A BLOOD LETTER FROM NANHAI

Translated from Chinese into English
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A Thumbnail Sketch of China
The Story of the Eight Immortals
English Conversation ABC with Notes
  XYZ Vol.I
English Conversation ABC with Notes
  XYZ Vol.II
English Conversation Vol.III
Sightseeing & Dining in Taiwan with
Chinese Festivals & Celebrations
Intensive English for Taiwan College
  & University Students
Foreword

A letter is rarely written in blood except in a desperate situation begging for imminent help to clear up one's false accusation and to relieve his intolerable trauma. It is the strongest protest against injustice, brutality and torture by an innocent.

Mr. Yuan Tien Chiou, the author of "A Blood Letter From Nanhai" was a victim of the nefarious Vietnamese communists. His family of eleven was virtually destroyed by those miscreants. During his fatal day when stranded on a coral reef alone, he tried to summon all the prominent religious founders to listen to his complaint but in vain. Before he died, he also regretted that he couldn't revenge himself upon his tormentors.

Nevertheless, after his death his letter was found by a fisherman and was later translated from Vietnamese into Chinese by Mr. Chu Kuei. Hence his tragic story was known all over Taiwan and in the South-east Asia.

Since Taiwan is the strongest bastion in the Far East defending freedom, democracy and human rights, it is our duty, the duty of 17 million ROC populace, to help circulate his message to every nook and corner on the globe. For this reason we have commissioned Dr. Fook Tim Chan to translate the
letter from Chinese into English so that the deplorable story will be heard not only in the Orient but also in the Occident.

Now the author can sleep peacefully forever without any regret, as his call for aid has been answered and his effort in exposing the atrocity of his enemies is rewarded.

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A Blood Letter From Nanhai

I can hang on but momentarily.
In those draconian years I've seen deaths aplenty. I've witnessed the most cruel, brutal, dreadful, grisly and tragic ways of dying of all descriptions. To me, death isn't important anymore. Aggravation, lamentation and resentment seethe inside me. I've been trying to suppress them but to no avail. They have to come out in the open.

On one of the unknown coral reefs in the South China Sea, I peeled off my shirt and applied the pointed part of a sea shell to draw...
僅餘的鮮血來寫這封信。我不知道該寫給誰？寫給天主吧？天主當吳廷琰被殺的時候就
揀棄了越南子民；寫給佛宗吧？佛宗在和尚
自焚的日子就已經自身難保了；寫給當年口
口聲聲為我們爭自由謀幸福的民主鬥士吧？
民主鬥士正在

whatever fresh blood that was left in my naked body to write this letter. I don't know to whom I should write. To the Catholic God? When Ngo Dinh Diem was assassinated, God had already abandoned the inhabitants of Viet Nam. Should I address it to Buddha? But Buddha could not even protect himself since the day a monk chose self-immolation by burning himself with gasoline. Should I file my complaint to those democratic fighters who claimed that they fought for our freedom and well-being during the war years? Well, these democratic warriors are now enjoying their liberty and indulging in gaieties.
in Paris, London and New York. Or shall I confide my plight to the Great Ally that sent troops to fight for us and financed the war, forcing us to adopt their democratic system and be protected by human rights? The Great Ally has long ago written us off as undesirable people whose destiny was well deserved, and has moved on to another place repeating its buffoonery and capers.

Shall I tell my woes to my own relatives? There were eleven mouths in my family. My eldest brother died in the cannon fire of the Viet Nam war. My nephew Wentou was slaughtered by stray bullets during the riot before the liberation. My
ninety-three-year old grandmother and my seven-year old niece, Wen Luen, starved to death under the Peoples’ Government after the liberation. My father, who never discussed any politics all his life, was beaten stroke by stroke until his heart stopped during the purge. My second elder brother was bound and whisked away to the execution ground to be shot by the firing squad because he committed a misdemeanor of pilfering a sweet potato in the concentration camp to satisfy his uncontrollable hunger. Framed by somebody, my sister-in-law was sent to jail for an offense she did not commit. Owing to lack
病死狱中；母親上船時被匪幹推下海裏淹死；妻在海上被海盜射殺；文星兒和我一同游泳來到這個珊瑚礁上，熬到第十三天就在萬般痛苦中死了，他的屍體被同來的難友吃了，吃他肉的難友也都死了。海天茫茫，如今我寫給誰呢？

