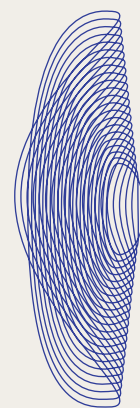
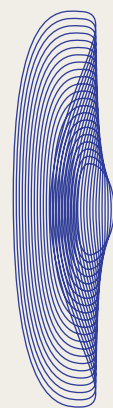
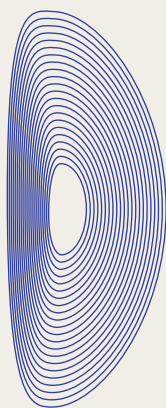
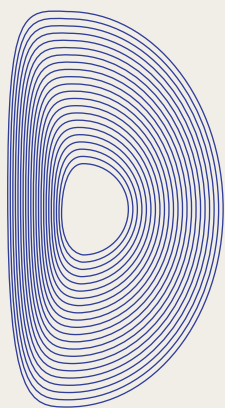
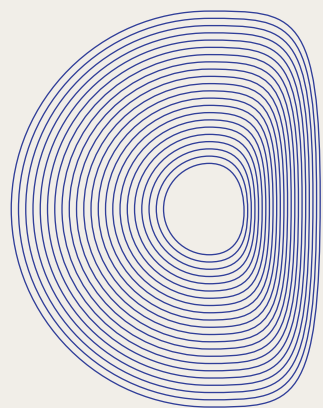




**A research and sound installation project**  
**"Hồi Sông"**



Artists  
Nguyễn Nhung  
Zach Sch

Hồi Sóng" - A research and sound installation project

**Concept and sound design by:**

Nguyễn Nhung  
Zach Sch

**Narration written by:**

Đỗ Hương  
Nguyễn Nhung  
Zach Sch

**Vocal performances by:**

Anh Phi Trần  
Phạm Văn Cường  
Rami Abadir  
Thế Vũ

**Archival recordings and interview materials from:**

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Director Lam Lê  
Humboldt University of Berlin

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Sàn ART



Supported by:

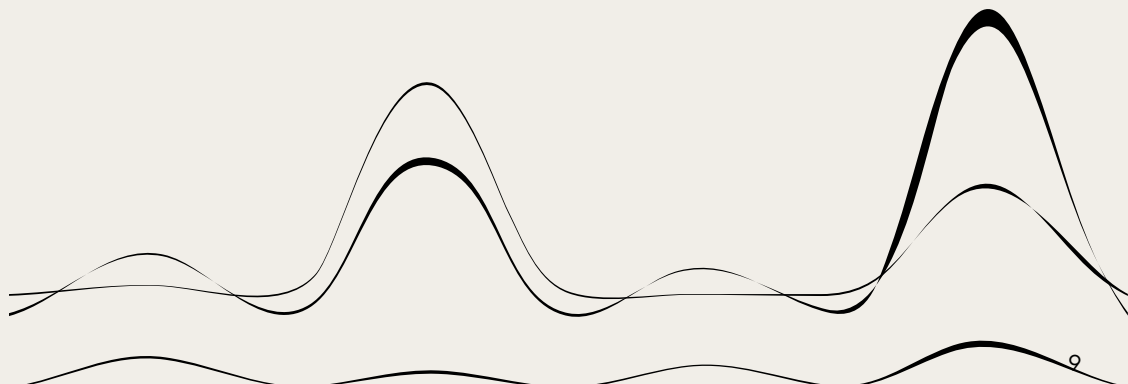
**Special thanks to our friends who have helped us during the research and production of this project:**

Nguyễn Khiếu Anh  
Jonathan Mayers  
Mai Phương

*Written by Mary Lou David*

*Translated by Vicky Đỗ  
Translation reviewed by Khuong Lê*

\*Disclaimer: This text was specifically written in response to the artwork installation and its subsequent display at Sàn Art space in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.



From the late 19th century onward, the successive inventions of sound-transmitting technology, from the telephone, phonograph and gramophone, changed our aural experiences forever.

Sound went from an ephemeral and abstract world to something that could be sealed onto records, a collectible object that could be extracted from its original context and infinitely repeated or reproduced in a different time and place. Sounds, which had so long been imprisoned in a world of textual annotations, transcripts and interpretations, could finally speak for themselves in the most objective and tangible manner.<sup>1</sup> Such innovations led to the creation of the first Phonogram Archives in Berlin and Vienna, eventually developing into a major European network attracting all sorts of academic fields.<sup>2</sup> But in the vast expanse of this sound-recording project, one pocket of history is of particular interest to us: the use of prisoners of war, captured from the frontlines of World War I, as some of its initial research material.<sup>3</sup>

**1** Britta Lange's research on the Humboldt sound archives provides not only a comprehensive survey of its history but a plethora of invaluable insights in regards to archival material and sound recordings in general. B. Lange, 'Archive, Collection, Museum: On the History of the Archiving of Voices at the Sound Archive of the Humboldt University', trans. by B. Carter, *Journal of Sonic Studies*, <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/326465/32646>, [accessed 03/09/21].

**2** Their interests in sound-recording went beyond musicology and linguistics, but also expanded to other academic fields such as chemistry, biology, medicine, anatomy, physiology, psychology, acoustics, anthropology and ethnology. Source: *ibid*.

**3** The Ministry of Culture and Education approved the "idea of using the involuntary stay of the prisoners of war held in Germany for sound recordings of speech" as part of a historical conservation plan to record as many languages, dialects, and songs as possible. From 1915-1918, researchers visited a total of 31 German Prisoners of War (POW) camps resulting in 1,651 gramophone records with voice, music, and instrumental recordings, and 1,022 wax cylinders with music recordings. Source: *ibid*.

Starting an archive is much like a leap of faith, one is partly blind to its usefulness or purpose in the future. What initially began in 1909 as an encyclopedic survey of linguistics and musicology morphed into one of the most concrete sources testifying the presence of colonial conscripts, forcefully or deceptively taken away from their homes by the French, to participate in a war that wasn't theirs.<sup>4</sup> While their crucial presence - for so long forgotten - is slowly reexamined by Western countries as part of a shared collective history, many gaps in the chaos of war remain unfilled.<sup>5</sup> Lists of words, numbers, prayers, chants, descriptions

**4.** Initially, France's method of colonial recruitment was founded on the basis of voluntarism before moving onto forced military conscription or coercion under the pretense of patriotism, false claims of a prosperity, inducements and so on. Such tactics were used not only for colonial infantrymen (*tirailleurs*), but also for the *travailleurs* (workers) sent to work in ammunition, gunpowder and aviation factories for example. Sources include: G. C. Gunn, "'Mort pour la France': Coercion and Co-optation of 'Indochinese' Worker-Soldiers in World War One", *Social Scientist*, Vol. 42, No. 78, 2014 pp. 63-84; C. Koller, *The Recruitment of Colonial Troops in Africa and Asia and their Deployment in Europe during the First World War*, *Immigrants & Minorities*, Vol. 26, No. 1/2, 2008, pp. 111-133 ; D. Maghraoui, 'The "grande guerre sainte": Moroccan colonial troops and workers in The First World War', *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 9, No.1, 2004, pp.1-21; excerpts from the documentary *Công Binh, la longue nuit indochinoise*, directed by Lam Le, 2013.

of homelands, experiences of the war front were recorded from the factory workers or infantry men drafted from Vietnam, Cambodia, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Guadeloupe, or Martinique, to name a few. Now part of the Humboldt University sound archive in Berlin, the aforementioned recordings underwent a process of digitisation in the mid-1990s, opening up a vault of erased history to public access. This is the source from which Hòi Sóng emerged from, the initial starting point of the project that has since expanded to other archival components all thoughtfully selected and edited by experimental composers and sound artists Nhung Nguyen and Zach Schreier.

