

this text intends to establish a space for participation  
in which a history experienced as disconnected  
is narrated collectively

therefore i recommend for stagings a rather large  
at least a diversely constituted chorus  
preferably  
logically  
with as many vietnamese or viet hyphenated members  
as in any way possible

choruses are a wonderful tool  
to challenge a text  
to team up against it  
to call it into question  
or to assume a position against its blind spots

if such a chorus is not possible  
at least half the ensemble  
should consist of actresses  
from a vietnamese background

if neither of these options is possible  
and the text in other ways as well is not used  
to produce in the ensemble's politics a  
space for participation  
in public institutions  
it then makes no sense unfortunately  
that you stage this play in your theater

sorry

later that night  
i held an atlas in my lap  
ran my fingers across the whole world  
and whispered  
where does it hurt?  
it answered  
everywhere  
everywhere  
everywhere

warsan shire—what they did yesterday afternoon  
to carry it over or to translate

a contract worker, who has reappeared  
her mother, who has returned  
her daughter, at an airport  
a contract worker, a translator

music

tim hecker—in the air I II III  
deru—i would like  
oneohtrix point never—chrome country  
brian mcbride—overture (for other halfs)  
grouper—the man who died in his boat

heartfelt thanks for the discussions  
the time the memories  
to all the interview partners  
in leipzig

tôi đã gắng hết sức mình để tái hiện thời gian chính xác<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> i did my best to reproduce the time exactly

those who were lucky landed on internment islands  
like pulau bidong

luck meant  
to have survived not to have been  
murdered or raped by pirates

luck meant  
to land on an uninhabited island of about  
a half square mile where  
40,000 people are crowded together

luck meant  
standing room in hell a  
tropical prison

he said  
you are a first class  
gook

// we start together  
chúng ta bắt đầu cùng nhau<sup>2</sup> //

what does it actually mean

to fall out of time

to fall out of time why not  
to stumble out of time why not  
to plunge out of time why not  
to be pulled out of time why not  
to be snatched out of time to be  
deprived of time what  
does that actually mean to fall  
out of time and who  
is even allowed to fall  
out of time and can you then  
return to the time from which  
you plunge fall slide slip or  
are you then forever timeless

timeless actually was  
always the promise  
of having no time

well but  
having no time is now  
not necessarily promising

instead belonging to  
no time  
fair game time

must you fall out of time  
to be released from time or  
must you belong to the right time to  
the time that might continue

---

<sup>2</sup> we start together

time in general once  
you begin to think about it

or time that  
simply has fallen out of the world is time  
that now no longer will have been correct time time  
that will simply have disappeared what does it mean  
to fall out of time who  
falls out of whose time and which time  
actually counts more that  
out of which you fall or that  
into which you fall

and then in the end always the story that  
puts time in order something  
time itself just does not manage to produce an  
order time always creates disorder which the  
story then must clear up in the end and who  
decides then actually which time  
in which story actually

actually  
actually  
actually  
actually  
actually

in general may occur to whom  
does time belong who owns it in the end who  
in general today actually has a time

// tân sơn nhât international airport  
between the places between the times //

delay  
or  
time suspension

or

cross your hands please  
stand still three seconds thank you from  
your bag yes the  
smartphone from your bag also  
empty everything empty everything empty everything  
the camera out indeed open  
the inside pocket please coat thank you  
watch sun glasses gloves  
remove liquids please fear  
has made this continent into  
what it is today also the shoes  
remove the boots fear  
of losing what they've become also  
high-heels no  
high-heels stay on high-heels are okay  
only the boots please legs bags hands the  
security officer who is also only doing his job that  
is what everyone here says i'm  
only doing my job you live work and  
have shift changes at the international hub and  
next please just  
go through exactly raise your arms stand still three two one  
thank you just a short test  
we must do still for  
explosives with the  
brush here one time  
exactly open the zipper  
slip in the brush freedom  
pure routine freedom  
pure routine i'm  
only doing my yes  
who knows in the end you didn't  
check one time everyone  
is a threat freedom if you  
remove all surfaces  
only terror remains what  
do you think  
remains of someone if  
you break him down a  
single threat stand still thank you back there

is a drugstore everything is reduced on  
sale hands in the air thank you over here  
the belt please thank you showcases  
full of souvenirs wide open longing  
in the glass façade but the runway exhausted  
wings lifeless battery half empty  
overcrowding breeds loneliness perfumes  
underwear hamburgers starbucks and  
in between always suddenly somewhere  
towering high really always a  
toblerone pyramid yes  
come here briefly please just  
the belt can you take it and the jacket  
the sweater also please in the box  
raise your arms thanks you  
can get used to anything toblerone at some point  
you get used to anything also  
to swiss imperialism

staring at my smartphone still  
no improvement in the situation black  
it looks at me tells  
me nothing at all i

stand before the painting casket  
bearers with steel helmets open  
mouths screams human pile

delay the display says  
nothing else delay nothing else

here is this  
cycle dealing with  
the paris commune i

stare at the officer who  
stares at me who is staring  
at who here if  
you stare at an officer long enough  
then you become one yourself he checks my  
papers he looks at me again he takes the

stamper  
a warm welcome comrade

here is this cycle of paintings functions like  
a huge historical panorama i

see the boat  
in the middle of the night boat  
is an exaggeration it has two rudders and  
is made of wood okay wood is probably also  
an exaggeration it is floating let's leave it at that it  
floats i

i ask myself  
were there a logic to history we  
would not have to keep telling it anew to ourselves

staring at the officer he  
says lucky  
that you were in the army i  
say lucky  
that the army won we

forget again and again where it  
once went  
history really where it  
once went  
forgetting i

see the boat but  
not the water i  
hear it only pitch-dark  
i think to myself pitch-dark  
I think aloud to calm myself pitch-dark i

think to myself were  
there no forgetting there would be  
no history i

count up those in business suits sitting here maybe  
i can then sleep i

don't turn over it  
wouldn't help anyway waves  
wash up against the boat i

think to myself no nonsense because  
we forget we must always repeat  
everything

when the boat takes off everyone  
becomes silent

here it is written  
were there a meaning to history we  
would know how it will have continued in between  
bayonets banners five yards long the  
battle panorama

before excitement bags chaos then  
silence

i think to myself rats  
learn to avoid poison they  
cannot pass their knowledge on  
however i

stare at the display a  
single computer mistake and  
everything stops delay says the display delay  
at the international hub delay i  
stare at the display i

stare no more even at the water i  
stare no more at the beach i  
stare no more at the painting the streets fog i  
stare no more at the pre-fab opposite i  
stare no more out the window i  
stare no more through the glass façade at the hub  
at the international i  
even stare no more outside