of nutriments she was reduced to a skeleton of only skin and bones during the last days of her imprisonment. My mother was pushed by a communist cadre to the sea and drowned when embarking on a boat. My wife was murdered by pirates on board a ship at sea. My son, Wen Sing, and I swam together to this coral reef. On the thirteenth day of our arrival, he ended his life after an excruciating struggle for survival. His body was eaten by fellow refugees. Those refugees who consumed his meat also perished. In such a wide open sky and boundless sea, to whom should I write this letter now?
My whole family, a total of eleven persons, all met the same demise under the tyrannical rule of the demented communists. You must think that for this vendetta, I would hate those communists to the core, that I wouldn’t live under the same sky with them. It is true that I execrate them to the utmost degree. Only determination for revenge had helped me to bear such torturing afflictions and intolerable ordeals. But there is another foe whom I despise even more deeply. A man-eating tiger no doubt should be detested but the one who drags others to propitiate the ferocious beast should be abominated even
烧死人的火坑固然可怕，但是谁逼人下火坑的那个人更可怕；咬死人的毒蛇固然歹毒，但是把毒蛇放進你被窝裏的那个人比毒蛇更歹毒。是谁把我們送往老虎口裏？是谁把我們推下火坑？是谁把毒蛇放進我們的被窝裏？是他！就是他！是那些「民主鬥士」和「偉大盟邦」。

我是土生土长的越南人，我的祖先来自遙遠的北方大陸，

more. The fire pit that cremates victims is dreadful but the one who shoves innocents into the flaming trap is more frightful. A poisonous snake that destroys human beings is vicious but the one who surreptitiously puts the snake inside your blankets is more malicious than the venomous reptile.

Who purveyed us to the tiger? Who threw us down into the fire pit? Who placed the virulent snake inside our bed coverings? Now I’ll tell you who! The democratic fighters and our Great Ally!

I was born and brought up in Viet Nam. My ancestors came from the northern part of the mainland.
Our family history dated back three centuries ago. Our pedigree, with a span of three hundred years, has linked many, many generations together. They were born there, raised there and deeply rooted there. The soil of our motherland had provided them with practically everything to nourish and nurture them. After they passed away, their bodies were transformed into earth completing the cycle of life in the motherland. I never dreamed that one day we would be compelled to leave her tender care. I came to this world in the latter part of 1941. When I was a child I remembered dimly that after the
越南人走了，日本人走了又走了，越南人再走了，日本人又走了，越南人再走了，日本人走了又走了，这些印象都很模糊，模糊的连自己也不能够清楚那些是怎样的经历，那些都是由自己和日本人的社会思想和生活习惯所引起的。我在越南的时候，我常常以法国的自由主义作为生活的基础，我先没有一个人作过「资本家」。这样的代理，没有一人作过。

French left, the Japanese came, and after the Japanese departed, the French returned. Finally the French went away for good. These impressions were rather vague. I could not figure out whether I experienced the change of events by myself or the vicissitudes were being told by others. When I realized what had actually happened, Vietnam had gained its independence. Therefore, the present situation of my country, the family settled down in the suburban area of Saigon. We had farmers for many generations.
dogs of the feudal lords. The background of our family was clean and honest. I still recollect vividly the scenario of my childhood, the straw hut where we took shelter. We labored in the rice fields or went fishing. We depended upon the support of our hardworking parents who toiled day in and day out in the rice paddies. We also had to endure hardship and study diligently.

Eventually we three brothers graduated from college. After leaving our alma mater we found jobs which were envied by others but hardly satisfied us.

As a result of urban development our rice fields were transmuted
建築用地價格節節上升。茅屋拆了改建成大廈，扇子丢了裝上冷氣，銀行裏有了存款，出門有汽車代步，我們也躋身於都市人之列。長輩們常講殖民地時代的許多苦楚，但是那些都對我太遙遠了，遙遠的和上古神話一樣。後來

into grounds for housing projects and other commercial constructions and the land value gradually inflated. Our thatched shack was razed and a mansion was constructed in its place. Our fans were junked as air conditioning units were installed in the new building. We had savings accounts in the bank. Instead of walking we drove our automobiles. We were now dwelling in the city among other urbanites.

Like many raconteurs, our elders often narrated the many acrid and distressing experiences in the colonial days. But these confabulations were things of the long distant past, like ancient mythology. After
repeatedly listening to these disgruntled, miserable tales, I began to be skeptical. Viet Nam was touted as the rice bowl of the world. But why had those who worked in the rice paddies no rice to eat? How could they swallow down their rice without the accompaniment of edible oil or meat? How could one coat last for more than three years? If you were an assiduous student why couldn't you find a school to attend? Without a refrigerator how could you keep and preserve the foods? How can you explain all these discrepancies? I said to myself: "It is mythological. Nothing but
神話！請原諒我的愚昧無知，我當時的確這麼想。長輩們說現在的一切都是拜獨立之賜，我們應該知道滿足。我當時心中卻大不以為然，明明是我們自己努力的成果，我們何用感激別人？長輩的見識太淺陋了，他們只知道殖民地時代的辛酸，那裏瞭解現代已是大衆化的消費時代？殖民地時代的生活我沒有親歷過，不能拿來和現在相比。