*5. Documents known as the 'Journal des Marches et des Opérations' (army diaries) offer details on the outward journey of the conscripts to France, their labour and frontline deployment in France, the tracking of battalions from their departure to eventual disbandment. However these sources remain incomplete in their composition, details and numbers, including casualty rates. Source: Gunn, 'Mort pour la France', pp.63-4. But the most obvious example are the vastly varying numbers of estimated colonial conscripts from source to source. For instance, a basic Google search shows 97,216 Indochinese conscripts during World War I. The British Library database estimates 500,000 colonial troops, including 50,000 Indochinese conscripts alone while Koller's essay mentions another 49,000 men from Indochina solely for factory work. All of these numbers are affected by the so-called "fog of war" but nonetheless emphasise the subaltern nature of the conscripts, taken for granted, in the eyes of colonial powers.*

Roughly translated as both a "return" and a "tuning in" of sound waves, Hòi Sóng aims to revive and reactivate a collection of these recordings through a sound installation that audience members can interact with.

Altogether, the project possesses three conceptual components - auditory experience, archive appropriation and audience participation - and three concrete elements - an installation made from vintage radios, experimental compositions, and side documentation. Open to public interaction, the artwork aims to simultaneously activate the stories while connecting people with a part of forgotten history and heritage. The radio channels, created as sound collages, incorporate original recordings from captured soldiers and retrospective testimonies of Indochinese workers from World War I and II respectively, scripted narration, and arrangements created by the two artists. While they first appear as mere gadgets to incite participation or conveyors to circulate these sonic narratives, the radios are here utilised as a tactic, a methodology. Each channel is meant to mimic and excite the experience of tuning in and out of radio transmissions. It can be hypnotic, soothing, boring, disruptive - one can decide to stay and drift, change, return, or two radios can be used at the same time and interact with one another in endless possibilities.

Within the realm of art, sound often appears as an intimidating medium for audiences mostly due to the inability to retrace its history and definition into a neat package like a traditional art movement. Curators have mistakenly attempted to anchor sound within a linear genealogy while in reality its parentage is multiple, constantly informed by a wide array of avant-garde practices from the 1910s onwards.<sup>6</sup>

Blurred boundaries between installation-based works, experimental performances or electronic music have further complicated our relationship to sound. This is particularly relevant in the context of Vietnam and Southeast Asia where a lack of documentation and a slower evolution of the medium have pushed diverse practices under an overly broad terminology.<sup>7</sup> With a sharp increase of sound-centric exhibitions since the 1980s, what is most notable today is the inclusion of these works amidst groups shows with a completely different thematic focus, illustrating its institutionalisation, relevance, and banality, within

contemporary art.<sup>8</sup> Just like any visual medium, sound has a capacity to become a vehicle for information, a trigger for aesthetic experience as much as political activation, which Hòi Sóng wishes to highlight.

<sup>6</sup>. Some examples include the techniques of automatism and collage associated with Surrealism as seen in the compositions of Erik Satie or Kurt Schwitters, improvisation and mechanization developed by Futurist composers such as Luigi Russolo, the Dada's Cabaret Voltaire and Marcel Duchamp's radical *Erratum Musical* in the 1910s, Pierre Schaeffer's sonic collages and the beginning of *Musique Concrète* in the 1940s, John Cage's seminal composition *4'33* in the 1950s, and the international happenings Fluxus group from the 1960s onwards. See: M. Mullane, 'The aesthetic ear: sound art, Jacques Rancière and the politics of listening', *Journal of Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2010, pp.1-12 ; A. Licht, 'Sound Art: Origins, development and ambiguities', *Organised Sound*, Vol. 14, Issue 1, 2009, pp 3-10.

<sup>7</sup>. Fermont and della Faille have done an excellent survey on the development of experimental sound practices in Asia, retracing its history in Japan, highlighting "exceptions" of artists in the region, and observing sound art in relation to Cold War, global political and cultural shifts as cross-national collaborations begin to form from the 1980s onwards. Source: C. Fermont and D. della Faille, 'Sound Art in East and Southeast Asia. Historical and Political Considerations', *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Sound Art*, (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), pp.175-183.

<sup>8</sup>. Cluett discusses the three "tempos" of curatorial inclusion of sound: its trendy canonisation in major retrospective shows, sound as a groundbreaking medium to convey information, and finally its inclusion into group exhibitions where sound is not the highlight. Source: S. Cluett, 'Chapter 7: Ephemeral, Immersive, Invasive: Sound as Curatorial Theme, 1966-2013', *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space*, (Lanham and Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), p.117.



The metaphor of a collage feels particularly relevant to this project. Conceptually fragmented and multi-layered, it mixes both eclectic components and fuses art with elements of the ordinary. Similarly, the artists have selected and extracted a wide array of original material and appropriated these excerpts by juxtaposing their own sound design in the background, thus shaping our immediate reactions to the stories told. Furthermore, each broadcast is purposely cut in varying lengths, breaking any possibility of linearity and putting the listener in a potential position of unease or a desire to switch channels. Even in the situation where two people tune in at the same time, the broadcasts will layer onto one another

in a unique experience. A prisoner recites a popular Créole fable narrating the joys his natal language brings to distant lands, paradoxically repeating “Still today, my life has always been easy”.<sup>9</sup> In another, a list of numbers are recited, almost robotically, in Zarma dialect. The epic tale Phan Trần is sung by one captive. Another recounts the accidental beheading of a draftee gasping for air in the overpopulated vault as Indochinese workers were being shipped off to France. The extracts are then juxtaposed with the voices of four intermittent narrators, or the carefully crafted music and sound design of the artists, ranging from extremely lyrical heights to the old-fashioned beeping of radio airwaves.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup>. Although the archive was originally recorded as “a Créole fable”, the exact nature and origin of the text remains uncertain, perhaps belonging to poetry or a personal text. Transcription and translation for this archive (PK 747\_2) are provided in the next section of this booklet.

<sup>10</sup>. This includes three scripts - recorded in Vietnamese, Arabic and French - written by the two artists and contributing writer Đỗ Hương.

The listener may be able to recognise some of the content, while others may react to different sections. Whatever void of knowledge exists in between is bound by sound, the cement of this project. Utilising sound as a collage highlights the opposition of these worlds but it also has the power to create new, imaginative connections between them.<sup>11</sup> The grainy recordings dating back from 1915-1918 evoke ghostly voices attempting to reach us with us from afar, but at the same time they are given a new presentness,

reactivated through the sonic work of the artists that give a backbone to these disembodied voices. By highlighting these disjunctions and antagonisms, by guiding the viewer into a disruptive listening experience, new emotions are allowed to emerge: a sense of lineage and understanding, a bridge between shared history and micronarratives, national remembrance and family anecdotes, universal and particular into an echo chamber of informations.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>. J. Rancière, ‘Problems and Transformations in Critical Art’, in *Malaise dans l’esthétique*, (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2004), pp. 65-84. Edited and translated by C. Bishop in *Participation* (London and Cambridge: Whitechapel and MIT Press, 2006), p. 83.

<sup>12</sup>. Much of these thoughts were inspired by the words of Mullane, p.9; J. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, (New York: Continuum International, 2006), p.91; G. Whitehead, ‘Radio Play Is No Place : A Conversation between Jérôme Noetinger and Gregory Whitehead’, *Experimental Sound & Radio*, (Cambridge: MIT, 2001), p.89.

<sup>13</sup>. The footage of these veterans were kindly lent by director Lam Lê. His documentary *Công Binh, la longue nuit indochinoise* interviews twenty Vietnamese soldier-workers drafted to France on the eve of the Second World War to work in its factories as they share their experiences of French colonisation and forced labour. Source: Lam Lê, *Công Binh, la longue nuit indochinoise*, ADR Productions, France, 2013.

