea causing an ecologic disaster. This time, they brought with them the yellow South Vietnamese flag, which was forbidden in Vietnam since the fall of Saigon 42 years ago.

This fact could be seen from commentators inside and outside Vietnam as a weakening of the stranglehold of the Hanoi communist regime on the people of Vietnam. Time will tell whether this will cause any reaction from the government.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUgN3uAnAoU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tMbseiDQhs>



## Dr. David Dao or Day Duy Anh

Dao, who refused to "voluntarily" give up his seat upon the orders of the airline staff, was violently deplaned off flight United Express flight UA3411 from Chicago to Louisville [on April 13, 2017 during which he suffered a concussion, a broken nose, and lost two front teeth.]

To add insult to the bloody injury the Vietnamese American suffered, the airline also failed to disembark his bags from the plane. According to Dao's lawyer, United then sent the luggage to Kentucky, far from the hospital he was admitted to in Chicago.

The luggage traveled from Chicago to Louisville before they were sent to the Daos' medical practice in Elizabethtown, and then finally routed to their home. So, not only was Dr. Dao assaulted, but he and his wife didn't even have their luggage while in Chicago.

"Instead, the airline flew their luggage to Louisville, Kentucky. And instead of delivering it to their home, they sent it to

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their medical practice office.”

<http://nextshark.com/what-united-did-with-david-daos-luggage/>

United Airlines, health care, and a system designed to privilege the powerful

<http://medicinesocialjustice.blogspot.com/>

**Dr. David Dao...**

Dr. Dao is also a singer who writes traditional Vietnamese music. Below are two his most famous songs, he once presented with

singers Hoang Oanh and Huong Lan.



Cầu tre quê hương - Hương Lan, Đào Duy Anh

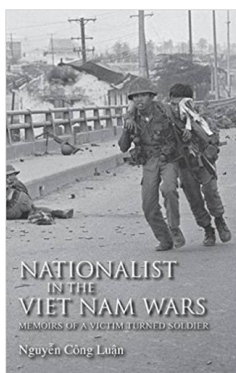
<https://youtu.be/6CwPARjH6lc>



Tát Nước Đầu Đình, Đào Duy Anh, Hoàng Oanh

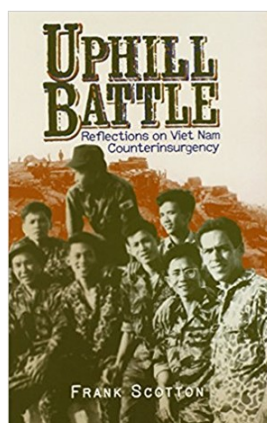
<http://www.sbtn.tv/tat-nuoc-dau-dinh-dao-duy-anh/>

## Nationalist in the Vietnam Wars: Nguyen Cong Luan



This extraordinary memoir tells the story of one man's experience of the wars of Viet Nam from the time he was old enough to be aware of war in the 1940s until his departure for America 15 years after the collapse of South Viet Nam in 1975. Nguyen Cong Luan was born and raised in small villages near Ha Noi. He grew up knowing war at the hands of the Japanese, the French, and the Viet Minh. Living with wars of conquest, colonialism, and revolution led him finally to move south and take up the cause of the Republic of Viet Nam, exchanging a life of victimhood for one of a soldier. His stories of village life in the north are every bit as compelling as his stories of combat and the tragedies of war. This honest and impassioned account is filled with the everyday heroism of the common people of his generation.

## Uphill Battle: Reflections on Vietnam Counterinsurgency: Frank Scotton



When the Viet Nam War ended, with the United States of America defeated, many wondered how a military powerhouse lost to a “raggedy--ass, little fourth--rate country,” as President Lyndon Johnson called North Viet Nam. Frank Scotton knew why. A young Foreign Service Officer assigned to Viet Nam in 1962, Scotton drove roads others avoided, walked trails alone, and spent nights in remote hamlets. Learning the Vietnamese language, carrying a carbine, and living out of a rucksack, he proved that small teams, correctly trained and led, could compete with communist units. In 1964, Scotton organized mobile platoons to emphasize political aspects of the conflict. Those special teams, adopted by the CIA, became models for the national pacification program. He prepared units in some provinces at the request of General Westmoreland, and in 1965 and 1966 worked with Special Forces.