myths!” It’s beyond my comprehension. Please excuse my ignorance. Our elders remarked: “We thank the independence for the present euphoria and everything we possess. We should be contented.” I could hardly agree to what they commented. The existing prosperity was due to our own efforts and why should we be grateful to others? The knowledge of our elders was too shallow and superficial. They merely reminisced of the bitters of life during the colonial days and were unaware of the present which was a popularized consumers’ era. I hadn’t experienced the subsistence level of the colonial time. It couldn’t be compared with the current
modern age. I only knew that the standard of living of the Vietnamese people was still far behind those of the highly developed countries of France and the United States. After the liberation of Viet Nam, I began to realize that without the protection of a government, any efforts would be a waste. But alas, it was too late to find that out.

The northern part of our country was captured by our enemies. Refugees in the hundreds of thousands, old and young, escaped to Saigon. They camped out in the open air suffering from cold and hunger. At first I shed sympathetic tears for them.
後來共匪窮追猛打，趁機殺戮，南方的北佬
犧牲自己的幸福
又口口聲聲說收復家園，我對著我們兩來難
辯的比較逐漸發生反感。我見到地以風日內

But later, when the communists
pursued us relentlessly and attacked
fiercely and mercilessly, it was

I sacrifice my happiness and fight

I was too naïve not to believe that
the Geneva Accord would absolutely
not guarantee that if we do not
attack others, others would not.

When they brought us all the troubles,
I began to harbor grudges against them as
those northerners who came to the
home towns. However, I began

I am not a
magnanimous Samaritan, why should
I sacrifice my happiness and fight
against us. Since I am not a

I was too naïve not to believe that
the Geneva Accord would absolutely
not guarantee that if we do not
attack others, others would not.

When they brought us all the troubles,
I began to harbor grudges against them as
those northerners who came to the
home towns. However, I began

I am not a
magnanimous Samaritan, why should
I sacrifice my happiness and fight
for the recovery of others' lost territories. I even had the malicious
tought of dumping our fellow countrymen into the fire pit to
extinguish the scorching fire permanently.

Now I have an apperception why
today the Malaysians kicked hundreds
of thousands Vietnamese refugees
into the sea. I'm sure that in future,
the Malaysians will also comprehend
why the Philipines would throw boat
loads of the Malaysians into the
waters. People never learn the truth
that mutual assistance resembles
the close relationship of lips and
teeth. When the lips are gone, the
teeth will soon lose their protection
and consequently suffer the loss.
The claws of the malevolent monster
rapidly stretched out south of the
7th degree. Deep in the forest and
mountains, news of guerrillas' marauding,
arson and massacre reached
us frequently. Fortunately Saigon
was still calm on the surface. While
the government was mesmerized in
launching incursions against the
communists, I was busy making
money. In my life I've never taken
interest in politics. I only wished
that my days be spent peacefully
and I would rather let the politicians
take care of the national affairs.
Coming as an intruder, the Great
Ally, despite its good memory, never
bothered to learn something of the past. The tragedy of the mainland China has never taught the Vietnamese and their Ally any lessons at all. The Ally still assumed an attitude of a global savior instructing what we should do and what we shouldn't. It utilized the Embassy as a review stand and sanctuary. They flashed out thick stacks of greenbacks to buy the "ambitious elements" and at the same time spread rumours everywhere fabricating chaotic conditions. We couldn't deny that at that time the administration of our government was inefficient and our administrators were stupid and ignorant. Inevitably, the
officials were corrupt and dishonest.

The Vietnamese folks were not as free as the Americans contrary to what people said. But the majority of them were able to live quietly and gradually improve their lot. However, without a very prosperous state the "ambitious elements" had no opportunity to make a fortune nor a chance for promotion. This turned out to be ominous as they decided to create a state of confusion and began to make trouble by inventing stories and exaggerating events. They aroused the feelings of the mob and stirred up the indignation of the general public until they were so incensed that
they became recalcitrant and rebellious to the government. Students initiated their movement of boycotting classes and staging demonstrations. Monks went on hunger strikes and some even set fire to themselves in protest. These incidents were dramatized and made headlines so that the total attention of the public was concentrated on the turmoil and upheaval. They had completely forgotten the imminent danger of the adversary. A few far-sighted intellectuals warned the populace to beware the foes' treacherous plot to take advantage of the obstreperous conjuncture to sneak in and invade us.
盟友傳出話來：「吳廷琰下台，共產黨不來！」信誓旦旦地保證，「只要越南人逼吳廷琰下台，盟邦就把越南置於原子傘保護之下。」我們的「民主鬥士」以壯烈的「烈士精神」在盟友的密切配合之下，槍殺了吳廷琰。鬥士們顛冠相慶，走馬上台。

To add fuel to the fire, our Ally disseminated news that if Ngo Dinh Diem stepped down, the communists wouldn't come. Our Ally even swore and guaranteed that if the Vietnamese constituents could coerce Ngo Dinh Diem to resign as their president, the Ally would place Viet Nam under the protection of the nuclear umbrella. With such encouragement and the close cooperation and coordination of the Ally, the democratic fighters usurped the high spirit of martyrs to gun down President Ngo. They rejoiced over the toppling of the Ngo's regime and were swiftly sworn in to their new posts. To stabilize
the new situation the elite allied troops arrived continuously. People of Viet Nam commenced to enjoy "People Cooking" or "Cooking the People."

