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VIETNAMESE
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- **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

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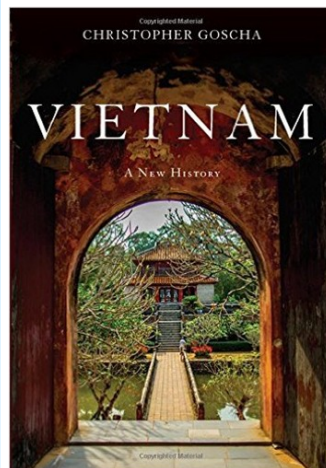
OCTOBER 2016



Vietnam. A New History: Christopher Goscha

A Book Review: Nghia M. Vo

A professor at the University of Quebec, Montreal, Canada, Goscha approaches the history of Vietnam from a different angle than his American colleagues. He focuses on modern Vietnam, leaving only three chapters to deal with ancient Vietnam.



He began by arguing that there are many Vietnams at various times in its history and that the S-shaped modern Vietnam existed only in 1802. Although correct as far as modernity is concerned, Vietnam as a nation existed since 938 CE when Ngo Quyen defeated the Han Chinese at the Bach Dang Battle. The fact that Vietnam or Giao Chi, as it was called in its humble beginning in the tiny Red River Delta, does not mean that the nation, spirit, or culture of Vietnam did not exist since 938. Using the same argument, although the U.S. was founded in 1776 with 13 former British colonies located on the East Coast, should we say that modern U.S. did not exist until 1912 (all 48 contiguous states included) or 1959 when Alaska and Hawaii were finally integrated into the U.S.?

Vietnam since its beginning was and is a divided nation where tribes, lords, generals, dynasties, parties, and religious organizations competed with each other to lead the nation and to impose their will on the others. Dissensions meant divisive and lengthy wars that rocked the nation, impoverished the people, and invited foreigners to jump in. Vietnamese fought more battles against each other than against foreigners.

The fourteenth and fifteen centuries saw battles fought between Vietnamese and Chinese Ming as well as between the lords of the Red River Delta and those of the coastal Thanh Hoa region. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the country divided into two distinct political regions (Dang Trong and Dang Ngoai) with the former (South) being ruled by the Nguyen and Tay Son and the latter (North) by the Trinh and Le. This was also the time when the Vietnamese acting as aggressors pushed further south and took over the central region from the Chams and the southern region from the Khmers.

After a brief reunification period under the southern Nguyen, the country fell into the hands of French colonialists in 1858. Goscha fills us in on colonial Vietnam where competing Vietnamese national parties first unsuccessfully battled against French invaders. During World War II, while Vietnam was occupied by French and Japanese forces, a civil war broke out between the Vietnamese Nationalist Party led by Vu Hong Khanh, the Dai Viet by Truong Tu Anh, the Vietnamese Revolutionary Alliance by Nguyen Hai Than, and the communists. The latter managed to "eagerly and savagely kill their compatriots. This is a reality of the armed conflict from 1945 and 1975 in Vietnam" (p. 208). The return of the French forces with the intent of reestablishing colonial control in Vietnam led to further bloodshed. Even animals knew how to get out of the way of French-led patrols. Nationalists and communists continued their attacks on each other causing one million civilian deaths during the first Vietnam War.

Although Allied Forces in 1949 backed the nationalist Associated State of Vietnam (ASN) led by Bao Dai, the French refused to transfer to him the Palais Norodom, siege of authority in Saigon and to help him organize an army to defend against the communists. The latter with Chinese communists' backing expanded their control of Laos and Cambodia. The fall of Dien Bien Phu ushered the

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formation of the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). The ASN became the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) led by Ngo Dinh Diem.

The Ho Chi Minh-led DRV embarked on a full scale of state sponsored tortures, executions, establishment of concentration camps and land reforms. Goscha notes that between “5,000 and 15,000” landlords were summarily and wrongly executed forcing Ho Chi Minh to apologize for the party’s errors (p. 294-295). Former communist official Nguyen Minh Can put the number at 172,000 victims http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam_landreform-20060608.html. Unofficial number ranges from 200,000 to 900,000. Goscha also writes about the concentration camps (p 302) that existed under the Diem regime, although he does not specify the major differences between the Ho and Diem’s concentration camps. This not only suggests a failure to understand what a communist gulag type concentration camp is like, but it also seem to deny the criminality of the communist system.

