

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Nghe Pham Van

COLLECTION: 4700.0995

IDENTIFICATION: Vietnamese refugee

INTERVIEWER: Unknown

PROJECT: Americans in Vietnam

INTERVIEW DATE: unknown

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1452, Side A

Studied in Hanoi; in 1940s, Vietnam didn't like French and Japanese domination; disliked communists, fought in Army; communists lack freedom; Nghe worked very hard for his country; prefers art to politics; was professor of music in Saigon; he was like a father to his students; rapid fall of Saigon; relations with US military; performance in October, 1974; desire to live in a country free from communism; arrival in Wake Island; US commander at Wake Island who spoke French; Nghe teaches music now; music is his life; played same classical music in Saigon that is popular in Europe; interviewer talks about his friend who plays guitar; always dreamt of playing music; lived in Hanoi during battle of Dienbienphu; culture in Hanoi, museums; Vietnamese culture; Vietnamese relations with French; wife's background; Vietnamese used to be polygamous; women senators in Saigon; children learning English in high school; considering a move to France; interviewer comments on Nghe's proficiency in English; journey from Hanoi to Saigon in 1954; Vietnamese population in US; girls who married to come to America; northern terrain, more agriculture in south; composes music, wrote book about his life; study group Nghe was in; in Asia, people like philosophy.

Tape 1452, Side B

Vietnamese people know their neighbors; Americans are too busy; importance of visiting friends in Vietnam; Buddhism in Vietnam; other religions in Vietnam; Hoa Hao leader who fought communists; people badmouthing religion, leaders; Chinese influence in Vietnam; grandfather can write Chinese but not speak it; Catholic pastor who lived in Vietnam, wrote down Vietnamese alphabet; Americans influenced Vietnam in superficial, materialistic ways; clothing styles in Vietnam influenced by French; difference in age between US and Vietnam; education in Vietnam; political situation in Vietnam; Vietnam has much longer history than US; US has too much freedom; fasting for health reasons; farmers in Vietnam; trip to Egypt; 400-page book on Nghe's life; ten pages of his book reprinted in a magazine; refugees could bring little out of Vietnam; his tattered violin case; Nghe was solo violinist in Saigon symphony; brings out scrapbook, shows pictures; musical scale, names of notes; lifestyle very different here; Nghe

plays guitar.

TAPES: 1 (T1452)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 30 minutes

PAGES INDEX: 2 pages

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