One of the reasons why the project relies heavily on side documentation is to guide the viewer in discerning the context behind the extracts. Those taken from the documentary *Công Binh, la longue*

*nuit indochinoise* are recorded in posterity, almost seventy years after the war ended.<sup>13</sup> The Humboldt recordings, although crystallised at the time of conflict, were heavily influenced by their circumstances of captivity. Most of the materials were actually scripted beforehand. Prisoners were requested to read out materials prepared for them, or orally prompted for those who could not read. Although some contain autobiographical notes, recounting past descriptions of homelands and life prior to being drafted to the European frontlines, it is hard to know how much of it was spontaneous as speakers were under the scrutiny of their captors.<sup>14</sup>

In this case, much of the archive is left incomplete with damaged recordings and the identity of its speakers partly lost.<sup>15</sup> Since the archive was formed for purely academic reasons, what transpires is a dehumanising experience where voices were dissected from their bodies and identities. The presence of the radio, which innately proceeds to a similar dissection of speech and corporeality, is a tool that reproduces this dislocation while giving a new terrain to these multitude of voices.<sup>16</sup>

Yet this experimental project only presents a fragment of stories. Much like the context in which each archive has been extracted from, we must acknowledge the boundaries of the narratives presented. The artists have made a conscious decision to select some, combined with their personal reflections and interpretations through the added layers of their music and scripts. Similarly, the listener selects and neglects the diversity of information contained in a project. While our visual experience of artworks in a gallery is very much shaped by light and plays of perception, sound has the capacity to seep through everything, it permeates the environment and knows no boundaries. If space is of particular importance to sound art, the choice of presenting the works in the neutral gallery of *Sàn Art*, due to its

intimate and cavernous design, amplifies the possibilities of immersion. As sounds invade the entirety of the site, the stories also filter through our memory, entering the realm of the subliminal.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup>. Lange, 'Archive, Collection, Museum'.

<sup>15</sup>. Each digitised file from the Humboldt Archive comes with a computerised index or a scanned copy of the handwritten 'library file' composed of the prisoner's personal information. The data includes the name of the speaker, the person supervising the record, the location of the war camp, country of origin, race, language spoken, religion, theme of the recordings amongst others. Some also include the phonetic form or script read out loud. But much like the military journals recording information on the draftees, much of the information is left uneven or incomplete. In others, the library card exists but the audio file is missing or damaged.

<sup>16</sup>. Weiss speaks of the "disembodied" voice in the radio in *Weiss, Experimental Sound & Radio*, p.4. Lange also discusses a similar idea with the "surgical dissection" of sounds, music and language in the process of sound-recording in Lange, 'Archive, Collection, Museum'.

<sup>17</sup>. J. Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory. Images of Recollection and Remembrance*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), p.49.

As audience members, we might select and isolate, focus or discard certain sounds. Comparably, a collaboration exists between the viewer and excerpts: as we preserve, share or neglect certain stories, we become part of an extended archive.<sup>18</sup> Although Hòi Sóng was not intended as such, one can observe its practices as derivative of relational aesthetics and other participatory methodologies in art.<sup>19</sup> Research-based works that trigger audience interaction or collaboration, produce situations of sociability and connectedness that aim to fill any gaps in a social matrix. People

experience these preserved stories, now imbued with a renewed presence, a sense of living and relevance. One can also observe an interplay between programming vs coincidence, control vs spontaneity. Three channels have been meticulously arranged but their delivery depends on the audience tuning in. The way each track responds or echos one another may never occur again, creating a unique experience by, and for, the audience, illustrating how the archive is not a static entity but a living body that can be endlessly re-actualised by those that revisit it.<sup>20</sup>

**18.** J. Salloum, 'sans titre/untitled: the video installation as an active archive', republished in C. Merewether (ed.), *The Archive*, (London and Cambridge: Whitechapel and MIT Press, 2006), pp.185-193.

**19.** Term coined by French curator Nicolas Bourriaud to encapsulate a series of emerging artistic practices in the late 1990s focusing on collaboration, participation, intervention, research-led activities and community-based projects into both the form and content. As individuals in a postmodern society feel alienated from one another, Bourriaud observes that 'through little services rendered, the artists fill in the cracks in the social bond'. See: N. Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, (Paris: Les presses du réel, 2002), p.36; A. Downey, 'Towards a Politics of (Relational) Aesthetics', *Third Text*, Vol. 21, Issue 3, 2007, pp.267-275.

**20.** Mullane, p.8.

It is important to stress that as a first experiment, Hòi Sóng is aware of its strengths and limitations. Both as a sound and participatory project, it asks what encounters are created by the artworks, for whom and for what purpose. Sound is the circuit for an informative and immersive experience while a relational methodology both reactivates forgotten voices and produces new, collective ones. Some of the challenges encountered include incomplete archival data, resource accessibility, or the unpredictability of the medium itself - which in turn may affect audience interaction and cooperation. Most importantly, the project poses the question of how we react to sound and oral narratives

when we don't have a script below our eyes or understand the language spoken. Even more so as the artists have incorporated their own compositions, shaping and shifting our emotions, and therefore interpretation and sense of connection. But this is also when the radio collage comes into play: the encounter does not, and should not, be harmonious. The general experience of listening to the radio also has its highs and lows, with a large amount of aural disruptions and frustrations as we drift off, suddenly brought back to earth by an atrocious pop

tune or commercial. More than sound or participatory art, Hòi Sóng is a project about transmission - transmission of a shared history, of narratives, of airwaves. The technical fuses with the content, and it all comes together: the historical, the societal, the personal, the family stories, the emotions. That is the magical filling of the social gap, or as Matthew Mullane eloquently writes "the connecting material between the past and present, between the here and there, and between you and me isn't a material at all, it is sound."<sup>21</sup>

**21.** Mullane, p.9.

# **An overview of the materials taken from the Sound Archives of Humboldt University of Berlin.**

In our work “Hồi Sóng”, we used some recordings from the Sound Archives of Humboldt University of Berlin (*Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*) as materials, and also did research on the contexts of these recordings from attached forms.

These recordings were made on wax cylinders in the period 1915 – 1922. In 1931, they were transferred to the Sound Archives of Humboldt University of Berlin, and then digitized in the 1990s.

**The catalogues are numbered as below:**

1. *The catalogues coded "PK" includes recordings previously owned by the Prussian Royal Phonographic Commission, which were made in the period 1915 – 1918.*

\_\_\_\_\_They are:

These recordings are research samples made by linguists such as Wilhelm Doegen in prison camps in Germany. There are information deficiencies and ambiguity in the attached forms, for example, some categories in prisoners' profiles are left blank, or the prisoner's names in one catalogue do not match.

**PK 747**  
**PK 1224**  
**PK 1397**  
**PK 1398**  
**PK 1490\_1**  
**PK 1646**  
**PK 1647**

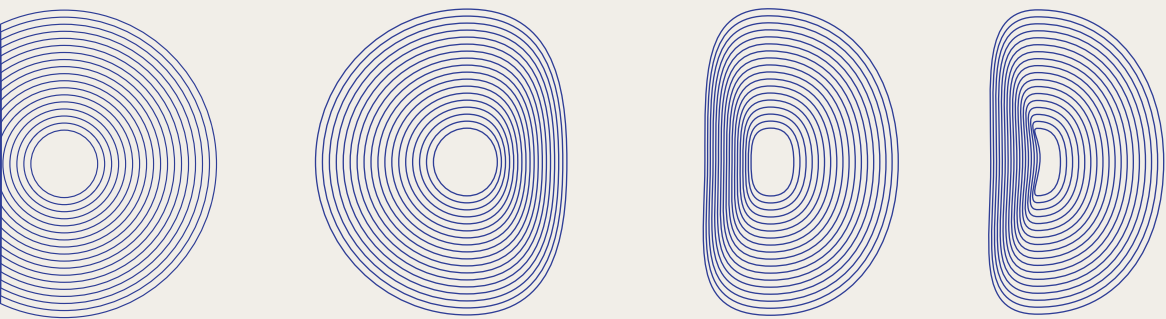
2. *Catalogue "LA 80" was recorded by the Sound Department of the Prussian State Library (German: Lautabteilung) in 1922.*

We have endeavoured to provide the translations of some attached forms as well as explain the content of the recordings.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to Humboldt University of Berlin for access to their material archives as well as their kind support during our research.