// leipzig late 80's  
he translates //

so

everyone please line up next to each other here one  
by one briefly the rules first of all so that  
they are all let's see  
or briefly first i  
am your and he there  
is our translator mr le

i said it

a warm welcome dear  
comrades who thanks  
to the warsaw treaty on friendship  
cooperation and mutual support  
were able to accept to advance far  
from their home here with us the  
internationalization of the  
socialist idea

i said it

we are happy that  
so many of you  
from our very distant sister state which  
defeated the american invaders not  
without serious casualties

i said it

came here

that i did not say

came here to us

that i did not say i

said

    it is nice that we get to know each other

    did you say that to them

    yes

    so please feel  
    almost at home in  
    your lodgings which  
    generously were newly built for you  
    partially with funds to internationalize the  
    productive forces here you are  
    separated into two shifts one in the morning one  
    in the afternoon briefly the rules are important the apartments  
    connect to the factory so that the  
    distance from the bed to the machine is not so far the  
    apartments of course pre-fab  
    to the highest standard newly built progress  
    in all parts additionally as explained three  
    rooms for four comrades in solidarity stay  
    please in this communal space after  
    ten at night in the  
    dormitory you are among your own if  
    you need something ask a translator for each  
    floor at least for each dormitory we try to assign one  
    the separate apartments as  
    explained 325 square feet to  
    the highest socialist standard for four of you that  
    makes almost 55 square feet  
    per comrade in a prime location  
    next to the machines please always show your  
    id card when exiting or entering if  
    visitors then please register them pregnancies but  
    that only in passing lead to breach of contract and  
    then to returning home just like  
    for sickness injury or other  
    causes of reduced productive energy so much for that good in  
    the apartments  
    i will now read that briefly aloud it

always confuses me for each four  
hand towels two light two dark dishes a  
cup a saucer a glass two  
plates one flat one deep additionally for each room  
one ash tray

that i also did not say i  
said

watch out that i don't catch you after  
ten at night  
sewing jeans in the dormitory additionally  
i say

the two dormitories for the female comrades right

there down the street

i say

and that dogs which bark and comrades who read from  
notes don't bite

so i think  
we're done i  
think everything or  
have you

translated everything

why are they laughing

don't know

well with a good mood comes progress

// leipzig late 80's  
she lands //

after our arrival we were allowed a  
settling-in period  
four to twelve weeks of  
labor-related training in basic methods  
two to three months a language course

to understand during the workday what  
was required we worked then  
in shifts we lived on dormitory floors  
we slept in bunkbeds communication  
didn't happen we were tolerated  
in the sense of progress and development for  
a limited time if satisfied a chance of  
extension if sick deportation we  
were placed at the old machines nonetheless  
on arriving there were  
sashes and fanfares  
at least one time when the photographers were there to  
propagate sister-state reciprocity i  
arrived in an airplane with about a hundred others  
on a foggy very cloudy morning upon  
awaking only clouds then joggled some laughed i  
looked out the window waited water drops ran  
down the glass then  
one car two a field a city a  
barrier somewhere in the fog everyone  
wanted to go to germany who  
wanted to go to bulgaria or romania anyway when  
i learned it would be germany i decided  
to stay i  
will stay here  
i said

// at the hub a canned  
memory //

i hesitated a long time climb in  
not climb in climb in not  
climb in climb in not climb in then  
the last boat cast off and i was in it

// he remembers //

of course to the rich sister state who  
wanted to go to hungary i

have a friend in an official position we  
were together in the army in the  
jungle we  
went to saigon together he  
arranged it for me i  
never saw him again he  
smiled when he gave me my documents

two days later i was gone i  
wanted to see the world  
and landed in the factory

// tân sơn nhạ̃t international airport  
a daughter giũa các lần giũa các nơi chõñ<sup>3</sup>  
an old voice wants to hear no more about it all //

delay

already ten hours delay because  
a volcano blew enough ash  
into the air to  
paralyze the entire international air traffic  
for hours it  
could last for days

delay

no one knows anything each  
path to the info desk a  
mutual disappointment we  
cannot help you right now yeah yeah  
thanks on the display also nothing new black  
gleaming i  
check the news nothing every  
two minutes no  
news according to social media  
the world is soon going to  
collapse one

---

<sup>3</sup> between times between places

headline chases the next always  
something else is happening at the same time  
nothing feels new  
about it you  
are anxious resignation  
scandal hype madness excitement that  
this world still exists that should  
actually give us something to ponder a  
live video from the lowest point on  
earth never  
was anyone so deep i  
watch for ten minutes hearts  
race across the display a  
fish stares into the darkness then  
i scroll down skim  
what is happening every corpse  
on mount everest was once  
an extremely motivated person  
i read i scroll further two  
cappuccinos later in the international  
transfer area between two  
crisis meetings in the waiting area by  
macdonald's someone attempts the  
deal of his life nothing  
has landed here  
for days now strange  
notion the skies empty only  
ash in the air  
only ash in  
the stash the photo again with  
address after landing through the streets  
of hanoi horns tourists  
nameless streets everywhere  
motorbikes my  
god everything always must look exactly how  
it just simply appears the  
next day to the address with  
the photo in my hand

do we know each other

no

what can i do for you

i'm looking for a woman who  
lives here

why

let's say i work  
for a german newspaper and  
research the history of pulau

unfortunately i can't tell you anything about it

wait your  
name appears on a list

my name

a woman who lives here  
on the list

she was flown out to germany wait  
bonn i think

the ugliest airport in the world

you know it

what list

this woman was part  
of a refugee contingent from  
pulau bidong

and what else

she didn't  
stay very long in germany

sounds pleasant

and many years ago came back here

what list

a list with survivors from pulau bidong but  
actually i would need to clear this up with the woman

i don't know her

wait maybe  
in this photo

where  
did you get this

do you know her

the photo from where

from an archive you  
know her

i know the photo from where

only with this woman can i can you  
help me find her

no unfortunately  
i don't know where she is

but i was given exactly this address

it was hers yes she  
used to live here until  
two years ago three

do you maybe know

no idea

something

politely she closed the door an  
announcement the planes will remain for forty-eight hours  
on the ground an announcement somewhere  
a suitcase is going to be disposed of promptly an  
announcement a passenger is being sought why  
i wonder why and then  
someone stands up goes over to the window with the panorama view  
the runways all full  
of airplanes ashes  
nowhere

// leipzig, late 80's  
she speaks he remembers  
chúng tôi đã gặp nhau nhur vậy đó<sup>4</sup> //

you sat with this message in the  
waiting room and read

we were told the following that according to  
this message well that

sister-state reciprocity a centerpiece of  
internationalization that  
sister-state reciprocity new roads to socialism that  
sister-state reciprocity a greater understanding that  
sister-state reciprocity against imperialism that  
the sister-state road and the sister-state  
community that sister-state  
solidarity and sister-state i  
read heard went along in a sister-stately way  
and thought get out of here as if  
the sister-state meant anything to me you  
always accept the story of where you're born  
the one just being explained you can't  
choose your story on

