



**A COUNTRY  
STAYS ALIVE  
WHEN ITS  
CULTURE 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 # 69

JULY 2014

## Vietnam, China, and the Paracels

A.

Throughout history, Vietnam has difficulty dissociating itself from its huge and powerful Chinese neighbor, whom it imitates and values. When China calls itself the Greater Dragon, Vietnam wants to be known as the Smaller Dragon. The Hue Imperial Citadel is a replica on a smaller scale and grandeur than the Chinese Forbidden City. The Vietnamese use the Chinese alphabet to transcribe its vernacular language or *nom* up to the early twentieth century, before switching to the present-day Vietnamese *quoc ngu*. The Vietnamese *Tet* corresponds to the Chinese lunar New Year.

Vietnam, however, knows that being a vassal is better than being assimilated by its giant neighbor having been in that latter situation at least twice from 111 BC to 939 AD and 1407 to 1428 AD. Vietnamese history is, therefore, a constant tug of war between the past or the future, assimilation by or freedom from the Chinese, belonging to the Chinese world or to the Southeast Asian community/Free World.

When the Vietnamese moved southward in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to present-day South Vietnam to give themselves some breathing room and distance themselves from the Chinese, they inadvertently created two societies, *dang trong* or South Vietnam (Saigon) and *dang ngoai* or North Vietnam (Hanoi). Since these two early societies fought each other for five decades (1627-1675), this period fittingly should be called the *First Vietnam War* ([www.sacei07.org/Newsletter61.pdf](http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter61.pdf)). *Dang ngoai* and *dang trong* evolved separately during these two centuries of confrontation (1627-1800) having no communication with each other. Even at that time, one could see that the north was Chinese-centric while Saigon was Free World centric and had turned away from the Chinese.

This was followed by the *Second Vietnam War* (1773-1800), which ended with Nguyen Anh/Gia Long reuniting the two societies in 1802. Although Vietnam could have become a modern state akin to the Japanese Meiji state, Nguyen Anh instead brought it backward toward the old Chinese world by reestablishing a Chinese-like society and culture, building the Hue Imperial Citadel, and turning his eyes away from modernity. Due to his short sightedness, Nguyen Anh's empire crumbled six decades later in 1867 under the assault of 2,000 French soldiers who took over the whole Vietnam and turned it into a French colony. (Vo, Nghia. *Saigon. A History*, 2011: 40-58)

B.

Following the Second World War, the communists took over North Vietnam with the help of communist China and the Soviet Union. The 1954 Geneva Accords re-divided Vietnam into communist North Vietnam (Hanoi) ruled by Ho Chi Minh and the Republic of Vietnam under Ngo Dinh Diem who turned over to the U.S. for help to defend South Vietnam ([www.sacei07.org/Newsletter60.pdf](http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter60.pdf)). North (Hanoi) and South (Saigon) then waged the *Fourth Vietnam War* (1954-1975) to decide the future of Vietnam: should Vietnam follow a Free western democracy (South) or a communist ideology (North)?

Ho Chi Minh adopted Maoist revolutionary tactics, tools, and material support to subjugate and control northerners by unleashing a reign of terror and oppression through the Land Reform and the Literary 100 Flower-Movement (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter54.pdf>) during which tens of thousands people died. Children ended up accusing and reporting their parents, sisters accusing brothers, husbands accusing wives, and so on in order to survive.

C.

The Paracel and Spratley Islands in the South China Sea have belonged to Vietnam for centuries. Vietnamese fishermen went fishing there and harvesting the islands' guano to fertilize their lands. After WWII, the French returned control of the islands to the South Vietnamese.

Ho Chi Minh and the CPV (communist Party of Vietnam) beholden to Chinese offered the Paracels to China. Pham Van Dong, Hanoi's Prime Minister in 1958 officially gave away the Paracels to the Chinese. [http://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%B4ng\\_h%C3%A0m\\_n%C4%83m\\_1958\\_c%E1%BB%A7a\\_Th%E1%BB%A7\\_t%C6%B0%E1%BB%82](http://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%B4ng_h%C3%A0m_n%C4%83m_1958_c%E1%BB%A7a_Th%E1%BB%A7_t%C6%B0%E1%BB%82)

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9Bng\_Ph%E1%BA%A1m\_V%C4%83n\_%C4%90%E1%BB%93ng