**Further reading:**

*"Sound Archives: History and Perspective."* Humboldt University of Berlin



## **Narration no.1**

*Written by Nguyễn Nhung (originally in Vietnamese).  
Translated by Lê Trang. Translation reviewed by Khương Lê.*

You are listening to a poem recitation by Mr. Nguyễn Văn Tấu, originally a farmer from Nam Dinh province. He was imprisoned in Halbmondlager camp in Germany. Most likely, he was a soldier of the French Army before being captured by the Germans.

About 55 kilometres to the South of Berlin, Halbmondlager was a prison camp for colored skin soldiers (including Vietnamese captives). The German government utilized the camp as a propaganda platform to entice these soldiers into fighting for them. Residents in Berlin at that time were aware that there were prisoners living in their proximity.

Mr. Nguyễn Văn Tấu's voice was recorded on July 19th, 1918 when he was 35. This was part of the study by some German linguists and ethnologists of the time. They recorded the stories and poems read or sung by the prisoners.

In this recording, Mr. Tấu sang an excerpt and commented on "Phan Trần Truyện", originally a popular epic tale written in Chữ Nôm with 936 lines, author unknown.

His singing was neither about his own life nor complaints about the miserable life in prison. It was simply a poem familiar to the common workers at the time.

But there was probably bewilderment and torment within it: when could they be released? When could they go back home? From the perspective of the German researchers, it was merely a research sample, which was clearly analyzed from a linguistic point of view.

In November, 1918, the German Empire collapsed. It was the end of World War I. No one really knew how the prisoners like Mr. Nguyễn Văn Tấu were doing, after these major events. We only have very few traces of their existence, from the reports left by the German researchers.

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***“Phan Trần Truyện Trùng Duyệt”*** (AB.26). Yale University Library. (n.d.).

***‘LAUTARCHIV. “History and Perspective of the Sound Archives”***. Humboldt University of Berlin.

***‘LAUTARCHIV. Catalogue number PK 1398***. Humboldt University of Berlin.



- *explanation* :

*Transcription and Chinese-Vietnamese translation by Nguyễn Đình Hưng  
English translation by Lê Trang*

Below is the manuscript of the prisoner Nguyễn Văn Tấn's poem singing, which appears in the recording you have just listened to. A part of the singing also appears in the sound installation (read more on the category "Artwork" on this website).

**In this sung poem:**

1. The first two lines: Unknown content.
2. The next twelve lines: to summarize a part of the epic tale "Phan Trần"
3. The next five lines: to praise the wise Gods at the performance to bless all the audience.
4. The last line: Unknown content.

*Mr. Tấn's full poem singing (excluding the first two lines) is translated as below:*

There was a story once told

Of Phan and Trần

- An oath...

- What oath did they swear?

They swore an oath to be husband and wife

Should one family bear a son, the other a daughter

They shall be betrothed for ever

A hair brooch for a folding fan, they were destined to be  
together

- The year after...

- What happened the year after?

When there was unrest in the state of Qi the year after

Kiêu Vân left to take her vows

Phan Sinh came to visit his aunt in a temple

Coming across Kiêu Liên, he was stunned by her beauty

- There was once a poem

- How did it go?

A poem once went:

How solid the supports and pillars are

The most holy Gods are protecting the people

Blessing them with goodness, wealth, and longevity

Blessing them with a safe and sound life.

Admiring the flowers in the dim light

Sharing this sorrow with these petals of bloom.

## Personal sheet

**Sound recording number:** P.K.1398      **Prisoners of camp:** Wünsdorf (Berlin)  
**Date:** 19th July, 1918  
**Time of recording:** 1.45 (AM/PM ?)

Duration of the recording:      **Plate Diameter:** 27 cm

Room of the recording:

**Type of the recording: (speaking, singing, choir, instrumental, orchestra):**

Song continues (part of) 1396. Talking and singing.

**Name (written in mother tongue):** Nguyễn Văn Tấu

**Name (written in Latin alphabet):** Nguyen Van Tau

**First name:** (Van Thao)

**Date of birth (or approximate age):** 35 tuổi

**Place of birth (hometown):** Nam Định, Giáo Rục Village

**Which large city located near the place of birth:** Nam Định

Canton - circle:

Department - Government - County:

Place of living for the first 6 years:

Place of education from age 7 to 20:

Type of education:

Lfd. Nr.

### PERSONALBOGEN

Laufliche Aufnahme Nr. P.K. 1398 Ort: Wünsdorf (Berlin)  
 Datum: 19.7.1918  
 Zeitangabe: 1 Uhr 45 Min  
 Dauer der Aufnahme:      Durchmesser der Platte: 27 mm  
 Raum der Aufnahme:  
 Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Lied, Fortsetzung 1896, Choraufnahme, Instrumentenaufnahme, Orchesteraufnahme): gesprochen u. gesungen

Annahme

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben):  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): Nguen Van tau (Nguyễn Văn Tấu)  
 Vorname: Van Thao  
 Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? 35 Jahre  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? aus Nam-dinh, Dorf Gioe Ruc  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes? Nam-dinh  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ujes):  
 Departement - Gouvernement (Gubernija) - Grafschaft (County):  
 Wo gelebt in den ersten 6 Jahren?  
 Wo gelebt vom 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr?  
 Was für Schulbildung?  
 Wo die Schule besucht?  
 Wo gelebt vom 20. Lebensjahr?  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt der Vater?  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter?  
 Welchen Volksstamm angehörig?  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? annamitisch  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? etwa Französisch  
 Kann er lesen? Ja Welche Sprachen? annamitisch  
 Kann er schreiben? Ja Welche Sprachen? Quen-Ding-Schrift  
 Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? Ja  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? Nein  
 Religion: Konfuzianer Beruf: Bauer  
 Vorgeschlagen von: 1. P. K. Müller  
 2. W. Döegen

Beschaffenheit der Stimme:  
 1. Urteil des Fachmannes (des Assistenten):  
Austauschende Töne sind ohne Fehlsprache, gut, P. K. Müller  
 2. Urteil des Kommandanten (des Offiziers):  
Die des Kommandanten werden ohne Fehlsprache gesprochen, gema. W. Döegen

Place of education:

Place of living before the age of 20:

Father's place of birth (specific location):

Mother's place of birth (specific location):

Which tribe/group of people originated from:

**Which language as mother tongue:** Vietnamese

**Other speaking language:** A little of French

**Can he/she read?** Yes **Which language?** Vietnamese

**Can he/she write?** Yes **Which language?** Chinese

**Does he/she play a homeland instrument at the camp?** Yes

**Can he/she play/sing modern European music?** No

**Religion:** Ruism

**Job:** Farmer

**Suggested by:**

1. F.N.K. Müller
2. Wilh Doegen

**Quality of the voice/tune:**

**1. Judgement of the experts:** weak nasal sounds (Tenuis consonant) unclosed - F.N.K. Müller

**2. Judgement of the commissioners:** Nasal sounds with soft consonants. The silent ending sounds are pronounced without opening the mouth - Wilh Doegen.