As the fighting escalated, the bombarding sound of cannonry penetrated closer to Saigon. The situation of the new establishment was deteriorating. Government officials were inefficient and more bribable, and human rights were

* Note: Democracy in Chinese means "People Master." The word master is a homonym of "Cooking" and so "People Master" also can mean "People Cooking" or "Cooking the People."
The regime changed hands from time to time. The apocalypse of the highest authorities — the Embassy, revealed repeatedly that "If the president steps down, the communists won't come." In the meantime people suffered incessant tribulations and catastrophes. The Great Ally suddenly turned around and negotiated with a tiger for its hide against the interest of the Vietnamese masses. The Ally exchanged millions of Vietnamese lives for the "Nobel Peace Prize."

In April 1975, the doomsday eventually fell on the Vietnamese populace. In the beginning, the democratic warriors wanted us to believe that everything they did

更沒有保障。一次一次的政變，大使館裏一次一次傳出「呂廷琰下台，共產黨不來」的天憤，無休無止的苦難—齊落到越南人民的頭上。偉大的盟友掉過頭來與虎謀皮，用越南幾十萬人民的生命換取「諾貝爾和平獎金」。一九七五年四月越南人民的末日終於來了。當初「鬥士」們要我們相信他一切
都是为了我们好，保证绝对不会砸锅沉船，
他自己也在船上，他自己也从同一个锅里吃
饭。他说的可真漂亮：「船沉了，不管坐头
等舱或三等舱，都要淹死。」我们当时竟傻
得信以为真。后来船真的沉了，才发觉头等
舱里还有直升飞机。

was for the good of our people. They
assured us that they wouldn't fail
in their mission and they would
never scuttle the boat. They averred
that they themselves were on board
the ship and they also ate from the
same rice pot as their fellow
passengers. "If the ship sinks",
they reasoned, "all the passengers,
whether they are in the first or
third class, have to suffer the
same fate of drowning." Whatever
they harangued sounded pleasant to
the ear. They beguiled us into
thinking that what they iterated
was true. Later the ship did
sink. But we found that there
were helicopters for the first class.
It seems that they took us for kids of thirteen.

Our Ally flew home triumphantly with "glory and victory." The democratic fighters jetted to Paris, London and New York engaging in carefree life and debauchery. You might tell them of the downhearted and mournful days of Viet Nam after its downfall but they have no ears to listen.

Who wants to run the risk of leaving his home and country. Who desires to go to a strange nation and to be thrust into the sea? Who wants to drift to an isolated island and eat the flesh of his own son? But I'm sure that if a lamppost had a pair...
of legs, it would try to run away from the iron curtain as soon as possible and as fast as possible.

In this solitary island I have managed to keep alive for forty-two days. I yelled to Heaven for help but Heaven won't reply. I shouted to the Mother Earth but she wouldn't respond. In such a wide horizon on a far, far away coral reef, who could hear my call?

Goddess of Mercy, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, The Supreme God of Heaven, I want you all to listen. I hate the democratic fighters and the Great Ally that delived us to feed the tigers, threw us into the fire pit and inserted the venomous
蛇放在我們被窝的「鬥士」「盟友」，讓我活着咬他一口，死也甘心！

阮天仇 絕筆

snake inside our quilts. I want to settle this blood feud once and for all. Just let me bite them one hard bite while I am breathing my last breath and I will die without any regret.

Yuan Tien Chiou
My last writing
(Before his death)
譯者附記：內弟有一天到南海外漁，在一個荒島上發現了十三具屍骨和一大堆大海螺，這份血書就是嵌在該海螺殼裏，字跡模糊，我只將其大意揣摩着翻譯出來。

朱桂

The Blood Letter From Nanhai was written originally in Vietnamese and translated into Chinese by Mr Chu Kuei. The following is his note:

One day my brother-in-law was catching fish on the South China Sea and discovered thirteen corpses and a big heap of sea-shells on an solitary island. This blood letter was found in some of those shells. The words were dim. I tried to follow its main theme and translate its contents from Vietnamese into Chinese.

Chu Kuei