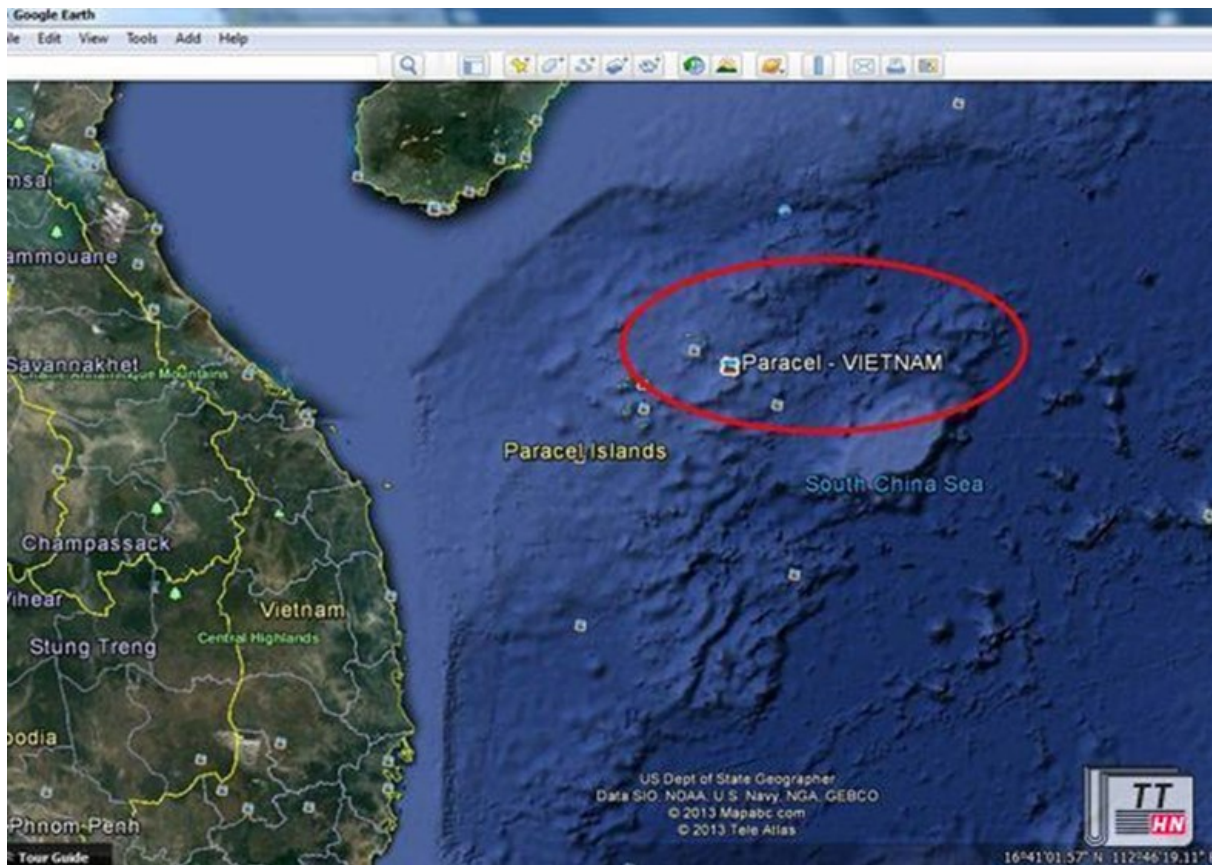
South Vietnam, on the other hand, continued to lay claim on the Paracel and Spratley Islands. In 1974, Saigon sent its Navy to fight against Chinese Navy in the Paracel area. This was known as the Battle of the Paracel Islands where Saigon lost a battleship and its captain along with the control of the islands (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter65.pdf>).

D.