Lfd. Nr. \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONALBOGEN

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr. PK 1398 Ort: Münadorf (Berlin)  
 Datum: 19.7.1918  
 Zeitangabe: 1 Uhr 45 Min  
 Dauer der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_ Durchmesser der Platte: 27 cm  
 Raum der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Lied, Fortsetzung 1898, Choraufnahme, Instrumentenaufnahme, Orchesteraufnahme): Lied, Fortsetzung 1898 gesprochen u. gesungen  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Arbeitszeit

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben): Nguen Van Pau (Nguyễn Văn Phú)  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): fran Pau  
 Vorname: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? 35 Jahre  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? aus Nam-dinh, Dorf Gioe Hue  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes? Nam-dinh  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ujezd): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departement - Gouvernement (Gubernija) - Grafschaft (County): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo gelebt in den ersten 6 Jahren? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo gelebt vom 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was für Schulbildung? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo die Schule besucht? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo gelebt vom 20. Lebensjahr? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angegeben) stammt der Vater? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angegeben) stammt die Mutter? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Welchen Volkstamm angehörig? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? annamitisch  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? etwa Französisch  
 Kann er lesen? Ja Welche Sprachen? annamitisch in  
 Kann er schreiben? Ja Welche Sprachen? Quoc-ngu-Schrift  
 Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? Ja  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? Nein  
 Religion: Konfuzianer Beruf: Bauer  
 Vorgeschlagen von: 1. F. N. K. Müller  
 2. Wilh. Doegen

Beschaffenheit der Stimme: 1. Urteil des Fachmanns (des Assistenten): auslaufende Töne sind ohne Form  
schwach  
von F. N. K. Müller  
 2. Urteil des Kommissars (des Kommissars): auslaufende Töne sind ohne Form  
schwach  
von Wilh. Doegen

Photo file of prisoner PK 1398



**- explanation :**

*Transcription and Chinese-Vietnamese translation by Nguyễn Đình Hưng  
English translation by Lê Trang*

The sound installation piece used a recording of the prisoner Nguyễn Văn Tiệp's (or transcriptionally Tiệp/Diệp) poem singing, taken from Catalogue number PK 1397, Sound Archive of Humboldt University of Berlin.

**In the recording, Mr. Tiệp also sang a summary and commentation of the epic tale Phan Trần (similar to Mr. Tấu in Catalogue number PK 1398). Details are as below:**

1. The first two lines: Unknown content.
2. The next twelve lines: to summarize a part of the epic tale "Phan Trần"
3. The last nine lines: to praise the Emperors' wisdom and the country's peace.

*Mr. Tiệp's full poem singing (excluding the first two lines) is translated as below:*

There was a story once told  
Of Phan and Trần  
They swore an oath to be husband and wife  
Should one family bear a son, the other a daughter  
They shall be betrothed for ever  
A hair brooch for a folding fan, they were destined to be together  
When there was unrest in the state of Qi the year after  
Kiều Liên (1) left to take her vows  
Phan Sinh came to visit his aunt in a temple  
Then came across Kiều Liên  
Stunned by her beauty, he longed for her steel heart  
And he so desired (2) for her hand  
Rejected, the young man fell ill since

A poem once went:  
An honorable man is a holy man, and so are the Emperors  
As Excellency they are praised  
Emperor Yao and Shun adhered to the Doctrine of the Mean for prosperity  
Emperor Yu and Cheng Tang reigned in succession, an era of peace  
The three dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Zhou) were all holy  
The five emperors (Yellow Emperor, Emperor Zhuangxi, Emperor Ku, Emperor Yao, Emperor Shun) were those of wisdom  
What blissful an era it was in conjunction with these reigns  
For the pacific Emperors to rule over his civilians with peace.

**Annotation:**

(1) This word is “Vân” in the original tale  
(2) In the prisoner’s phonetic form, these words were either “Cũng đã toan” or “Cũng đã toan” (intended to). However, the sung words in the recording were unclear to us.

## Personal sheet

**Sound recording number:** P.K 1397

**Prisoners of camp:** Wünsdorf (Berlin)

**Date:** 19th July, 1918

**Time of recording:** 1.30 (AM/PM ?)

Duration of the recording:

**Plate Diameter:** 27 cm

Room of the recording:

**Type of the recording: (speaking, singing, choir, instrumental, orchestra):** Song:

continuation of 1396. Talking and singing

**Name (written in mother tongue):** Nguyễn Van Diep

**Name (written in Latin alphabet):** Nguyen Van Diep

**First name:** Van Tiep

**Date of birth (or approximate age):** 26 years old

**Place of birth (hometown):** Hải Dương

Which large city located near the place of birth:

Canton - circle:

Department - Government - County:

Place of living for the first 6 years:

Place of education from age 7 to 20:

Type of education:

Lfd. Nr. **PERSONALBOGEN**

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr. P.K. 1397 Ort: Wünsdorf (Berlin)  
 Datum: 19.7.1918  
 Zeitangabe: 1 Uhr 30 Min  
 Dauer der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_ Durchmesser der Platte: 27 cm  
 Raum der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Choralaufnahme, Instrumentalaufnahme, Orchesteraufnahme): Fortsetzung 1396  
gesprochen und gesungen

Anantisch

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): Nguyen van Diep (Nguyễn Văn Giáp)  
 Vorname: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? 26 Jahre  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? Anrich, Hai Hung  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes?  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ujesd): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departement - Gouvernement (Gubunja) - Grafschaft (County): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo gelebt in den ersten 6 Jahren?  
 Wo gelebt von 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was für Schulbildung? Chinesische Schulbildung  
 Wo die Schule besucht?  
 Wo gelebt von 20. Lebensjahr?  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter?  
 Welchen Volkstamm angehörig? Anantisch  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? Anantisch  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? keine andere  
 Kann er lesen? Ja Welche Sprachen? Anantisch und  
 Kann er schreiben? Ja Welche Sprachen? chinesisch  
 Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? Ja  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? nein  
 Religion: Christenheit Baud: Bauer  
 Vorgeschlagen von: 1. P. V. K. Müller  
 2. H. H. Bogen

Beschaffenheit der Stimme: 1. Urteil des Fachmanns (des Assistenten): Ergebnisse (Laut) wegen seiner dicken Lippen nicht zu beurteilen.  
 2. Urteil des Kommissars: Weniger starke hellere nasalisierte Stimme mit unvollständiger Konsonanz. Die atonale Konsonanz schließt sich an. Die atonale Konsonanz ist, verschluckt, nicht zu hören.  
 ges. H. H. Bogen

Photo file of prisoner PK 1397



Place of education:

Place of living before the age of 20:

Father's place of birth (specific location):

Mother's place of birth (specific location):

**Which tribe/group of people originated from:** An Nam

**Which language as mother tongue:** Vietnamese

**Other speaking language:** No

**Can he/she read?** Yes **Which language?** Vietnamese

**Can he/she write?** Yes **Which language?** Chinese

**Does he/she play a homeland instrument at the camp?** Yes

**Can he/she play/sing modern European music?** No

**Religion:** Ruism

**Job:** Farmer

**Suggested by:** 1. F.N.K. Müller  
2. Wilh Doegen

**Quality of the voice/tune:**

**1. Judgement of the experts:** *Difficult to differentiate bilabial sounds (b+v) due to thick lips - F.N.K. Müller*

**2. Judgement of the commissioners:** *Strong nasal sounds, moderate consonant sounds. Silent, ending sounds are pronounced without opening mouth - Wilh Doegen*

Lfd. Nr. \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONALBOGEN

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr. P. K. 1807 Ort: Wündorf (per-Lin)  
 Datum: 19.7.1936  
 Zeitangabe: 1 Uhr 20 Min  
 Dauer der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_ Durchmesser der Platte: 20 cm  
 Raum der Aufnahme: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Choralaufnahme, Instrumentenaufnahme, Orchesteraufnahme): Fortsetzung 1808  
gesprochen und gesungen

Anantisch

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): Nguyen van Diep (guyen van diep)  
 Vorname: (Van Diep)  
 Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? 20 Jahre  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? An rich, Hai u Thu  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes?  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ujesd): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departement - Gouvernement (Gubunja) - Grafschaft (County): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wo gelebt von 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr?  
 Was für Schulbildung? Chinesische Schulbildung  
 Wo die Schule besuchte?  
 Wo gelebt von 20. Lebensjahr?  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter?  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter?  
 Welchen Volksstamm angehört? Anantisch  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? Anantisch  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? keine andere  
 Kann er lesen? Ja Welche Sprachen? Anantisch und  
 Kann er schreiben? Ja Welche Sprachen? chinesisch  
 Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? Ja  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? nein  
 Religion: konfuzisch Baud: Bauer  
 Vorgeschlagen von: 1. F. N. K. Müller  
 2. Wilh. Doegen

Beschaffenheit der Stimme: 1. Urteil des Fachmanns (des Assistenten): Ergebnisse (2-3) zeigen an einer dicken Lippe, die die bilabialen Laute nicht richtig auszusprechen lässt.  
 2. Urteil des Kommissars: Weniger starke nasale Konsonanten als in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen. Die stimmlosen Konsonanten sind nicht so laut wie in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen.  
 3. Urteil des Kommissars: Weniger starke nasale Konsonanten als in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen. Die stimmlosen Konsonanten sind nicht so laut wie in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen.  
 4. Urteil des Kommissars: Weniger starke nasale Konsonanten als in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen. Die stimmlosen Konsonanten sind nicht so laut wie in den vorhergehenden Aufnahmen.