Contrary to other reports, Goscha suggests that Ngo Dinh Diem was not an American puppet. “This fiercely independent-minded nationalist leader repeatedly rebuffed American advice. He and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu had their own ideas about nationalism, land reform, and counter-insurgency. And together they often enraged their American backers.” One diplomat in Saigon once mentioned that dealing with them “was like dealing with a whole platoon of de Gaulles” (p 313). Many Vietnamese, on the other hand, would disagree with the labeling of Thich Tri Quang as an “eminent nationalist” (p 317). The victory of communism over republicanism has been hollow for it has not brought freedom and democracy to the Vietnamese. Even the DRV’s own supporters questioned the need of war. Bao Ninh, a communist veteran, asked, “So much blood so many lives sacrificed for what?” (p 445)

Republicanism has been present in Vietnam since 1900, therefore longer than communism. Spearheaded by Phan Chu Trinh, Phan Boi Chau, Phan Van Truong, Nguyen The Truyen, Huynh Thuc Khang, Nguyen Thai Hoc, Nguyen An Ninh, (p 446), it called for popular sovereignty, rule of law, free elections, and representative governments only to succumb to French colonialism, World War II, and communism.

The final chapter of the history of Vietnam has yet to be written because Vietnamese have begun to realize that the communists have “coopted a century of Vietnamese republicanism” (p 457). Vietnamese people have called for reform, return to the 1946 republican constitution, and even revolution. Bloc 8406 has accused the communist party of caving in to Chinese demands after the bauxite affair. It remains to be seen if the different factions will “come together to remake Vietnam or to make yet another Vietnam.” (p 461)

Overall, this is a good work that debunks many myths (although there are many more) and details the twists and turns of the complex history of Vietnam. The author is to be congratulated for stressing on the deep divisions between various factions/parties that fought each other throughout the centuries for the chance to leave their mark on the country. Vietnam is a deeply polarized and internally divisive country. Whether a new Vietnam will come out of the present battle between republicans and communists remains to be seen.

Give back to our people
Freedom and human rights,
The right to see, to hear, and to speak,
The right to choose morality and freedom
The right to reject dictatorship and authoritarianism.

Give back to the soldier
The right to live a heroic life
To have pride in their culture,
So he knows how to protect the country
And the people of Vietnam.

Give back to the people the right of determination
They know what they want
To freely seek happiness.

Give back to the people the main right.
They know what they want
To seek peace in Vietnam...

Give Freedom Back to Our People

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEoyTo797iU>

The song written in 2013 by an overseas Vietnamese song writer.

Catholic Church in Ha Tinh Province, North Vietnam (diocese of Vinh) uses it in its August 7, 2016 mass. <https://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/FomLgKxI2XE?rel=0>

The Catholic Church, which has stayed away from politics, has now organized demonstrations against the Communist regime, although in a peaceful manner.



<https://youtu.be/fHAO0BdjBPk>

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Give Freedom Back...

Demonstrations by the local lay people, on the other hand, usually turn violent because of reprisals from the Cong An (secret police). <https://youtu.be/4ORZVdwfOLc>. Demonstrators were beaten and jailed for condemning Formosa, a foreign steel company that has dumped toxic materials in June 2016 into the South China Sea causing a severe environmental disaster. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjaVsgLu9dU>

As a result, millions of fish died in that area of central Vietnam. Even large fish that live far away from the shore were seen washing ashore. Birds feeding on the dead fish also died. People got sick when they ate the dead fish. The whole fishing industry was wiped out in central Vietnam. Attached is a TV report from a Taiwanese TV company: *Vietsub*] “Việt Nam Cá Chết” – *Phóng sự gây chấn động dư luận Đài Loan của đài truyền hình PTS*

Formosa, which initially denied its role in the mass fish killing (“fish died because swimmers urinated into the sea water”) now agreed to pay \$US500 million, a tiny sum for this maritime disaster that may take decades to clear up. For compensation, the local people, whose livelihood depends on fishing are so far given rotten rice. <http://danlambaovn.blogspot.com/2016/08/formosa-tra-tien-nha-nuoc-lanh-tien.html?m=1>.

This explains the local people’s anger toward a corrupt regime that not only did not protect them from foreign companies’ greed, from environmental industrial disaster, but also beat and harassed them when they demonstrated against a company causing a huge environmental disaster. “Formosa, it is a CRIME to kill the environment,” is written on the posters.