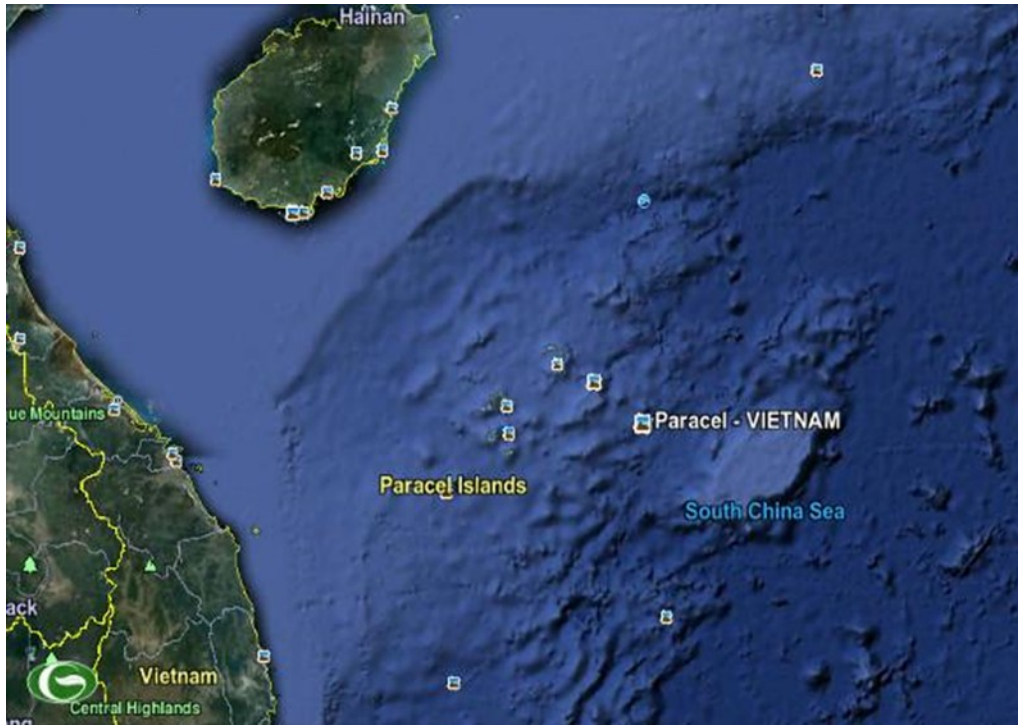
The Vietnam War ended in 1975 with Hanoi conquering Saigon (A Conquest Through the Barrel of A Gun (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter46.pdf>) and forcing 2 million South Vietnamese to escape to western countries. Hanoi then unleashed a reign of terror turning South Vietnam into a land of Boat People (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter67.pdf>) and a land of concentration camps (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter66.pdf>) in an attempt to eradicate the southerners. During and after the war, Hanoi committed numerous crimes against humanity and the Vietnamese people (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter53.pdf>). However, people continue to rebel against the Hanoi communist government in one way or another (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter56.pdf>) and All Men Are Created Equal (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter50.pdf>).

E.

Beholden to the Chinese to the point of being their puppet, Hanoi continued to cede Vietnamese lands to the Chinese and to give them special privileges. It never raised its voice about the Chinese occupying the Paracels and Spratleys. When people demonstrated in Vietnam against the Chinese, they were locked up (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter41.pdf> Singer Nguyen Khang). Only the overseas Vietnamese (<http://www.sacei07.org/Newsletter51.pdf>: The Republic of the Little Saigons) freely and continuously demonstrated against the Chinese for interfering into Vietnamese affairs and taking over the Paracels. When Google Earth erred in listing the islands as belonging to the Chinese, the overseas Vietnamese sent maps and documentations to Google proving to the contrary. On Mar 21, 2014, Google corrected its error by listing the islands as being part of Vietnam. Hanoi never raised its fingers against the Chinese.



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Google Earth đã thể hiện Quần đảo Hoàng Sa của Việt Nam

## Anti-China riots in Vietnam

Siting of Chinese oil rig in disputed waters sparks violence



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F.

When on May 1, 2014 in an expansionist move and to satisfy its thirst of oil, the Chinese brought its Hai Yang Shi You (HYSY 981) oil rig within the Vietnamese continental shelf and its exclusive continental shelves, the overseas Vietnamese community demonstrated while Vietnamese rioted in Vietnam burning down Taiwanese and some Chinese factories in Vietnam. Hanoi quickly muzzled all these demonstrations.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/chinas-big-strategic-mistake-the-south-china-sea-10477>

"China on May 1 moved its giant indigenous oil rig, Hai Yang Shi You (HYSY) 981, southward in the South China Sea (SCS). The new location, only 120 miles from Vietnam's shore, is well within Vietnam's continental shelf and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). To support and protect this oil drilling structure, China dispatched over 80 vessels, a number that continues to rise. Foreign ships are warned to stay away from the rig for security and safety.

This move exhibits a new and dangerous escalation by China."

G.

In response, the Chinese simply showed the official Pham Van Dong missive to claim the Paracels are theirs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSITU8BfqQ>

H.

"In a text message to millions of people on May 15, 2014 Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said the Ministry of Public Security and provincial governments had been ordered to *"conduct concerted and determined measures not to allow illegal protests that cause security and social order disturbances."*

All protests are technically illegal in Vietnam.

Nationalist and dissident groups, which are also demanding basic democratic reforms that challenge Vietnam's Communist Party, have called for large protests in front of the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi and in Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam."

I.

After weeks of tension around the Paracels during which Chinese ships rammed Vietnamese ships to prevent them from approaching the oil rig, the situation seems to have cooled down a bit.