---

<sup>4</sup> we met each other like this

arriving the feeling i now am writing  
my story anew then  
the first examinations the first  
checks the first restrictions on entering the  
first restrictions on leaving the  
first strange looks on  
the street the  
sister-state road what  
a farce and every first wednesday of the month  
health checks with the physician because the  
sister-state road is also just a survival of the fittest because  
sister-state reciprocity demands fit bodies the  
translator greets me the female physician  
spells my name the  
translator says

excuse me i'll  
turn around actually  
a female translator is scheduled here but  
she is sick right now so  
i'm sorry

i laugh say thanks the  
physician asks something

the translator interprets competently with  
his eyes on the ceiling where a  
ventilator moves in silent circles under panels  
how

long have these panels hung there he asks himself the  
translator while he translates sentence for sentence the  
medical inquiry after the arrival in the sister state

good thanks  
i say during  
the landing rain from  
above this country looks somewhat  
lost but  
i like losers

the translator she says

she feels in general quite good and  
is pleased to be here

the physician listens takes notes understands she  
points to the bed i  
sit down she  
examines me are  
you pregnant pains homesick do you feel alright

i don't know i  
don't think so the  
translator while looking at  
the ceiling repeats what she says and  
also he says

where do you come from

how long have you been here

where do you live now

where do you work

and well why  
haven't we met before now

i laugh

the physician asks what's the matter

the translator immediately says  
something lengthier he  
says it with many details the  
physician nods sternly then  
continues

don't laugh he says  
what's your name

thanh i say she  
takes my pulse whether

the work is strenuous how  
much i eat

i hate the work but  
don't tell her that in the  
dormitory they smoke in the evening  
it stinks because the exhaust fan doesn't function  
also i can't sleep because two of my  
roommates are always sick but  
don't tell her that tell her  
i sleep very deeply and have good dreams

i'll tell her you would like to work more

no

the physician notes down figures blood pressure  
pulse age height mood the  
translator says something to the physician she  
looks at me displeased  
i shake my head the  
physician turns around doesn't understand i  
shake my head he says something again the  
physician takes more notes examines

what is your name  
i ask him what

is that important

he says and then  
the physician says  
you are in great health and then  
he asks when  
we will see each other again

// at the hub an old voice  
bàn chân biến mất trong nước<sup>5</sup> //

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<sup>5</sup> the feet disappear in the water

i didn't look at the bottom where  
your feet slowly sank under the water i  
didn't turn around for the cries  
around us in the water didn't  
think about what was swimming under us what  
was floating beside us i  
saw a strand of hair on your neck i  
searched for your eyes which  
followed the cries i  
searched for your eyes to  
hold on to them and said don't look at the  
bottom don't touch the water don't look  
to the side look here hãy nhìn đây<sup>6</sup>  
look over here here look over here hìn đây  
look over here look here

// leipzig late 80's  
she remembers he recalls something as well  
những hình ảnh kẽ về các kỷ niệm của chúng tôi<sup>7</sup> //

I still know you  
stood in front of this painting

the paris commune cycle  
and outside meeting again in  
the churchyard and discussions and  
they want to form  
a unity and they want to  
be one people again  
going home often they go  
by those who are standing there silently who  
look at me then

paris commune cycle about the finally discovered  
political form

---

<sup>6</sup> look here

<sup>7</sup> images that tell about our memories

and you read aloud  
about the finally discovered political form

and outside in the  
churchyard they stood  
silently and waited in the rain  
some spoke still and  
you continued to read aloud

about the finally discovered political form

cycle about the finally discovered political form  
under which the economic emancipation of  
labor could be accomplished

and you read aloud and i  
felt sick

there are my paintings  
says the painter  
they are not historical paintings they  
are paintings that  
with the help of history  
express themselves  
in the present

and  
the gatekeeper observed us the whole time  
because actually we  
were not supposed to be here

but he was also worried about the demonstration  
outside everyone  
was overwhelmed since the summer and  
in front of us the painting the  
paris commune cycle and  
everything full of cries everything full of the dead a  
battle triptych hanging there on which  
the times collapse on each other like  
fallen soldiers the  
tragedy a bayonet on which

someone scratched freedom the  
tragedy a  
battle triptych with the  
main focus on  
the tragic side of the  
commune its timelessness  
despite defeat maybe  
only ghosts can ever  
win against time

maybe time is a  
particularly german problem

you said

because for them the verbs always  
specify the time yet  
the time is never right

you said

it always must be negotiated anew in  
vietnamese the context of words determines  
the time and the germans  
have an endless problem with time  
because they want to enforce it with  
their grammar or

and then you briefly  
silently looked at me  
an old man in the painting with  
bayonet and a  
naked woman with scarf a  
speaker puffed up screaming behind  
somewhere at the painting's edge  
a cross time is never right  
the images can assert whatever  
they want in the end there remains  
nothing but an assertion about  
time and subsequent times  
remember

with the help of these false images  
pasts which  
never happened in this way but  
even if they had happened differently it  
wouldn't matter at all  
for subsequent times you  
just take the time that  
you're handed why  
is that asshole staring at us  
the whole time like that

hence they have a right and a wrong  
a planned and an unplanned an  
allowed and a disallowed all  
a grammatical problem they are  
as bureaucratic as their grammar

which you said

and you continued  
to read aloud and i  
felt sick

because we are just not planned here

but we are here so now there is  
nothing to be done i mean what's the deal then  
the talk about reciprocity come off it sister state  
behind it all nothing but economics in the end

of course what else

yes not what else why  
do they tell us then we  
are working for progress we  
can't go out we  
should avoid public places you  
should have no contact with the women comrades  
as if it would be a question of sister-state  
reciprocity whenever  
a state is behind something the person counts for shit

whatever is written on the posters  
whatever is written in the pamphlets in the end it's all about  
economics everything  
is in the end economics that shitty  
paris commune a  
question of economics vietnam a  
question of economics the tragedy a  
question of economics the battle triptych a  
question of economics time as a whole a  
question of economics outside those  
in the churchyard a question of economics

yes of course all  
life is economy economy is  
risk life is risk

and i still felt sick

the gatekeeper came closer

i thought then to myself he  
should just come closer i'll throw up at his  
i am pregnant and you  
completely irritated

no not a bit i just didn't know  
what i now what you do i mean  
everyone knows  
what it means

and the gatekeeper stared at us and then  
those outside again in the rain there were  
not a lot at the start they said later there  
were more and more