<https://youtu.be/OF2vjp6HWxg>

The Battle of the Flags



<https://www.facebook.com/jane.db.9/videos/534548840068738/>

A communist delegation somehow flew a red communist flag (a yellow star on a red background) on the balcony of the San Francisco City Hall, CA. While they were watching, the overseas Vietnamese managed to drop a South Vietnamese yellow flag (three horizontal red stripes on a yellow background) on top of the red flag.

<http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/Protestors-Decry-San-Francisco-for-Flying-Communist-Flag-392212041.html>

General William H. Seely III

US Marine Corps Director of Intelligence



Brigadier General William H. Seely III

U. S. Marine Corps Director of Intelligence

Brigadier General William H. Seely III was born in Saigon, Vietnam. He graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from American University, Washington D.C. and was commissioned through NROTC George Washington University (1989). He holds Master's Degrees from Oklahoma State University, National Intelligence University, and the Naval War College (With Distinction).

His formal military education includes: The Basic School, Quantico, VA, (1989); Basic Communications Officer Course, Quantico, VA, (1990), US Army Airborne (1991), US Navy SCUBA School (1992), SERE School (2003), MAGTF Intelligence Officers Course, (1993), Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI) (1994), US Army Military Intelligence Officer Advanced Course (1995), Amphibious Warfare School, Non-Resident Course, (1995), Urban Reconnaissance Course (1996), US Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Non-Resident Course (JPME-I) (2002), the Post-Graduate Intelligence Program, DIA (2005), College of Naval Warfare, Naval War College (JPME-II) (2010), and the Senior Planners Course at Marine Corps University (2014).



BGen Seely's command leadership billets include: Communications Platoon Commander, H&S Company, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, (1990-92), Company Commander, India Company, Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion, Kunia Hawaii (2000-02), Battalion Commander, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, 3d Marine Division (2006-08), and Commander, Marine Corps Intelligence Schools, Training Command (2011-13).

His staff assignments include: S-2, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, (1992-93); S-2A and S-2, Marine Air Group-36, (1993-95); S-2, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Belleau Wood, Mogadishu, Somalia (1994-95); S-2A and S-2, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), 1996-00; Deputy G-2 and G-2 Operations Officer, Marine Forces Central (FWD) Command (2002-03); Regional Terrorism Branch OIC, J2 Counter-Terrorism, US Central Command, (2004-05) and Deputy Director for Intelligence, Joint Intelligence Center, US Central Command (2005-06), Director, Intelligence Integration Division, Combat Development and Integration, MCCDC (2010-11), Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (G-2), Marine Corps Forces Command (2013-14), Chief of Staff, Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace (2015), and Intelligence Director (J-2), Combined Joint Forces Land Component Commander-Iraq (CJFLCC-I), Task Force 82nd Airborne (2015-16).

BGen Seely's operational deployments include UNITED SHIELD Mogadishu, Somalia, USS Belleau Wood (1994-95), SOUTHERN WATCH / INTRINSIC ACTION / DESERT THUNDER Kuwait (1996-98) USS Essex/USS Tarawa, SAFE DEPARTURE Eritrea NEO (1998) USS Tarawa, STABILISE East Timor HAO (1999) USS Peleliu, ENDURING FREEDOM Bahrain and Kuwait (2002-03), IRAQI FREEDOM Iraq (2005, 06-07, 08) and INHERENT RESOLVE Iraq (2015-16).

BGen Seely's personal military decorations include: the Legion of Merit with Gold Star, the Bronze Star with two Gold Stars and "Combat V"; the Defense Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters; the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star; the Joint Service Commendation Medal; the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two Gold Stars; the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal; and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Escape from Saigon: *Nguyen Van Canh*

Interviewed by Larry Engelman

I didn't decide to leave until sometime in mid-April 1975. We knew that Americans made preparations for leaving and we learned that the American Embassy in Saigon tried to organize an exodus for American officials in the Embassy and American dependents. So we recognized that the Americans had quit and we no longer would receive support from anywhere in order to defend our country.

So I remember that when I was at Saigon Law School in the office and one of the professors came to see me because I was a deputy dean. The professor said that now the Americans were leaving and now we had better prepare ourselves to leave too or we would be left behind. And we would have a big problem with communism.

We held a special meeting of all the professors of the law school on the 14th of April. There was a discussion and a debate and the final conclusion was that we should contact the American Embassy to see whether or not they would help us. After all, if they helped professors from the medical schools, as we had been told, they then should help us because those of us who taught at the Saigon Law School who were involved in politics and law and economics and many of the things that the communists objected to and would not tolerate if they won.