Photo file of prisoner PK 1397

類

PHONETISCHER TEXT

願點 颯颯他 越亭場子中 聯  
 寬會 鑽翠 貼是 越標 頭點 聰貼  
 更固 沒准 詩根 無情 別曲 雷之 擊翠 吏 覺 棋

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr.

Art der Aufnahme:

Name der Sprecher, Sänger, Musiker:

Welche Sprache bzw. Dialekt:

Name des Aufzeichners:

歌 讀 細 抄 擇 祀 魁 讀 抄 提 詩 八 字 臨 深 懸

TITEL:

子 太 君 平 民。

五 帝 臨 臨 五 帝 君。 今 日 幸 逢 今 日 治。 太 平 天

堯 舜 盛。 禹 湯 繼 治 禹 湯 文。 三 王 好 三 王 聖。

聖 人 君 子 聖 人 君。 古 制 咸 錄 稱 上 大 人。 堯 舜 執 中

也 使 施 止 車 緣 悉 除 帝 史 返 米 數 看 重。 否 古 疏 浪

量 景 梁 姑 駮 蒙 覽 恃 浪 仙 下 界 使 喂 哺 此 悉 驥 發 共

願 約 介 洛 細 輪 茹 膏 固 亂 娘 嬌 連 別 稿 遂 修 抄 番 生 細

一 青 都 是 氣 五 五 福 悉 祥 雲 碎 引 番 陳 紅 戶 器 願 約 丁 寧

喂 哺 咽 埃 席 生 特 媽 耦 沒 耕 輪 叫 埃 渚 慎 埃 龍 心 胸 登

搜 英 抄 械。 捷 抄 緬 匪 固 音 老 界。 茶 湯 結 豆 搗 磨。 魁 抄 英 制 使

臥 米 逐 干 炊 爨。 布 功 分 媽 餒 餓。

Antje Gieseler von Nguyen van Thiap 15. Juni 1918

Antje Gieseler von Nguyen van Thiap (Friedrich) 15. Juni 1918

P.K. 1397 19. Juli 1918

P.K. 1395 (Nguyen van Thiap) 19. Juli 1918

潘 陳 傳

抄於 邊尼。 胸襟 解詔 拓 辟 遠翰。 美善 祀 碩 攢 踞。 祀 八 浩 青 辛  
 捕頭 祀 臥 勇 諾 呂 幸 捕 賊 頭。 待 抄 遠 賄 包 侯 朱 音。 炸 廠 打  
 搜 英 抄 械。 捷 抄 緬 匪 固 音 老 界。 茶 湯 結 豆 搗 磨。 魁 抄 英 制 使  
 臥 米 逐 干 炊 爨。 布 功 分 媽 餒 餓。

Transcript of the epic tale "Phan Trần" written in Chinese and Chữ Nôm is a part of Catalogue PK 1397

## Catalogue PK 747

### - explanation :

*Manuscript and recording are transcribed and translated from Creole language by Bruno Bosc.*

*Vietnamese translation from English (as an intermediary language) are done by Hoàng Thùy and Khương Lê.*

*The French manuscript is translated by Nguyễn Diệp Thùy Anh, reviewed by Nguyễn Phương Thảo.*

*The catalogue PK 747 is consisted of two recordings, PK747\_2 and PK 747\_3, which share the same content:*

**“My friend, if you hear someone singing a song with the tune of your country, don’t be surprised because I already traveled all over the world and everywhere I went I sang with the tune of my country.**

**The eloquence of my voice was a pleasure for everyone. With my beautiful voice, I have a lot of influence, it is wonderful when you know how to sing and speak. “**

**To this day, life has been pretty easy for me.”**

#### **Annotation:**

1. The voice in both recordings PK 747\_2 and PK 747\_3 do not match the manuscripts with the same catalogue number. Instead, it matches the manuscript of the catalogue PK 747\_7.

2. The content of the manuscripts PK 747\_2 and PK 747\_3 is a fable called “The disobeying rabbits”. Currently, the recording for this manuscript has yet to be found although the title of the fable was mentioned in the prisoners’ profile. The manuscript is as below:

*“Two, three little rabbits escape from the den despite their mother’s warnings and threats. They roam far away from home. They play in the bright sun, on the fragrant fresh grass. What could possibly make them happier than that? Meanwhile, their mother rabbit is worried sick about all the possible bad things that might happen to them. And then, the mother rabbit goes on looking for her kids everywhere. If the fox finds them, they would be eaten. How can they avoid the savage animal with such wicked teeth? My obedient children! And so the fox meets the rabbits. He says: “good morning children” as soon as he meets them. “It’s good that you escaped your den, to be here and enjoy a beautiful day! Without you, I would suffer from my hungry stomach.” As soon as he finishes speaking, he strangles the baby rabbits and eat them. Children, never forget what your parents tell you because those who disobey will be punished.”*



## Personal sheet

**Sound recording number:** P.K.747

**Prisoners of camp:** Münster I

**Date:** 21st March, 1917

**Time of recording:** 5.30 (AM/PM?)

**Duration of the recording:** 3 minutes

**Plate Diameter:** 27 cm

**Room of the recording:** Theaterbaracke (the next room)

**Type of the recording:** (speaking, singing, choir, instrumental, orchestra):

- |                       |                  |                 |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Disobeying rabbits | 2. Creole fables | Creole language |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|

Name (written in mother tongue)?

**Name (written in Latin alphabet):** 1. Lagier 2. Francius

**First name:** Quentin Joseph

**Date of birth (or approximate age):** 25 years old

**Place of birth (hometown):** François, Martinique Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe

Which large city located near the place of birth?

**Canton - circle:** Martinique Guadeloupe

**Department - Government - County:** Martinique Guadeloupe

Place of living for the first 6 years?

Place of education from age 7 to 20?

Lfd. Nr.