// tân sơn nhạ̃t international airport  
a daughter again between the places  
an old voice does not want to go to pulau bidong

giữa các lần<sup>8</sup> //

delay

continuing chaos because of the volcano how  
can a single volcano throw so much ash into the sky the  
display remains silent about  
the interruption wider than worldwide  
now silence

i stroll through the  
transfer area that  
continues to maintain its normalcy very  
amusing the duty free shops open as if  
there were normal business why  
do they open why don't they close it  
is apparently more likely that the  
worldwide air traffic collapses  
than the fricking duty free shop doesn't  
open in the morning but  
the toblerone has to be sold so  
the world ends not  
with a bang but with ash dust and a traffic jam

next day once again knocked waited

you again

wait

i don't know where

listen i want nothing

show me the photo again

here

come in

---

<sup>8</sup> between times

the door opens she takes the photo points  
to the coat hooks goes  
into the kitchen what  
do you want from me

you were in pulau

maybe why  
are you interested in that

because i am researching the island

were you ever there

no i

wanted to collect material first and then

where do you come from

germany like  
i said

no originally

east germany and you  
why do you speak german

the ugliest airport in the world

you know

what someone said when

we landed welcome

to freedom then

we got a room

pocket money and three weeks later

they had forgotten we were there

why did you want the photo

three weeks later they had  
forgotten pulau

why did you want the photo

three weeks later our pictures had  
erased the growing number  
of victims the question  
of a survivor is not why  
but who didn't

why did you want the photo

what do you think

you recognize something in it

who wouldn't  
it is a picture everyone  
recognizes something in it here thanks  
i don't know what  
became of this women  
you're seeking

but you know her

have you talked to others about  
pulau

not yet

i wasn't there for long what  
do you want to know it stank day  
and night it was overcrowded what  
else

would you go with me  
to the island  
pulau bidong

// tôi muốn hiểu thời gian  
tôi muốn trải thời gian

tôi muốn nhìn vào thời gian từ mọi phía<sup>9</sup> //

what then  
if there were no time at all  
    really only  
    history and  
    only history forms time

what then if  
all time in itself is lost  
doesn't happen at all if  
    only through history  
time can be found again

what then if  
time in itself is without history  
without direction careens from place to place

what if all time in itself  
were so free that it hurt if  
time in itself belonged to  
another freedom which we  
can never understand because our time  
    is simply so  
    our history is finite

which also hurts

however here it is not the  
possibility that hurts but  
the impossibility of knowing that  
you can always only be part  
    of a history that  
    not all time is just  
    freely available

it also hurts

---

<sup>9</sup> i want to understand time  
i want to spend time  
i want to look at time from all sides

that everything elapses except for  
time which  
always remains the same  
at least behind the  
stories in which  
we cloth it this time so that we can  
endure it because if it were simply  
to be so naked in front of us time  
in all its silence in  
all its ahistoricity maybe it  
would be even more painful than  
telling a story about it about  
this naked indifference of time

// leipzig later 80's  
khi cuộc sống lặng lẽ tắt vào ban đêm<sup>10</sup> //

one was sent back because  
she broke her arm that  
it was actually her colleague who  
didn't want it to come out  
that she was pregnant by him  
that somehow got lost back  
in vietnam she died alone

or

one who  
pulled it off she  
wanted to stay she got up  
the next morning as if  
newly born  
and was permitted to stay another two years then  
she was sent back one way or another

or

one was sent back after she got

---

<sup>10</sup> when life quietly shuts down at night

blood poisoning from  
the hanger it  
was just lying around  
in the room and  
it got caught when  
pulled out so  
it was all taken care of  
so to speak then it just got stuck and she  
died after a long flight  
delay  
in the hospital her  
legs were shaking before the operation when the doctor  
removed his mask she lay there still

or

one  
who only helped who  
thought while watching how  
the metal how that felt  
whether it  
the metal or whether it  
would be better or  
how far in  
or whether she should hold more firmly or  
more loosely or whether  
it is at all and  
the poster on the wall she  
stared at then to distract herself  
hanging there for weeks months and  
she ignored the jerking arms

or

one was sent back because she  
got sick again and again the treatment  
in the sister state was too expensive for the sister state the flight  
was long and cheap the remaining time  
short and nice

or

one was sent back who  
didn't want to use the hanger she  
sat on the bed her roommate was  
holding her another had the  
hanger then she stood up and  
immediately got on the plane  
deported to the sister state no one knew what happened her  
trace got lost after the airport

but i  
will stay

// leipzig late 80s she is waiting in the pre-fab building  
he is running through the fog  
à anh sẽ hát cho em nghe khi ngoài kia họ thét gào<sup>11</sup> //

from the window  
watched how  
the fog creeps  
through the streets how  
the water on the range slowly boils how  
the tea brews how  
people go out leave  
the pre-fab building in the evening  
go back inside how  
an unease settles over the city  
hardly noticeable when  
you're constantly preoccupied with how  
once again the first ones  
talked about the people about unity about  
the end about the beginning and  
about the people  
i was just hoping that we still would be  
two three  
four five  
weeks here undetected that  
no one notices

---

<sup>11</sup> well, i'll sing it to you when they scream out there

that i still am still two three  
four  
five  
weeks in your room

maybe  
we were lucky that  
recently they were so  
concerned with themselves that  
they somehow no longer noticed us that  
they were more about themselves  
than us maybe  
we were lucky

canine squads in the evenings the  
barking seeps into the room human  
chains are broken up masses who  
call for unity for a  
time they no longer  
worried about us there  
was bureaucratic confusion and  
we were  
the least of the problems i  
hidden in the room boiling  
water waiting

there were fewer and fewer  
at the machines finally when  
the people returned it got tense  
during the hours between  
the housing block and factory we  
were checked questioned suspected i  
was interrogated several times grilled  
there were eyes everywhere in  
the last weeks at  
the machines there was talk  
again about the people  
someone explained to me that  
they wanted one  
people again a

national unity again that  
i would not really be able to  
understand sure  
i thought north south west east the  
world is only to be  
imagined as divisible

from the window watched later how  
things became tenser the  
whispering increased how they began  
to go out how  
the streets became fuller how  
the canine squads grew larger how  
the human chains became ever longer how  
the churchyard was no longer adequate

someone  
explained to me that they  
wanted one people again a  
national unity that  
finally should be restored someone  
explained to me that  
they were yearning ultimately for  
such a unity that  
blooming landscapes were  
already standing by and  
just waiting to  
burst out here into the churchyard in the rain

and i hoped it would happen i  
hoped it would happen maybe  
then we can just stay