So they appointed me as the chairperson of the ad hoc committee to contact the Embassy. I wrote a letter to Ambassador Graham Martin. I received no answer. Then we tried a different way to contact the Americans to see whether or not they planned to aid us, because we understood that the Viet Cong were about to besiege the city. They had already won the fight at Xuan Loc.

We tried to get in touch with another American official at the Embassy, but no one replied with an answer.

Every day as chairperson of the ad hoc special committee, I was at my office the whole day even until midnight to see whether or not the American Embassy would tell us information. But no.

I stayed home until the 29th. A friend came by. He said that he had just come back from Pier number 3 at the Saigon port. An American ship is still there. He told me I should go to it right away. So at that time I told my mom and my wife and my seven children and my father and my older brother and his wife and three children and my younger brother and my sister -- because we lived together -- I told them we had to go right away. So we used our own means. I drove a car. And my brother, who was an attorney, drove a scooter, and my elder brother, used his motor bike. We arrived at the Saigon pier about four p.m. There was no American ship, no American ferry, nothing at all. They had already gone. So I talked to some people still wandering over there and they said that the American ship left at two or two-thirty or three p.m. So I didn't know what to do. I told my folks that we should stay there because we had a chance to go out, and if we went home -- and we didn't expect any phone call or help from the American Embassy at all -- we'd have no way to go.

A week before this one of my students at the Saigon Law School who was a member of the Hoa Hao religious sect came to my home and said that he knew that if South Vietnam collapsed we would have a big problem because I was a high ranking member of the Dai Viet Party and taught politics, taught communism and constitutional law, so it was very dangerous for me to stay. He said they had already made up their minds to organize a resistance based in the Hoa Hao area in the western region of South Vietnam, close to the Cambodian border.

He said that they already had a ship in case something bad happened. And he said he would come to take me and my wife and children to the Hoa Hao area. So when I was at the Saigon pier I thought of him. And looked for him to see if we were not successful to go out, I should join the Hoa Hao religious sect in order to fight. Because I knew that I was a politician they would kill. Saigon was under curfew. But people tried to rush out to look for ways to go and the situation was chaotic. So I told my family to just stay there and wait and maybe we would have a chance for another ship from the American naval force to come back because from the Saigon port to the mouth of the Saigon River at Vung Tau is just like 80 kilometers. It took maybe three hours or four hours. Hopefully by six, seven or eight p.m. another ship would come back. In that case we'd have a chance to go out. Or the Hoa Hao boat would come back there.



We stayed there until midnight and nothing happened at all. And overhead American helicopters came in to pick up refugees somewhere, we don't know where. At eleven p.m. at least thirty-one big ships from the naval port started to move out. We did not know what to do and just stayed there, sitting there at the pier until the next day. And one of my students at the Saigon Faculty of Law, now he is living in Orange County -- he escaped later on -- he met me there and said, "Oh, professor, I don't know what to do, so I just followed you and your mob and

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Escape from Saigon...

I hope you will accept me as a member of your group here." He said he had been working for the CIA at the Embassy. It appeared that they left him behind. So he didn't know what to do so he'd just follow me.

After 7 a.m. there were no more helicopters coming to pick people up any more. My student suggested that he would go back to the American Embassy at that time to see what was going on. I said, "Okay." And he took his motorbike and maybe fifteen or twenty minutes later, because Saigon Pier Number 3 is close to the American embassy, not far away, he came back and said the Americans were all gone. Before they left they had exploded tear gas in order to prevent people from looting inside the Embassy he said. However, a lot of Vietnamese rushed in and looted and they came out carrying things like a chairs or desks, or something. But the Americans had already left completely.

He told me he was going to go home and I said okay. I stayed there until 8 a.m. Then I used my motor scooter, a Vespa, to look for the student of the Hoa Hao sect. I came to their headquarters and I declared myself and someone who lived there said, "Oh, Professor, I'm going to look for that student for you." He gave me the phone number and he gave me the telephone, and he said, "Oh, the situation is still optimistic, professor. Don't you worry! We are ready in case something happens. Surely we have the duty to take you to the western part of South Vietnam to protect you and we need leaders."

I left the Hoa Hao headquarters in Saigon and we back to Pier Number 3. And at 10 a.m. one of my colleagues from Saigon Faculty of Law -- he was a young professor -- said "Oh brother Canh, I came to your home and somebody said that you had already left -- so how come you are still here?" I said, "Nobody took me so I have to stay here. I have no way to get out." I thought that perhaps now the only way to get out was to go to Nha Be, a town thirteen kilometers from Saigon. It is located on the Saigon riverbank. A lot of fishing boats are there. So I told him that we had to risk our lives, either to survive or to die. I asked him if he wished to follow me to Nha Be and look for a fishing boat to go out. He said that whatever decision I made, he would follow because he knew that my decision was right.