Recently China by opting to buy billions of dollars of oil from Russia has placed the latter on its side. Caught off guard by the loss of its Russian partner, Hanoi is seeking partnership with and help from the Philippines, Japan, and the U.S., which have a difficult time supporting an oppressive and corrupt regime, although moving Vietnam away from the Chinese/Russian axis would be a nice play. Hanoi also has some internal problem with one group siding with the Chinese and the other turning pro-western. It also has difficulty explaining to its people its betrayal to the fatherland by signing away the Paracels to the Chinese in 1958.

Hanoi, on the other hand, besides courting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), is mulling if things get worse, not to defeat China, but to inflict enough material damage and psychological instability to cause foreign investments to flee the country.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/vietnam-mulling-new-strategies-to-deter-china/>

To neutralize the effect of the Pham Van Dong's missive, two solutions have been suggested:

1. The CPV has to dissolve itself and turn over the government to a non-communist government or "South Vietnamese" government because the latter has NEVER relinquished its rights to the Paracels and Spratleys.
2. If the CPV does not intend to dissolve itself, the people would have to find a way to replace it.

As negotiations are underway, the Chinese have moved their HYSY 981 oil rig away from the disputed area, but sent 4 new oil rigs to the Paracels to continue its oil exploration. They are also seen enlarging certain islands by dumping sand on them and improving fortifications there. They seem to tell everyone they are there to stay. Confrontations, therefore, are likely to arise at any time.

The history of the Chinese oil rig is another example of the CPV betraying the fatherland and giving away Vietnamese land to foreigners.



## Comment on Fox Programs of 16 June 2014

To: [oreilly@foxnews.com](mailto:oreilly@foxnews.com)

Dear Mr. O'Reilly:

During your commentary on last evening's "O'Reilly Factor" broadcast you said this: "The South Vietnamese did not fight hard enough for their freedom. So they lost it."

That statement is incorrect, and I thought you would like to know why. After the United States withdrew the last of its forces from Vietnam pursuant to signing of the Paris Accords in early 1973, the South Vietnamese fought on alone.

To induce the South Vietnamese to agree to the terms of that agreement, viewed by them as fatally flawed in that it allowed the North Vietnamese to retain large forces in the South, President Nixon told President Thieu that, if North Vietnam violated the terms of the agreement and resumed its aggression against the South, the United States would intervene militarily to punish that behavior. And, said Nixon, if renewed fighting broke out, the United States would replace on a one-for-one basis South Vietnamese losses of major combat systems (tanks, artillery pieces, and so on), as was permitted by the Paris Accords. And finally, said Nixon, the United States would continue robust financial support for South Vietnam. In the event, the United States defaulted on all three of those promises. Meanwhile North Vietnam was receiving unprecedented levels of support from its patrons, the Soviet Union and China. From January to September 1973, the nine months following the Paris Accords, said a 1994 history published in Hanoi, the quantity of supplies shipped from North Vietnam to its forces in the South was four times that shipped in the entire previous year. Even so that was minuscule compared to what was sent south from the beginning of 1974 until the end of the war in April 1975, a total during those sixteen months, reported the Communists, that was 1.6 times the amount delivered to the various battlefields during the preceding thirteen years.

If the South Vietnamese had shunned the Paris agreement, it was certain not only that the United States would have settled without them, but also that the U.S. Congress would then have moved swiftly to cut off further aid to South Vietnam. If, on the other hand, the South Vietnamese went along with the agreement, hoping thereby to continue receiving American aid, they would be forced to accept an outcome in which North Vietnamese troops remained menacingly within their borders. With mortal foreboding, the South Vietnamese chose the latter course, only to find—dismayingly—that they soon had the worst of both, NVA forces ensconced in the south and American support cut off.

(It is important to recall that neither side, the North nor the South, had an indigenous capacity to equip and supply their military forces. Thus if one side, the North, continued to receive the necessary wherewithal from its patrons, while the South was cut off by their supporters, the outcome was already decided.)

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Former Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird explained the consequences. For two years after signing the Paris Accords, he wrote, "South Vietnam held its own courageously and respectably against a better-bankrolled enemy. Peace talks continued between the North and the South until the day in 1975 when Congress cut off U.S. funding. The Communists walked out of the talks and never returned. Without U.S. funding, South Vietnam was quickly overrun. We saved a mere \$257 million a year and in the process doomed South Vietnam, which had been ably fighting the war without our troops since 1973."

Many Americans would not like hearing it said that the totalitarian states of China and the Soviet Union had proven to be better and more faithful allies than the democratic United States, but that was in fact the case.

Until the progressive and draconian reductions in assistance began to have drastic effects, the South Vietnamese had fought valiantly. In the two years after the January 1973 signing of the Paris Accords, South Vietnamese forces suffered more than 59,000 killed in action, more in that brief period than the Americans had lost in over a decade of war. Considering that such losses were inflicted on a population perhaps a tenth the size of America's, it is clear how devastating they must have been, and the intensity of the combat that produced them.