from the window watched how  
the streets first grew quieter then  
ever fuller I thought why  
would they be interested  
now in a child they  
now have too many other problems they  
are losing their state no  
wait they are just scrapping it that

this is possible the  
    paris commune comes  
    to mind again a battle triptych  
    in which the states collapse they  
    get the state off their back they  
    are just scrapping it

and the blooming landscapes which  
    were promised once would yet  
        appear they  
    were all sure about that they  
    would all be like pie in the sky  
        these landscapes  
    that were already hanging on  
        the posters everything  
        will bloom they  
    were all sure and after the fall  
    a spring would be waiting they  
        were all sure a  
        shared a national spring and  
        not even i asked myself who  
            is meant by that by  
        the national springtime who  
            may one day stroll  
    through these blooming landscapes and  
        we  
        they screamed and  
        we  
        they called and as one  
        we  
        they demanded and this  
        we  
    moved through the nights through the  
        streets this  
        we  
        to which we so wished to belong  
        and this we  
        never again stopped  
    speaking out there on the streets in  
    the nights on the squares this we wanted  
        finally to come into its own we

have been shut out of history  
long enough after all we  
saw it the freedom on  
the other side we  
too want it now  
the freedom sellout we  
too want it now  
the full responsibility finally to be  
able to say what we  
really think even if  
no one likes it we  
were oppressed long enough and  
we  
they screamed and  
we  
they demanded and  
we  
want to free ourselves finally over there  
at the markets the future  
is already waiting  
a time that no longer knows  
time that just simply lives on mindlessly the  
future and that  
is what we too  
want now we  
want to be we again we  
nothing else and  
we  
didn't know who  
they now actually meant with their  
we but they knew  
who they meant with this  
we  
even the canine squads who  
at some point no longer knew how they  
were against this we  
that they actually were too and  
we  
they shouted and as one  
we  
they spoke and as one

we  
they moved along below the window on  
the street and  
i only hoped that  
we  
are not too visible that  
we  
now the three of us are  
not too visible that we  
can just somehow  
participate in this  
we out there that was  
marching straight into the blooming landscapes  
which were promised them

// tân sơn nhạ̃t international airport a daughter  
comes to pulau bidong an old voice would prefer to say nothing  
còn bão vẫn còn<sup>12</sup> //

and still nothing still they stand around  
here in these waiting areas  
always the same worldwide that  
may even produce some calm like  
in hospitals the sterile atmosphere here  
at the saigon airport trolley case  
next to trolley case next  
to eyes sunk in the  
displays while  
time passes by  
in between announcements all  
flights still delayed what  
are they actually waiting for still as if  
something would arrive here among  
the array of products among  
how-to books travel books among  
these they allow themselves something they lie  
on the suitcases sweaty their  
suits sweaty and wait

---

<sup>12</sup> the storm is still there

dead time the  
only true utopia maybe  
that we still have  
standby time

delay

where previously products were now  
someone is standing there makes  
out of dead time itself added value status update  
my freedom  
that too only a quote for the crowd if  
even boredom becomes competitive we  
want  
they said at the recruitment that  
you remain true to yourself even  
if it means that we must  
let you go which  
then also happened someone  
must be let go because the  
spirit  
is no longer right someone  
is let go because  
the true self deep down that  
is professed did not  
persuade someone  
is let go into dead time standby time  
outside until you can place yourself once again  
product placement of the soul oh well  
the dog can shit on it how  
often should you repeat that we've known  
it for a long time and play along just as  
we always play along

delay

i scroll through the photos before  
the departure father in the store  
among the curtains table clothes which  
no one buys anymore

scroll further arrival saigon international airport  
people at the airport for me  
total strangers the streets which  
mean nothing to me the hotel  
nothing as well the address on the card  
her address her door  
in the boat next to her

her face studies furtively to  
find something familiar in it she  
doesn't know the woman who I seek  
no she said she doesn't know what  
happened to her what  
does that mean what happened to her  
her face studies what  
happened to her something familiar that  
happened to her what  
then she spoke at some point

when they came to the city they said you  
can all stay they said we  
are now finally united  
again they said our  
division is over what comes  
together belongs together the  
americans had already left saigon weeks before  
what stayed behind was a  
frightened city we  
cheered on the soldiers once again who  
moved through the streets this time  
our own while the first boats  
had already left the city they said  
we had nothing to worry about one week later  
the raids began the  
interrogations the insinuations the whispers what  
is reunification without exile excess without  
something they can deport  
to create identity those  
freshly united must be able  
to separate themselves somehow  
from the old

must be able to  
cast off clean house discard watch  
out when getting off the sand  
is soft you can  
easily sink in here

she looked into the water i  
asked her when  
she was here last

i never left

she stood up  
carefully  
looked at me touched  
the water on the beach a gull  
dismembered a fish

i never left the  
first boats came in may  
the camp  
here was built  
for four thousand  
perhaps on the first boats  
that arrived here there were twenty  
thirty people who  
thought they would stay only  
a few weeks here in august there  
were one hundred and three  
months later ten thousand

the gull stared at us cocked  
its head awry beat  
its wings sunk its  
beak again why  
did the numbers rise when  
the war ended

shortly after the end families  
were broken up to  
gain more control

then came  
the summonses to  
the reeducation camps you  
had three days' time  
to report to one of these camps  
we heard  
about executions forced labor indoctrination and  
that was only what they could  
talk about when  
people returned from the camp  
they were silent and  
repeated phrases the gaze  
mindless focused straight ahead into  
the future that was promised if  
anyone actually returned

we walked along the beach through  
a forest beyond it  
cliffs noise nothing  
otherwise far and wide on the ground  
hardly any traces she said

you can never  
even or  
imagine how that was here what  
this place once

i've seen pictures

pictures  
of the barracks here  
on the beach

pictures

of the ships  
that arrived

everyone always believes the pictures  
hold on tight to something with that  
they always only overwrite what was

but with the pictures  
we finally noticed  
something about what actually  
was happening here

pictures erase the  
truth is found in the story  
not in the picture

then you explain

in the end you also  
only make a picture again  
thanks to the pictures  
you once again see only what  
you want to see  
the photo that you showed me what  
do you see in it why did you show it  
to me

why not

where did you get it

if you don't recognize anything in it  
why does it interest you

it is a nice picture that's  
all it reminds me  
of this island

why

she laughed

they said the helicopters will arrive soon and  
we would be flown out so  
we waited for days we  
took turns  
watching on the beach for survivors some

washed up on shore at night and we wrote down the names  
of those who had been on board then

we called out  
the names in the camp until  
someone collapsed who  
recognized one of the names

how long were you here

until the helicopters arrived

then you were flown out

flown out oh please first  
journalists were flown in who  
stared at us like  
backward people in the camps