### PERSONALBOGEN

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr. P. K. 747 Ort: Münster I  
 Datum: 21.3.1917  
 Zeitangabe: 5 Uhr 30 Min  
 Dauer der Aufnahme: 3 Min. Durchmesser der Platte: 27 cm  
 Raum der Aufnahme: Theaterbaracke (Nebenzimmer)

Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Choraufnahme, Instrumentenaufnahme, Orchestraufnahme): 1. ges. fables Creole (Martinique)  
 2. Creole fables

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben):  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): 1. Lagier 2. Francius  
 Vorname: Quentin Joseph  
 Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? 25 ans 27 ans  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? François Martinique Basse-Terre  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes? Martinique Guadeloupe  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ueds): Martinique Guadeloupe  
 Departement - Gouvernement (Cubernija) - Grafschaft (County): Martinique Guadeloupe  
 Wo gelebt in den ersten 6 Jahren? Martinique Guadeloupe  
 Wo gelebt vom 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr? " " "  
 Was für Schulbildung? école primaire école primaire  
 Wo die Schule besucht? François Guadeloupe  
 Wo gelebt vom 20. Lebensjahr? Martinique " "  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt der Vater? Martinique Creole Brun  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter? Creole Creole Blanche Bianche  
 Welchem Volksstamm angehörig? Creole Creole  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? Creole Creole  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? François François  
 Kann er lesen? Ja Ja Welche Sprachen? François, Creole Creole, François  
 Kann er schreiben? " " " " " " " " " " " "  
 Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? Ja Ja  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? " " "  
 Religion: athol. athol. Beruf: Fischer primaire  
 Vorgeschlagen von: 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Beschaffenheit der Stimme: 1. Urteil des Fachmannes (des Assistenten):  
 2. Urteil des Kommissars:

**Type of education:** Primary school Primary school

**Place of education:** Francois Guadeloupe

**Place of living before the age of 20:** Martinique

**Father's place of birth (specific location):** Creole from Martinique Brown Creole

**Mother's place of birth (specific location):** White Creole White Creole

**Which tribe/group of people originated from:** Creole Creole

**Which language as mother tongue:** Creole Creole

**Other speaking language:** French French

**Can he/she read:** Yes **Which language:** French, Creole

**Can he/she write:** Yes Which language?

**Does he/she play a homeland instrument at the camp:** No

**Can he/she play/sing modern European music:** No

**Religion:** Christian

**Job:** Fisherman Painter

Suggested by:

1. Judgement of the experts:

Quality of the voice/tune

2. Judgement of the commissioners:

Lfd. Nr.

## PERSONALBOGEN

Lautliche Aufnahme Nr. **P. 747** Ort: **Münster**  
 Datum: **21.5.1937**  
 Zeitangabe: **4 Uhr 00 Min**

Dauer der Aufnahme: **5 Min.** Durchmesser der Platte: **27 cm**  
 Raum der Aufnahme: **Theaterbühne (Hedonhäuser)**

Art der Aufnahme (Sprechaufnahme, Gesangsaufnahme, Choraufnahme, Instrumentenaufnahme, Orchesteraufnahme): **1. von selbst gesung**  
**Delimit** **5. Solo Creole** **Creolisch (Martinique)**

Name (in der Muttersprache geschrieben):  
 Name (lateinisch geschrieben): **1. Eugler 2. Francois**  
 Vorname: **Quentin Joseph**

Wann geboren (oder ungefähres Alter)? **28 ans 27 ans**  
 Wo geboren (Heimat)? **Frangale, Martinique Basse-Terre**  
 Welche größere Stadt liegt in der Nähe des Geburtsortes? **Martinique Guadeloupe**  
 Kanton - Kreis (Ujezd):

Departement - Gouvernement (Gubernija) - Grafschaft (County): **Martinique Guadeloupe**

Wo gelebt von 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr? **Martinique Guadeloupe**  
 Wo gelebt von 7. bis 20. Lebensjahr? " " "  
 Was für Schulbildung? **école primaire école primaire**  
 Wo die Schule besucht? **Frangale Guadeloupe**  
 Wo gelebt von 20. Lebensjahr? **Martinique**

Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter? **Martinique Creole Brant**  
 Aus welchem Ort (Ort und Kreis angeben) stammt die Mutter? **Creole Blanche " Blanche**

Welchem Volksstamm angehörig? **Creole Creole**  
 Welche Sprache als Muttersprache? **Creolisch Creolisch**  
 Welche Sprachen spricht er außerdem? **Frangale Frangolisch**

Kann er lesen? **Ja Ja** Welche Sprachen? **Frangais, Creolisch, Creol., Frangais.**  
 Kann er schreiben? **Ja Ja** Welche Sprachen? " " " "

Spielt er ein im Lager vorhandenes Instrument aus der Heimat? **Ja Ja**  
 Singt oder spielt er moderne europäische Musikweisen? **Ja Ja**

Religion: **cathol., cathol., Beruf: Fischer peintre**

Vorgeschlagen von: 1. 2.

Beschaffenheit der Stimme: 1. Urteil des Fachmannes (des Assistenten):  
 2. Urteil des Kommissars:

## Catalogue LA 80

### - explanation :

Arabic manuscript translated to Vietnamese by Vương Thị Thu.

This Arabic manuscript is also translated to German by the Sound Department of Prussian State Library ("Lautabteilung"). German-Vietnamese translation by Nguyễn Quỳnh Chi.

The recording of five people acting and singing in Arabic was made on August 22, 1922. They performed a self-written script in a store in Cairo, Egypt.

*Their roles and respective letters are as below:*

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Roles</b>
<i>A</i>	<i>Karim (Muhammed)</i>	<i>Customer 1</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>(Uncle Khalil) AsisHomda</i>	<i>Seller</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>(Bey) Fahmi</i>	<i>Customer 2</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>Rahman Homouda</i>	<i>Customer 3</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>Aziz</i>	<i>Customer 4</i>

*Below is the full acting script - contents in brackets are also characters' lines:*

**1. A:** Hurry up, Mr.Khalil!  
**2. B:** Wait a minute, honey, everyone has to line up.  
**3. A:** For heaven's sake! I have been waiting for half an hour!  
**4. B:** Muhammed, honey, I saw that you just arrived.  
**5. A:** What do you mean? I swear, I have been here since morning!  
**6. C:** Alright I got to go, just don't forget to send me the stuff later, Mr. Khalil.  
**7. B:** No, I won't, Mr. Bey. When you get home, the stuff will have been there already!  
**8. C:** Goodbye!  
**9. B:** See you! May Allah bless you! **(1)**  
**10. A:** Mr. Khalil, Mr. Khalil...it's my turn now! **(2)**  
**11. B:** My son, may Allah bless you with his patience! **(3)**  
**12. A:** I have been waiting for a long time, Mr. Khalil!  
**13. B:** Then leave, I won't sell you anything.  
**14. A:** First, you let me wait here for an hour, then

you said you wouldn't sell anything to me.  
**15. B:** What do I have to do with you when you just stay around and keep shouting all morning!  
**16. A:** I'm scared of my boss.  
**17. B:** Yes...that's true! **(4)**  
**18. A:** With the Prophet, hurry up, Mr. Khalil!  
**19. B:** What do you need?  
**20. A:** Half a kilo of ground coffee, a bag of Halva **(5)**  
**(6)**  
**21. B:** Coming right up. Sing a song for everyone here. I've got everything you asked for here. Fahma and Aziz, you sing with him too. **(7)**

**22. A, D, E:** *(singing)*

*a) Let us head for the Nile, let us go there. We want to have fun playing and smiling. The Nile blesses us, brings us prosperity, and good luck. Let us honor and commend this holy river. Here, our ancestors also worshiped the river (like God).*

*Let us head for the Nile, let us go there. We want to have fun playing and smiling.*

*b) The Nile water is better than beer, euphoria and marijuana: a true gift from God, not from Syren (the origin of the beautiful grapes), not "very old" (8), nor Bokna (French Cognac)! Let us head for the Nile, let us go there. We want to have fun playing and smiling.*

*c) My countrymen, Europe is jealous of us all, they are jealous because we have the Nile. The Nile is not content to be compared to the Seine, nor to the Phoin. A sip of the Nile water...*