So he followed me.

However, when I crossed over the Tan Thuan Bridge -- the bridge which connected Nha Be and Saigon -- I was far ahead I had to stop and wait for my colleague and while waiting for him I saw a southern man. He came to me and said, "Oh, your car is full of people, so you are escaping. Where are you going?" I told him I was planning to go to Nha Be to get a fishing boat to go out. He said, "No, don't go to Nha Be because the Viet Cong are already over there. They already took over



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Nha Be district and post last night. So the way I look at it, you are escaping but if you come there you will be arrested. So please come back to Saigon, because if it's a crowd no people will recognize who you are. But the way I look at you here is that you are escaping. That is clear. And it's very dangerous."

So when my colleague came I told him the story, and he asked what to do. I told him I didn't know, but it was better for us to come back to Pier Number 3 and then make a decision later on but not right now. So I told him now to go ahead in his car. There were eleven people in my small car, just a little bit bigger than a Datsun B210. I stuffed people in, because my children were small and they sat on the knees of my mom and wife in the back.

I told my colleague then to take two of my sons -- I have seven children, five girls and two sons. And he said, "Okay, I have only two children and my wife, so I can take more." But those other members of my family do not want to join him. I told him to go first, so he went first.

On the way back, on the other side of the bridge on the way back to Pier Number 3, he stopped at Pier Number 11. He got out of the car with my two children, his wife and his two children. He stood in front of the gate and there was a policeman who held the gate and did not let them go in. I asked him, "What happened? What's going on here?" He said that he gave the policeman thirty thousand piasters to let him in. He took the money but he did not let him in.

So I asked my colleague why he planned to get inside anyway? Do we know there is something over there? How come? He said that in there we had a chance to have a boat to get out. Just a guess, an estimate. So while he talked to me, the policeman told him, "Now, go in." So he and his wife and two children hurried in. My two children, my two sons asked me whether we should follow him. I said, "No, you follow me."

We then we came back to Pier Number 3. When we got back to Pier Number 3, it was about 12 noon. At that time someone's radio said that General Minh surrendered unconditionally and everything was lost. When I came to Pier Number 3, I saw a lot of people climbing up on that fishing boat anchored alongside the pier. My family and I followed them, but they didn't know whether they were going out or what. I was sitting on the top of some wooden boxes they kept fish in, and I heard the engine start working, and wondered why the boat did not move out. I got down and got into the cabin and saw a big Vietnamese man and I asked him how come the boat did not move and the engine is functioning? He said, "Oh, I am a lieutenant in the Vietnamese Navy so I tried to take this boat out to escape. The engine of the boat is working, however it doesn't move." He tried to fix it but was not successful.

Then he got out of the boat. I didn't know what to do, because he was a man who stole the boat and now he'd left. So I got out of the boat too. Before I made the decision to get out, I saw a big ship -- a Vietnam Thuong Tin ship -- from a corporation. The government owned one part and private investors owned a portion of the corporation, too, run by Vietnam Thuong Tin, a bank. They had a ship and it was in the middle of the Saigon River, just anchored to wait for orders to go out. It was about 1 p.m. by that time. That ship came to Pier Number 5 to pick up people. So while I was at Pier Number 3 I told my people to go off the boat and try to catch that ship, because four or five thousand people were already there. They stood up on the boat. But how could they get there?



They had to go back to the bank along the river. In the past they had used a barbed wire to separate Pier Number 3 from Number 5. So we had to use our hands in order to pull the barbed wire down.

We reached Pier Number 5. The Vietnam Thuong Tin ship was huge. There a long ladder to climb up, so they docked alongside with another ship, middle-sized one. There was a piece of wood for people to climb from the deck of the ship up to the Vietnam Thuong Tin ship. Maybe that ship from the pier was six or seven meters high. So I pushed my mom up and my two children and told them to just stay there until the whole family got up and then the whole family would move to the other ship. But just my mom and my two children were there and the ship left and they went off. So I had to take my mom and my two children down.

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Escape from Saigon...

One of my students who was there asked me what to do now. So I said I didn't know. Either I had to go back home or maybe I had go back to Pier Number 3.