Near the end Tom Polgar, then serving as CIA's Chief of Station, Saigon, cabled a succinct assessment of the deteriorating situation. "Ultimate outcome hardly in doubt," he reported, "because South Vietnam cannot survive without U.S. military aid as long as North Vietnam's war-making capacity is unimpaired and supported by Soviet Union and China." Should you wish, I would be glad to send you my published analysis from which these comments are drawn and which includes the relevant documentation. In that case, please specify the postal mailing address I should use.

Sincerely, Lewis Sorley

Dr. Lewis Sorley  
9429 Garden Court  
Potomac, MD 20854  
(301) 299-3168 (H)  
(240) 441-3622 (C)

## Vietnam Books of Interest Lewis Sorley's Recommendations

Braestrup, Peter. "Big Story" (Novato: Presidio, 1994). Abridged and up-dated edition of the original two-volume work. Examines and documents how media coverage of the enemy's 1968 Tet Offensive conveyed an entirely wrong message to the American people and their government.

Bui Tin. "Following Ho Chi Minh: Memoirs of a North Vietnamese Colonel" (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995). An account by the officer who accepted the South Vietnamese surrender at Independence Palace on 30 April 1975 of his subsequent disillusionment with the communist regime and eventual defection to Paris.

Burkett, B.G. and Glenna Whitley. "Stolen Valor: How the Vietnam Generation Was Robbed of Its Heroes and Its History" (Dallas: Verity Press, 1998). A brilliant examination of bogus "veterans" and the damage they have done to the reputation of real Vietnam veterans, plus a documented account of those heroic real veterans.

Colby, William. "Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of America's Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam" (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989). An authoritative account of how the war in the villages was won, then eventually lost, as told by the head of U.S. pacification support and later Director of Central Intelligence.

Cook, John L. "The Advisor" (New York: Bantam, 1973). An unvarnished account of the toughest job in Vietnam by an officer who served as an advisor to the South Vietnamese.

Hofmann, George F. and Donn A. Starry, ed. "Camp Colt to Desert Storm: The History of U.S. Armored Forces" (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999). See the chapter by Lewis Sorley entitled "Adaptation and Impact: Mounted Combat in Vietnam."

Hunt, Ira A. Jr. "Losing Vietnam: How America Abandoned Southeast Asia" (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2013). An authoritative account by an officer who served 1974-1975 as Deputy Commander of USSAG, "MACV in exile" in Thailand. Documents in heartbreaking detail how relentlessly the U.S. Congress slashed the wherewithal the South Vietnamese needed to continue the fight.

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Larteguy, Jean. "The Centurions" (New York: Avon, 1961). A brilliant novel of French professional military officers in Indochina, metro-politan France, and then Algeria, with many insights into leadership, patriotism, and counter-guerrilla warfare.

Lewy, Guenter. "America in Vietnam" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). Based on unprecedented access for an independent scholar to classified documents on the war, this excellent account does much to set the record straight on how the war was fought and why it ended as it did. Wrote Professor Lewy in his "Preface": "Mythology, half-truth and falsehood concerning events in Vietnam abound and, unless corrected, will enter the textbooks for the mis-education of our children." In this book he does yeoman service in providing such correction on a wide range of issues.

Moore, Lt. Gen. Harold G. and Joseph L. Galloway. "We Were Soldiers Once...and Young" (New York: Random House, 1992). An account by a battalion commander in the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and an accompanying reporter of battles in the Ia Drang Valley in autumn 1965. Great combat accounts plus insights into the conclusions drawn from these encounters by General Westmoreland and others.

Moyar, Mark. "Phoenix and the Birds of Prey" (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997). The only soundly researched and non-ideological account of the campaign to rid South Vietnam's rural hamlets and villages of the Viet Cong infrastructure that, through terrorism and coercion, had kept the people under communist domination.

Moyar, Mark. "Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965" (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). A fair-minded and brilliantly researched account of the early days of the war and the regime of Ngo Dinh Diem.

Oberdorfer, Don. "Tet!" (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971). Still the definitive account of the enemy's 1968 Tet Offensive and allied reaction to it.

Pham, Quang. "A Sense of Duty" (New York: Ballantine Books, 2005). Beautifully written parallel accounts of how Quang Pham, his mother, and two sisters began a new life in America after the fall of Vietnam while Quang's father struggled to survive long years of captivity in communist so-called "reeducation" camps.

Pike, Douglas. "PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam" (Novato: Presidio, 1986). The late Douglas Pike, a Foreign Service Officer and scholar who served in Saigon for a number of years, provides excellent insights into enemy forces, methods and ideology. See also his "Viet Cong" (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966).