you yourself explained how  
the conditions were here

and these conditions were  
exploited several hundred of us  
were singled out our misery was documented  
with many pictures our helplessness was pinpointed  
we were flown out and then our new good fortune was confirmed in  
the new world while here  
boats continued to capsize mild infections led  
to death no more water was available we  
were flown out and with us  
the responsibility was flown out away  
from this island we  
were allowed to go so that the rest here or  
elsewhere could die in peace

we are interesting only  
as a small number this  
just so humanism can still tolerate us  
the representatives who they can rescue we  
in all the pictures never stood for  
the rescued we

stood and stand for those still left behind we  
were allowed to go for the war of images for which we  
were only extras and the backdrop never  
again they said never again  
should people drown when fleeing read the caption  
under the pictures and  
that the west now was committed to those  
drowning while fleeing  
the west  
in all these pictures  
was writ large and  
never again  
they said and in the  
camp someone died of blood poisoning and  
the family stared apathetically at  
the flies on  
his eyelids and  
never again and  
a fraction of these people were  
flown out in a storm of pictures and then the pictures were history  
then they had the pictures  
of the rescue

they tried to help everyone

words

but they said they couldn't  
help everyone

of course not come over here there they lie still  
years later those  
who they stupidly could no longer help

she led me through the forest  
up on a hill on it a  
shack below on the beach several  
gulls were fighting over a dead fish

the barracks stood here  
you see

no

of course not nothing  
left so what should i explain why  
    start over again it's enough  
when i can't forget the pictures i  
saw them from the boat lit up the  
    barracks while i  
    flailed around while i  
hunted screamed flailed  
    around here  
    stood the barracks here  
i waited days weeks months  
while the boats arrived in an hourly rhythm while one  
    after the other capsized hopelessly  
    overcrowded these  
boats and i stared apathetically at the sea  
    where i saw my daughter  
    for the last time

i tried not to  
irritate her remained silent watched  
    the gulls

these pictures  
you can never forget what  
    do you really know  
thanks to the pictures which  
    long ago sunk into history  
    and are casually used by  
those who make this history their own  
    the horror the  
    overcrowded boats that capsized here the  
journalists who report on phantom boats that  
    float around beyond the island did they  
    see the boats arrive the  
bodies in them lying on their bellies in knee-deep water do  
    these pictures have something that really  
    accomplishes something sometime

and then i did ask  
which daughter

// at the hub silence slow motion memories  
tất cả những người này họ đến từ đâu<sup>13</sup> //

in east germany  
i hardly encountered any  
racism  
because the propaganda machine functioned  
so well  
but after the fall of the wall  
the devils showed  
their real faces

most of us  
went back but where did we belong  
who was responsible for us we  
were in limbo for years  
forced  
to go out on the streets  
to protect our existence

and we were there and  
waited we  
were there and waited we  
were there and waited for what  
what does it mean  
to fall out of time what  
does it mean to want to go back what  
does it mean to fall out of time  
to where do you fall

// leipzig after the fall of the wall  
welcome to the present  
chúng tôi đã hết thời<sup>14</sup> //

---

<sup>13</sup> where are all these people from

<sup>14</sup> we are out of date

but this we but  
this we but  
this we had no place  
at all for us

the first ones were deported  
flown out taken away we  
we would ask you to leave  
this country now that no longer exists  
now there exists here  
something else in which you simply do not  
no simply do not feature in  
which within you are not present

although previously still from the sister state  
now there were only gooks

although previously still the shared  
pre-fabs now there were the investors

because someone had to well these pre-fabs

well someone had to well

these pre-fabs what  
do you do with them otherwise who  
wants to other than a  
few hotels or what do I know

one evening on the way home the  
entry door was open our room emptied out we  
didn't even have an authorization we  
were fair game  
the first years nothing nothing  
so our beds flew

so our things flew  
and i stood below and  
watched how the apartment  
flew

and we thought life at our risk

and i thought at least my daughter so that she  
                  doesn't like me then  
                  so that she doesn't like me  
then so that she doesn't like me  
                  then

so we went underground

first in the direction of provincial halle  
for example there we had acquaintances

life at our risk

celle chemnitz everyway there were  
                  enclaves

illegal meanwhile  
out there the we found its way back to itself  
                  finally united  
                  again unity again

in the wrong time  
born between then and  
now between yesterday and today  
                  between future and history

in between lived with friends played  
                  cards in the evening  
                  remembered

back  
wherever that once was

they offered money but  
                  no one  
                  wanted to go back

about the sister state  
nothing more was heard instead

market economy instead  
blooming landscapes instead  
the new times  
in which this we finally once again  
recognized clear boundaries it celebrated  
the new times it celebrated  
the new we on its own

and we celebrated your first  
birthday

secretly because you were not  
allowed to be there  
secretly because you had  
no history at all  
secretly because you still  
had not even a  
name

where to go then  
better to sell curtains  
table cloths

and you celebrate your second birthday slowly  
the sky clears up slowly  
you may have your own apartment because  
no one else wants them anyway suddenly  
we were once again needed buying power  
knows no nationality

and you celebrate your third birthday

actually your first

we live at our risk we  
live precariously because we do not  
exist here in this  
post-traumatic story this  
love story of a nation that  
now finally wants to be at home with itself again we  
sell cigarettes and

falsify your birthdate erase three  
of your years erase your history erase  
your past erase  
this time so that you  
have a future

// pulau bidong an old voice remembers  
tôi không muốn nói nữa<sup>15</sup> //

i climbed in the boat pretty much at the end looked  
back time and again and saw how  
even more climbed in and even more and how  
they fought at the port and that still other boats  
also already overcrowded and that  
still other boats also already overcrowded and  
that still other boats also already overcrowded and  
you jumped in the water that pooled  
in the bottom of the boat and  
more and more climbed in when  
the motor already and you  
jumped in the water in the boat you  
in the water knee deep in the boat you  
in the water while the  
city in the background smaller while the  
city in the background smaller which belonged no longer  
to anyone look here hãy nhìn đây  
i said and the water rose higher look here  
saigon liberated city now forced labor camp flags  
were swapped people  
replaced that  
other boats also already overcrowded and you  
are in the water on board while  
the city disappeared while  
the boat at some point rolled look  
here i said look over here over here  
hãy nhìn đây while  
everyone changed sides while the  
captain became more frantic

