

Liberation Time (Chapter 1)

Cindy Nguyen

Chapter 1

What year did that happen?

Before liberation. / Trước khi giải phóng

When did you go to school?

Before liberation.

When did you become a farmer?

After liberation.

When did you meet dad?

After liberation.

When did you want to leave?

After liberation.

And when was I born?

After liberation. / Sau khi giải phóng

What is liberation?

Cindy Nguyen is a subversive artist-historian who works between film, poetry, and visual narrative. Her work defies dominant narratives and meditates on the subtle textures of translation and memory. Her current multimedia project, “Mẹ [Mom], Translated,” explores intergenerational language and love. Nguyen’s other major project includes MISS/MIS, a feminist exploration of all things deemed ‘mis-’ –wrong, dirty, defiant. Her art experiments on translation, categorical impulses, and misreading emerged from her Ph.D. at UC Berkeley on Vietnamese libraries, print culture, and reading. Her art has been published in transnational publications PANK Magazine, Diacritics, Ajar Press, and her scholarly projects have been funded by Fulbright, Social Science Research Council, and the National Academy of Education/Spencer. With funding from the Brown Arts Initiative, she is currently working on a poetic documentary film on the language of Vietnamese refugee remembrance and history. She is currently a Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellow at University of California San Diego in the Literature Department and gives public talks on memory, translation, and creative arts.