Rochester, Stuart I. and Frederick Kiley. "Honor Bound" (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999). An authoritative (and exhaustive) account of Americans who became prisoners of the North Vietnamese.

Sorley, Lewis. "A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam" (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999). Demonstrates how the war during the latter years of American involvement, with General Abrams in command and working closely with Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and William Colby, differed in almost every respect from the approach taken earlier when General Westmoreland commanded, and how the more availing approach produced a different outcome.

Sorley, Lewis. "Honorable Warrior: General Harold K. Johnson and the Ethics of Command" (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998). See especially with regard to General Johnson's misgivings about how the war was being conducted under General Westmoreland, and then about the PROVN Study on how the war should be fought commissioned by General Johnson and subsequently implemented by General Creighton Abrams when he succeeded Westmoreland in command in Vietnam.

Sorley, Lewis, ed. "Vietnam Chronicles: The Abrams Tapes, 1968-1972" (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2004). Annotated excerpts of tape recordings made at MACV Headquarters during the years General Abrams was in command and featuring him, Ambassadors Bunker and Colby, and such visitors to Saigon as Melvin Laird, General Earle G. Wheeler, Admiral John McCain, and British counterinsurgency specialist Sir Robert Thompson. 900 pages.

Sorley, Lewis, ed. "The Vietnam War: An Assessment by South Vietnam's Generals" (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2010). In a series of insightful and candid monographs senior officers make an important contribution to entering the neglected South Vietnamese outlook into the historical record.

Sorley, Lewis. "Westmoreland: The General Who Lost Vietnam" (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011). Thoroughly documented and analytical account of Westmoreland's unavailing war of attrition, his complicity in Lyndon Johnson's deceptive "progress offensive," and his frequent departures from the truth when his perceived self-interests were at stake.

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Starry, General Donn A. "Armored Combat in Vietnam" (New York: Arno Press, 1980). Excellent account by an officer who commanded the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in combat, was the close-hold redeployment planner for General Abrams, and rose to four-star rank himself during the Army's rebuilding years following Vietnam.

Todd, Olivier. "Cruel April: The Fall of Saigon" (New York: Norton, 1990). An immensely sad, but beautifully poetic and sympathetic, account of the last month of the war, written by a French journalist who at first admired the enemy, then came to see them as "red fascists."

Veith, George. "Black April: The Fall of South Vietnam 1973-1975" (New York: Encounter Books, 2012.) A brilliantly researched account of South Vietnam's heroic and effective defense after withdrawal of United States forces until, undermined by the U.S. default on its commitment to continue providing robust materiel and financial support, the South was overwhelmed by communists receiving greatly increased support from their patron states. An effective counter to those who have falsely portrayed the South Vietnamese as unwilling or unable to fight for their freedom, and a tribute to their courage in doing so against insurmountable odds.

Webb, James. "Fields of Fire" (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1978). A powerful novel of Marines at war by an author who as a young officer was one of them.

## Brigadier General Viet Xuan Luong: The First Viet-Am US General

BG Viet Xuan Luong emigrated from Vietnam with his family to the United States in 1975 as a political refugee. He began his military career upon graduating from the University of Southern California.

His first assignment was with 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment at Fort Carson, Colorado, where he served as Rifle Platoon Leader, Anti-Tank Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, and Battalion Maintenance Officer. In 1993, Luong was assigned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina and served in the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, as the Battalion Assistant S-3 (Operations) and Commander of Alpha Company.

Luong attended the Command and General Staff College and then was assigned to the Southern European Task Force (SETAF). Luong served as SETAF G-3 Chief of Plans, and the Operations Officer and Executive Officer of 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade, in Vicenza, Italy. During his assignment at Southern European Task Force, Luong deployed to Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina on several occasions as part of the NATO Strategic Response Force.

In 2005, he assumed command of the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3d Brigade Combat Team, 82d Airborne Division. During this command, Luong deployed his battalion in September 2005 as the Division Ready Force 1, in support of Operation American Assist, the Hurricane Katrina Relief efforts in New Orleans, and Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08, in support of the War on Terror.

In February 2009, BG Luong assumed command of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team (Rakkasans), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). In January 2010, 3rd BCT deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11. Following BCT command, Luong attended Stanford University as a National Security Fellow and subsequently served as the Deputy Director, Pakistan Afghanistan Coordination Cell, J5, The Joint Staff.

BG Luong holds a degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Southern California and a Master of Military Arts and Science.

On May 20, 2014 U.S. Congress Luong appointed Luong Brigadier General of U.S. Army, becoming the first Vietnamese American to earn this honor.