---

<sup>15</sup> i do not want to talk anymore

while the city disappeared and knee deep  
the water pooled on board look here  
i said look over here as  
the first baggage overboard as  
the first cries ceased look here as  
the first ones overboard and the ship rolled  
in slow motion and you looked over here  
and i didn't listen to the cries as  
the water rushed in i  
didn't listen to the sirens as  
the water rushed in i  
searched for your eyes as  
the water rushed in to hold on to them  
and you looked at me and already then  
the dead were floating in the sea

already then the dead  
clustered in the water and  
already then the cries for help sounded bitter already  
then they ceased quickly their  
mouths full of water their arms pushing  
against the current their  
hair going down in unison whoever  
counted for nothing in life does  
not surface in death whoever  
counted for nothing in life does  
not surface in death whoever  
counted for nothing in life does  
not surface in death and  
who counts anyway who counts anyway who  
counts anyway who counts anyway anything

already then  
the dead were recorded without being counted

lifeless numbers  
next to pictures

and already then the numbers numbed the  
world which showed its concern with  
bound hands faced with the

rhythm of the current already then  
the numbers counted for nothing who  
even counts the distance from bow to bottom who  
even counts the number of fingers in the water  
and you look at me as  
the boat rolled to the side and you overboard and  
i didn't hear the cries i  
jumped after you i didn't hear the sirens  
i dove in after you i  
grabbed for your hand but there were so many  
hands and i held my breath deeper if it must be  
deeper to the very bottom if it must be  
to the very bottom and grabbed at all the hands  
one of them had to belong to you and look here all  
these hands one had to belong to you one had to be  
yours one had to belong to you and look over here  
look here all these hands  
most already cold you had disappeared  
look here i  
screamed look over here and i counted the distance  
from bow to bottom i counted the distance  
from bow to bottom finger for finger hand  
for hand and who counts  
these hands who  
counts them i  
held my breath  
counted again the distance from bow to bottom but then the boat  
capsized then we plunged into the sea then  
you had disappeared among all  
these hands who counts these hands who  
counts them how many between you and me  
from your hand to mine most already cold among  
all these hands who  
counts them even who  
counts these hands  
hãy nhìn đây  
look over here look here look here

// pulau bidong she resurfaces  
from the water and tells the end

that the old voice cannot know  
a daughter takes notes //

someone reached for my hand took me pulled me out again

my mouth full of water someone  
pulled me out my  
mouth full of water someone  
pulled me out I heard  
only cries i  
heard only sirens my  
bag was all that remained this  
photo in it among the clothes and  
someone brought me back to  
the port first and the floor was still wet because  
my hair didn't stop dripping when  
someone asked for my name and i counted  
the drops and i  
said how i was called how  
my mother called me how you would  
call me where  
is my mother i asked my  
hair wet the floor dripped my shoes in the  
water unbelieving one word after another trembling where  
is my mother no one answered i was  
left with the possibilities i  
tried to sift through them all those  
years all those possibilities until  
i accepted that the  
boat capsized the water came the hand  
slipped away i  
sank counted the  
seconds under water opened my eyes blurry  
passing me by the luggage and hands and shoes and  
a boat upside down I explained how our house looked where  
we had lived how  
the sky looked in the evening but  
no one knew where to put me i  
resurfaced only cries one  
two three counted the  
seconds above water sank again

one two three cries clothing stuttering motors the  
pacific is warm at night someone  
floats down painlessly until  
you hear nothing more one  
two three seconds under water one  
two three then other boats  
came sirens honking cries one  
two three and i grasped at a hand  
someone brought me to a new family someone  
gave me a new name someone  
gave me a new history i  
accepted all that  
what remained blurred pictures  
the bag this photo among the clothes i  
performed the name performed  
what they suggested to me what  
they commanded performed  
everything in order  
to finally get away

// pulau bidong a daughter takes notes an old voice explains //

here were the barracks here  
i waited days weeks months  
while the boats arrived in an hourly rhythm while one  
after the other capsized

hopelessly overcrowded the  
boats on the beach  
we collected the washed-up clothing  
apathetically looking at the sea we noted  
the names of those who weren't washed up  
apathetically the waves hammered  
apathetically i observed the  
flow of the currents  
apathetically i waited for  
you to show up again

until the helicopters came  
then we were flown out

they hardly celebrated us  
that we landed we  
the stranded ones the  
rescued ones the  
ones celebrated in the storm of pictures  
descended from the airplane and  
the applause erased our history erased  
us the  
applause at the airport the pictures for  
the world erased us i  
saw still the island counted  
the waves while  
they cheered us i grasped  
still in the water somewhere there  
my daughter is still floating

why are you so  
sure that she  
i mean maybe

I saw her disappear i  
saw how  
she disappeared

but there were numerous boats

I saw how  
she in the sea

maybe she was  
on another

i am not  
the woman  
you are seeking

which woman

where did you find this photo

why

what do you see in it

nothing it is yellowed faded you  
can hardly recognize anything

why then did you show it  
to me

what did you recognize in it

where did you find it

in an archive

in saigon

no why

but then

in some archive

what was this archive was  
anything else in it

documents and other photos

what documents

documents memoirs things that  
are found in an archive

and who owns this archive

why do you want to know that

you travel here knock on  
my door show me this picture and  
do not know in whose archive you

have been digging

archival secret

archival secret

yes confidential sources

confidential sources

why is that so important to you

why won't you tell me

it belonged to my mother

i'm sorry

oh please

what

yes what exactly are you sorry about

about your mother

what about my mother

apparently you thought you  
would find something here

i never expected that

and unfortunately i cannot help you

i already noticed that

i don't know where  
you will find this women who  
you are seeking

she probably disappeared long ago

probably

maybe she was here once

maybe

sat on the beach waited  
until the helicopter came

what should she have done otherwise  
keep searching how long where in saigon  
she would probably  
have been shot on her return

not accepting

how easily that can be said

she could have searched later

after thirty years

twenty to thirty years what  
does that mean anyway

maybe she tried it maybe it  
did her in maybe what  
do we know anyway

yes that's right what  
do we know anyway

maybe she just  
wanted certainty

certainty

yes

to tell herself a story that  
reassures her yes why not maybe she wanted that  
to deceive herself

she maybe didn't know any better

maybe

i'm sorry that i can't  
help you further

you know what i always find strange  
when i speak in german

what

that the verbs determine the time

that is truly strange

as a child i never  
understood never  
comprehended that  
time can be specified according to a  
word in  
vietnamese  
time is from the context  
becomes visible there is  
no self-contained time

why do you tell me that

your address was on the envelop  
in which i found the photo

maybe just a misunderstanding

maybe

// tân sơn nhất international airport

between the places between the times  
tôi lắn các ngón tay của mình trên toàn thế giới  
và thì thầm đâu có nỗi thương đau<sup>16</sup> //

delay  
nothing said  
what  
should you even say where  
would you begin and why

delay  
and still  
they wait here a few  
hours still they say a few  
hours until  
time continues again until  
they lift off from here one  
after the other those  
travelers constantly  
at idling speed here  
constantly passing through waiting where  
are you all going to where are you drawn