So when I went back at Pier Number 3, the fishing boat that was there with the engine working had already left. I didn't know what to do. I saw people rush in another fishing boat. The pier was long and another fishing boat was there. So we did the same thing. We got in, but it did not work. However, there was another fishing boat along the pier by it, so a lot of people got in that one. I told my people that a lot of people had gotten in and maybe that one would move out. In the one I was on I saw nobody who would steer the boat. My whole family, eighteen people -- we little by little walked to the other ship.

I was so tired. We got on. I saw the family of one of my friends -- Dinh Thach Bich --there, his wife, mother and children on the boat. I asked, "Where is Bich?" And they said he was in the cabin. But they said they didn't know whether or not it would go out. After a few minutes I saw an in-law of Bich who was a major in the Vietnamese naval force. He was a commander of a big ship given to us by America in the past under the Diem rule. I saw him turn and get onto the ship. So I thought we would probably go after that. And we did.

The man who steered the boat was a major in the naval force. He knew the area well, so he did not go along the Saigon River to go out, but he turned to the right hand side of the big river. It was not deep but it was big, so the Viet Cong could not shoot us. Finally we were in the open river. I felt a little bit better than before, because for twenty hours I did not eat or drink anything. So I talked to a person who used to live with Bich and asked him how come he got into that boat. He said that the boat was owned by Truong Thai Ton, the minister of economy for South Vietnam under Nguyen Cao Ky. He owned a shrimp catching corporation and this was one of his boats.

Early the next morning we met with an LST in the open sea. Someone had a loudspeaker so we talked to someone and someone said "This is the commander of a ship, we do not take refugees. You go that direction and wait until 8 a.m. There is another ship that will get you." So we followed that direction. It was still dark, and we met with another LST and they said that they were a Taiwan LST come to pick up their military attaches and families. However they would pick us up, just wait until daytime. So we moved around and stayed for a while until 8. Then they came back and they picked up children and women. One hundred and seven men were left on board. They said they'd give us food, water and so on and told us to follow them to the Philippines.

It took us six days to get to the Philippines. We were in the Philippines for about three days. Then they took us to Guam. When we were on the fishing boat someone had a radio. And the next day we heard on the radio about the burning of all of the books of the Saigon Faculty of Law because they said that those books came from a decayed culture, so they had to burn them.

During all of this time trying to take care of my family and finding a way out, I felt great frustration. But not fear because we knew that we would get either life or death. My situation was a little bit different from others because we came from North Vietnam, and my family were landlords and my mom was imprisoned before she escaped and came to South Vietnam in '54. We knew our situation and in South Vietnam I was active in the Dai Viet Party in fighting communism. I was secretary general of Politburo of the party and commissioner for propaganda and training. My thesis for the doctoral degree at the Saigon Faculty of Law was about Vietnamese communism, all the tactics and strategy that the communists use I disclosed in my doctoral thesis. I taught those courses at Saigon Faculty of Law. I taught those things at the National Defense College. I taught those things at the Vietnamese Command and General Staff College for quite a while. So there was no room for me to live under communism. For me and my family it was either life outside Vietnam or death. Staying in Vietnam meant death for sure. If we tried to leave and if we all died together, the whole family, it's okay.

<http://lde421.blogspot.com/2012/12/nguyen-van-canhs-vietnam.html>



The ARVN Museum, Westminster, CA

<http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/tn-wknd-et-0918-vietnam-exhibit-20160904-story.html>

9842 Bolsa Ave., Suite B106, Westminster

Seven Vietnamese physicians from Orange County, including Quan Nguyen, a Fountain Valley dermatologist, opened the museum in April 2016.

"A lot of my younger patients have come from Vietnam, but they don't know anything about the Republic of Vietnam or what it was," said Thomas Quach, an obstetrician and gynecologist at Fountain Valley Regional Hospital and Medical Center, CA. The doctors pay the rent each month — about \$1,000 — out of their own pockets for the 1,000-square-foot space, and several other people volunteer five days a week to man it.

They are hoping to eventually move the museum to a building four times larger than the current space, at 9842 Bolsa Ave., and are looking to raise \$100,000 to offset the costs.



They teamed with historian and collector Darwin Hall, who had gathered uniforms, papers, patches and other historic artifacts from the war over the last 15 years. The memorabilia is expected to be switched out every few months to offer fresh experiences at the museum, which is open year-round Tuesdays through Saturdays.

The items, he noted, which he found largely at flea markets, are rare.

Quan Nguyen considers the museum a "closure place" for the South Vietnamese people, where the older generation can pass on their memories — and perhaps find some peace.