[http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/one\\_item\\_and\\_teasers/nom\\_cmtent.htm](http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/one_item_and_teasers/nom_cmtent.htm)

**May 20, 14 P**

**N1718 Army**

**The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Army under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:**

Colonel Francis M. Beaudette, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Gary M. Brito, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Patrick W. Burden, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Paul T. Calvert, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Brian P. Cummings, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Jeffrey W. Drushal, to be Brigadier General

Colonel Paul Bontrager, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Scott E. Brower, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Joseph R. Calloway, to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Welton Chase, Jr., to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Edwin J. Deedrick, Jr., to be Brigadier General  
Colonel Rodney D. Fogg, to be Brigadier General

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Colonel Robin L. Fontes, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel David C. Hill, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Kenneth D. Hubbard, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Sean M. Jenkins, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Richard C. S. Kim, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Ronald Kirklin, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel David P. Komar, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Patrick E. Matlock, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Joseph W. Rank, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Christopher J. Sharpsten, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Michael J. Tarsa, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Richard M. Toy, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Brian E. Winski, to be Brigadier General

Colonel Karen H. Gibson, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Michael D. Hoskin, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel James B. Jarrard, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Mitchell L. Kilgo, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel William E. King IV, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel John S. Kolasheski, to be Brigadier General  
**Colonel Viet X. Luong, to be Brigadier General**  
 Colonel James J. Mingus, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Eric L. Sanchez, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Christopher L. Spillman, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel Frank W. Tate, to be Brigadier General  
 Colonel William A. Turner, to be Brigadier General

## West Point Graduates Class of 2014



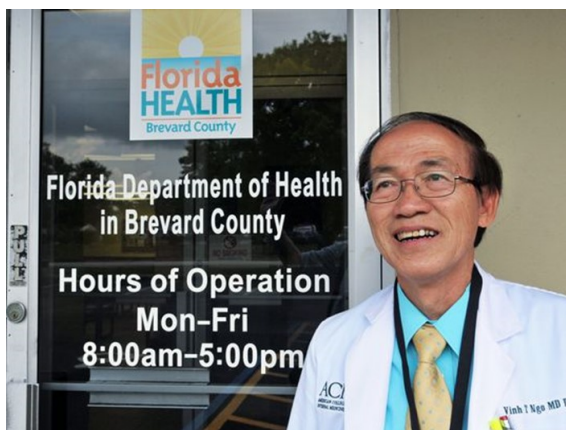
The United States Military Academy at West Point (USMA) is a four year co-educational federal service academy located at West Point, New York. Candidates for admission must both apply directly to the academy and receive a nomination, usually from a member of Congress. Most graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Army.

The Class of 2014 has graduated four Vietnamese-Americans.

West Point in 1985 commissioned the first two native Vietnamese graduates. They were Hung Vu, 21 of Queens and Jean Nguyen, 21 of Milton, PA.

*From left to right: Phillip Lê Hoàng Phú, Jonny Nguyễn, Vincarlo Nguyễn and Amanda Nguyễn. (Courtesy of Lê Hoàng Phú)*

## Mission Accomplished: Dr. Vinh Ngo Retired



<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/wellness/2014/06/12/longtime-health-department-doctor-checks/10333701/>

"He is an excellent physician and an excellent person," Health Department Director Dr. Heidar Heshmati said.

"He is an icon. He was always willing to do what was asked of him. Everybody, both staff and patients, always talked very highly about him."

Ngo's compassion and desire to help can be traced to the ordeals he endured before he arrived in America.

"His story is a remarkable tale of surviving," said Jay Rudy, staff analyst at the Health Department.

After graduation from the Saigon Medical School, Ngo served the South Vietnamese army as a chief physician of the 12th Regiment, 7th Division at Mytho Province.

"I took care of wounded soldiers under direct attacks from the communists," he said.

"Our regiment always won the battles, but anyhow we lost the war."

The North Vietnamese captured the young physician and shipped him to a labor camp in the middle of the jungle. His initial tasks were to cut down trees to clear land for building huts and to grow produce to feed the camp.

"I did not know if I would ever be set free and ever come home again," he said.

The communists eventually appointed Ngo physician for the camp of 500 souls, most of them teachers and other professionals.

"All of them were afraid to die there because of poor nutrition, (they) had (to) labor, lack of medication and malaria," said Ngo, who built a 10-bed clinic with the help of a nurse.

"I managed to keep all of them alive. I was lucky and so were they."

The terrible experience at the concentration camp helped Ngo hone his medical skills.

"I believe that after surviving in the concentration camp and helping other prisoners, I became a better physician," Ngo said.

"I was able to save a lot of people, even with very limited medications."