delay  
nothing said what  
should they have said anyway

delay  
some archive or another  
some carton some  
label document some  
trace a story your—  
daughter—  
lived near you on the  
other side  
behind the wall

and no  
unification because

---

<sup>16</sup> i trace my fingers all over the world and whisper no pain

only cracks no  
unification because  
only new stories no  
unification because constantly  
at the wrong place where  
do you begin what  
should you say what

would i say to her

nothing at all

where do you begin

nowhere

again and again from the start  
you begin to tell to  
explain to remember always  
from the start and anyway you arrive  
nowhere which crack  
can be even can be even  
can be even seamlessly which crack

i would have told her that  
i always went to the port and to  
our house which  
someone else now for a long time that  
the new family was quite nice that  
i plan to go to the sister state

why didn't you  
say that to her

i would tell her that i  
forgot how she looked that  
i forgot how her voice sounded that  
i forgot what we last talked about that  
at some point it didn't hurt anymore  
the forgetting

stories that you  
then tell yourself  
when you sort things out for yourself where  
you had been

stories that  
entire states must tell themselves  
when they sort things out for themselves

stories  
that simply don't want to heal over so  
long as you like to tell them the cracks  
here everywhere whoever  
finds them can keep them

when thinking i always only land  
at the cracks

land and am trapped again

why didn't you tell her that

that i forgot why she  
wanted to leave with me on this boat how  
she looked

why didn't you tell her that

that i had gotten a position that  
i had felt like a stranger there that  
i would have liked to tell her this and that

always only cracks over which you stumble when  
telling almost as if you talk to  
distract from the cracks

i would say to her that  
i forgot what  
i saw under the water that  
i was told she was dead

that i saw her sink down  
several times in the water

why didn't you tell her that  
i never sank that  
i went back to the shore then to  
the sister state and carried you  
into the new world why didn't you  
tell her that

one crack after another points the way  
through history

why didn't you tell her that

what

that they  
lived next to each other until  
the wall fell that  
they both felt like strangers until  
today why  
didn't you tell her that  
your father now curtains that  
he now table cloths that he now  
has become silent since  
living alone that  
he can't bear the photos that  
he laughs awkwardly if you ask him about  
the past that  
he was a good translator that  
he now table cloths that he now curtains that  
he now has become silent since  
living now alone that he remained polite in the hospital  
after she stopped breathing that  
he visited her every day until  
her room was cleared out that he  
fell silent for a week in his store  
at the city's edge where he now table cloths

whatever that might mean

to establish yourself

living at risk

after he was ignored for years

he barged in again at the  
unification at the  
we cries at the  
we calls at the  
we are finally someone again  
but he was just an intruder

i would say to her that i  
carried you while the  
walls went up and down while  
we sold cigarettes

i would say to her that in  
the rooms  
it was hot in the evenings that also  
the germans didn't only  
start saying gooks when  
the walls were down that  
they then however said it louder that  
they then suddenly did it more openly that  
they then suddenly did it enthusiastically that  
they then finally were allowed to say we we  
loud and they

i would say to her  
that i carried you that i  
counted the distance which  
we ran together foot by foot until  
someone said to me that i had only a few more months

pictures who's  
interested in them anyway

and the last feet i  
counted in slow motion

stories what do they tell anyway

the last feet i took step by step  
foot by foot until at some point  
i no longer could

the west  
what is it anyway  
a unification that  
will never happen

why didn't you say to her  
that you my daughter i her  
child that I out of the boat before her  
out of time before her but  
never out of history

unification what  
does it mean when  
does it mean

why didn't you say to her that  
you her granddaughter that you found her why  
didn't you say that to her

i would like to have told her that i  
landed in west germany  
the ugliest airport in the world that  
the sky here is ugly that  
the trees here are beige that  
i never wanted to stay here but  
that i also didn't want to return

what cracks  
anyway can be seamlessly

i would have said to her that i  
sometimes no  
i would not maybe  
i would have said to her nothing at all

maybe i would not have known where  
to begin

i would have said to her that i  
carried her through the city foot by foot  
on the boat foot by foot and look here  
i would have said again look over here *hãy nhìn đây*  
and held on to your eyes from bow  
to bottom foot  
by foot among all these hands held on  
to your eyes look over here

what does that mean anyway  
unification it doesn't mean who  
but against whom

why did you only stare at her later  
in the boat on the return on the street and  
she stared at you why  
did you say nothing

both of you stared at the picture and both  
of you knew what you were staring at both  
of you knew with whom you were standing both  
didn't know what to say

yes what

i hope i could tell them  
something

yes

I hope they understand now our  
history a bit  
better i  
hope they understand now what  
happened here i  
hope i could help them somehow

but we understand nothing we

never understand anything we  
tell ourselves these stories show ourselves  
the pictures and only see  
the crack in the stories the  
gaps

delay

maybe it was better this way what  
should you say anyway

yes thanks now  
i understand even less

do you understand something better  
now that you were there

what unity means what  
we means what  
we have become who  
we have become how  
we have become your  
legs still thrashing in the water the  
west on the shores already  
the waves are rising already  
the cracks are straining already  
the walls are breaking we  
is being cried again no matter  
what we tell we  
is being cried again no matter  
what we heard we  
is being cried again as if  
there were never a crack

only maybe this we is  
just the very crack about which we are talking

or maybe that  
i suddenly only a few more months  
and time in german a  
grammatical trap

you certainly didn't say that to her

or maybe that i  
actually wouldn't have known where  
to begin that  
you can maybe say less  
than you think if you  
have lost yourself

which cracks  
can be even seamlessly

why didn't you say to her that  
you next to each other

or that she actually only in  
an airplane

whether she simply would like to come along

why didn't you

whether she now simply will  
come along

or that the flight only a few hours that  
at least you together

that not everyone drowned in the waves

in any case not i

maybe indeed maybe  
I drowned there like everyone  
just came up again for the pictures  
was down there forever

or maybe that the  
curtains in your father's store ugly that  
it doesn't help that he alone in the past weeks

apathetic and constantly talked about how we  
got to know each other

or maybe nothing at all maybe  
that is the best nothing at all  
maybe that is in the end the only thing that  
can be said nothing at all maybe

or yes maybe simply nothing at all

delay they  
sit there and wait

outside the ash storm they  
say worldwide all planes are down they  
say worldwide they're sitting there and stare

delay display  
next to display on  
which the world rushes by

they say in a few hours it will start again  
the talking we  
believe in it we believe that it  
will start again otherwise what maybe  
they will fly again in a few hours maybe  
they will then get out of here it  
will come the next announcement if it comes it  
will soon start again

cảm tạ  
tạm biệt<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> special thanks, goodbye