*Continue on next page*

Released by the communists, Ngo immediately began planning his family's escape.

Millions of people tried to escape from Vietnam at that time and a lot of them died at sea. After two failed attempts, Ngo, his wife and 3-year-old son made their way out of their homeland on a 33-foot boat full of 133 people.

"After nine days at sea with very limited food and water, we were lucky to reach Malaysia."

Ngo and his family were transferred to a refugee center on a small island.

"I worked there as a volunteer physician for that refugee camp, as well as at the Bataan refugee camp in the Philippines before we came to California in 1982," he explained.

In America, Ngo found himself back at square one as a physician.

After completing a residency in New York, he worked for the Brevard County Health department, primarily at the Melbourne clinic on Babcock Street, for the next 25 years. He has seen almost everything, from diabetes and hypertension to raging infections, cancers and STDs.

The future holds some well-deserved time off for Ngo, who plans to visit relatives in California. He may also not be ready yet to altogether leave his patients at the health department.

"I may work part time as a *locum tenens* (traveling) physician in California for a year and then I may come back to work as a volunteer physician for the Health Department," he said.

## Oh Vietnam: A New Song by Truc Ho (2014)

[http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=I\\_FyclGPZ\\_M](http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=I_FyclGPZ_M)

I'm a farmer.

I'm a worker.

I'm a college student; a high school student; a soldier.

Oh Vietnam!

Our country suffers every hour.

Stand up. Do not feel afraid.

Promise not to betray our country.

Oh Vietnam!

North, Center, South, united in one heart

Stand up and destroy oppression.

Promise not to be enslaved by foreigners.

Oh Vietnam!

Our country suffers every day.

Stand up and destroy dictatorship

We hold the right to protect our fatherland.

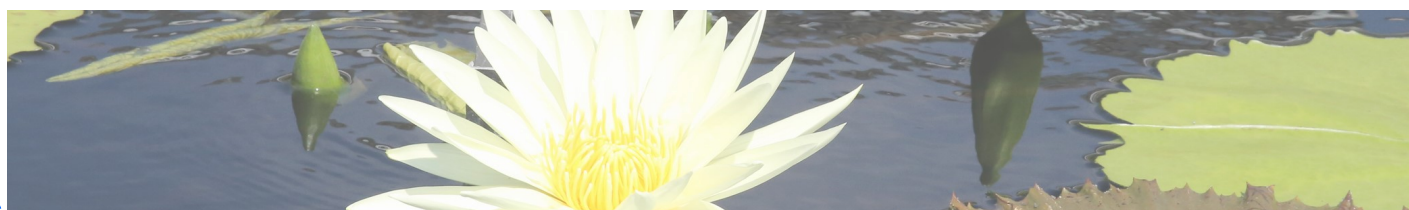
Oh Vietnam!

From five continents, united in one heart

Stand up, offspring of Dragon and Princess

We together will rebuild Vietnam.

Oh Vietnam!



## Y Moan: Vietnamese Minority Singer

What a lovely gift to sing this song to a father on the occasion of Father's Day. No one could convey the respect and gratitude of a son/daughter toward his/her father. Singer Y Moan was born in the province of Darlac in the southern Vietnamese highlands in 1957. He belonged to the E De Vietnamese highland minority. He was a well-known minority singer who in his songs extolled the virtue of the highlands. He passed away in 2010 of cancer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWHyR-TZGoQ>

### Đôi Chân Trần

Tôi muốn quên đi,  
Tháng với ngày.  
Cha đi lượm quả ngọt rừng,  
Cho con đỡ đói qua đêm.  
Tôi muốn quên đi,  
Đôi chân trần...  
Cha đi lượm từng hạt thóc,  
Cho con một bữa cơm chiều.  
Ôi, ngày tháng...  
Đôi vai gầy.  
Run run tựa vào hàng cây.  
Ôi, thời gian....  
Hãy quên đi,  
Đôi chân cồng kênh...  
Cha đi giữa rừng hoang vu.  
Lung cha đội nắng gầy.  
Ôi ! tóc bạc tựa trắng soi.  
Cả một đời và cả cuộc đời,  
Đôi chân trần...

### Barefoot

I want to forget  
the months as well as years,  
when father picked up sweet fruit  
in the forest to help ease his son's hunger.  
I want to forget  
he walked barefoot  
when he picked up each grain of rice  
to prepare dinner for his son.  
Oh! Weeks and months...  
Small shivering shoulders  
leaning against the row of trees  
Time has passed  
Let's forget  
with two bulky feet  
he walked across the deserted forest,  
shoulders exposed to the sun,  
his hair as white as the shining moon  
All his life,  
he walked barefoot.