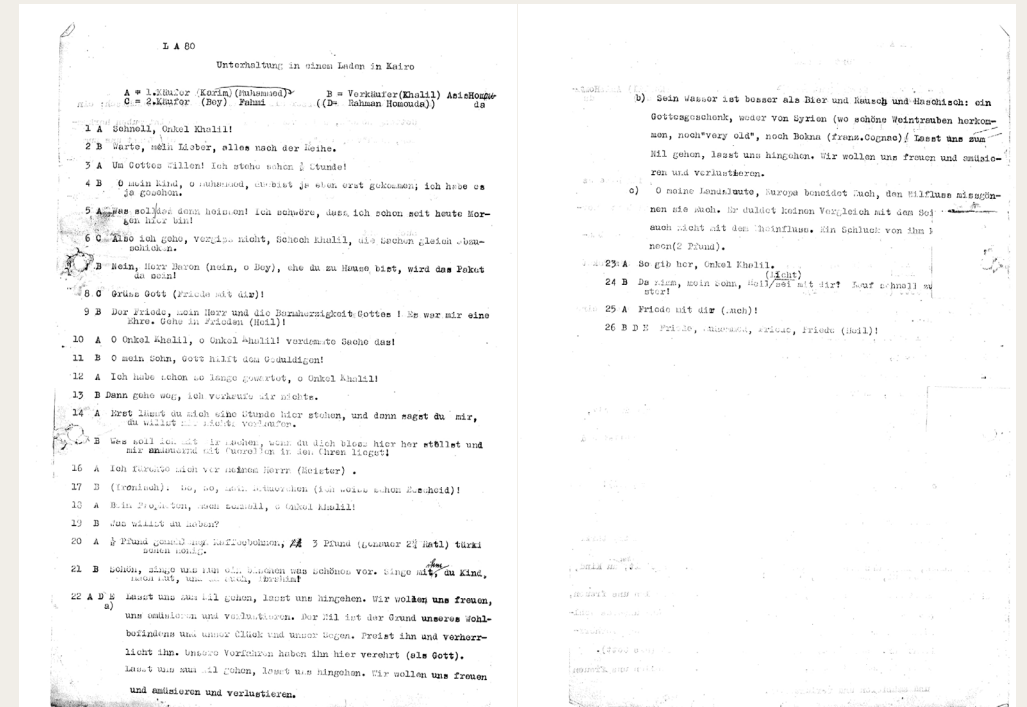


- 23. A:** Now, give me the stuff, Mr. Khalil.
- 24. B:** Here you are, you have the light of a loyal bird to his owner. (9)
- 25. A:** See you, Mr. Khalil (10)
- 26. B, D, E:** See you, Muhammed! (11)

**Annotation:**

- (1) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "God bless you in his mercy! My pleasure. I will take my leave. Bless."
- (2) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Mr. Khalil, Mr. Khalil, I'm getting frustrated!"
- (3) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "My son, God will help you to be patient!"
- (4) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Okay okay my boy (I've got it)"
- (5) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "3 kilos (exactly 2.75 Ratl) of Turkish honey."
- (6) Halva is a type of Egyptian traditional sweet.
- (7) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Alright, now sing something for us. You sing with him, too, be brave, you too, Ihrahimt."
- (8) This is how it appeared in the original manuscripts in Arabic and German, we do not thoroughly understand the context to translate it into Vietnamese.
- (9) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Here, take it, my son. Keep well! Run to your boss!"
- (10) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Have a good day, Mr. Khalil and everyone!"
- (11) Originally in Arabic-German translation: "Have a peaceful day, Muhammed!"

**Phonetic form - LA 80**



Transcript of the four or five characters' oral reading from the LA 80 catalogue number (in German, translated from Arabic)

## **Script by Zach Sch**

*Originally written in English by Zach Sch, translated and edited by Khuong Lê.  
French translation by Anh Phi Trần and Arabic translation by Rami Abadir employed in the sound installation.*

Between 1822 and 1961, people from across the French colonies, namely once *Troupes coloniales* (“*Colonial Troops*”), were brought together in order to fight the wars of the empire.

*Tirailleurs* (“Sharpshooters”) are what the French called their “indigenous colonial soldiers”. Although it is most commonly associated with soldiers from West Africa as well as units such as *Tirailleurs Malgaches* (Madagascar), *Troupes coloniales* eventually adopted and expanded to include soldiers from French Indochina - modern day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia - who served locally and abroad.

Across the French colonial possessions in 1914, a total of up to 25,000 native auxiliaries served as civil guards, militia or gendarmes – but did not serve outside their territories of recruitment. On the eve of World War I the *Troupes Coloniales* consisted of 42,000 French regulars (of whom approximately 13,000 were posted overseas); plus 50,000 African and Indochinese indigenous troops. Between 1939 and 1940, approximately 20,000 people were sent from Indochina to France as workers.

Although in most cases pressed into service, the experiences of these individual soldiers became shared over time.

These archival recordings constitute an intangible artifact of these people from Africa to the Indochinese peninsula in the form of their voices. Taken mostly in German POW camps after combat on the Western Front and under duress, they act as a way to highlight a more personal side of colonialism’s impact.

Research into African prisoners of war and even the service men themselves is greatly hindered by the deliberate lack of documentation of many of them. Unlike their white British, French, or German counterparts, international aid organizations did not keep records on them, as well as even rarely including them in outreach programs for their specific army's needs.

More severely, in the case of west African soldiers, they were treated more as anthropological specimens than as prisoners of war. Although limited, in the First World War, a number of cultural and linguistic studies but also medical experiments were conducted on these prisoners.

Furthermore, many African soldiers faced a degree of stigmatization upon repatriation in both France and their homelands.

During the Second World War, African soldiers who had fought during the Battle of France were exterminated by the Wehrmacht as well as by the Vichy French collaborators. The Nazi's seeing it as necessary in order to cleanse their possessions of "undesirables" before Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union.

## Reference:

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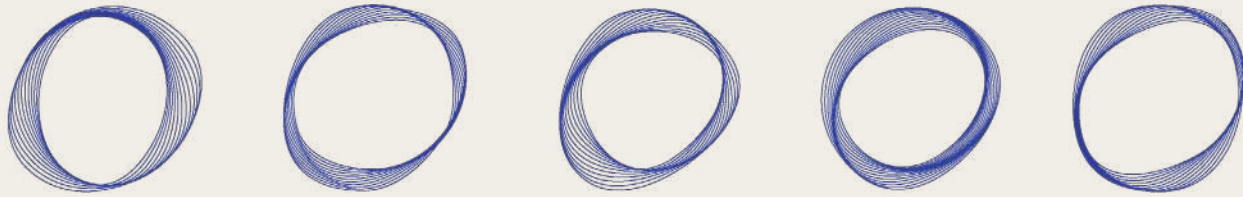
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***"Between Colony and Metropole: Repatriation of Vietnamese Workers from Post-war France"***, Chizuru Namba p. 109-132



## Narration no.2

*Written by Đỗ Hương & Nguyễn Nhung (originally in Vietnamese).  
Translated by Lê Trang. Translation reviewed by Khương Lê.*

*(\* ) Audio interview snippets used in this narration are from the film  
"Công Binh, la longue nuit Indochinoise", directed by Lam Lê.*

From November 1939 to June 1940, about 20,000 workers from Indochine (including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) arrived in France. They were called non-specialised workers (i.e. O.N.S - ouvrier non spécialisé). Within the introduction, we shall further discuss the memories of some Vietnamese workers as they reminisce about their time living and working under the colonial regime.

Regarding the number of the Vietnamese workers in particular: most of them were recruited from the rural areas in Tonkin and Annam (the modern Northern and Central Parts), in which the majority were farmers who were forced to join, and the rest were voluntarily going to France hoping for a life changing opportunity. These volunteers were born from well-off and high-status families, who later would mostly work as interpreters or foremen.

In the stories of the workers' journeys to France, an eyewitness recounted the incidents as follow:

***"In the cargo's hatch where I was, there were 2500 people. It was so stuffy that we struggled for air. A man pulled his head out just to get some. As soon as the ship weighed anchor, he was beheaded."***

After a few weeks crossing the sea, the workers who arrived at Marseille were immediately transferred to the Baumettes prison camp. At that time, the premise was yet to be completed and was fenced off with barbed wire and there were guards outside. The harsh and miserable living conditions led many workers to fall ill in the early winter months of 1940.

The workers were administered by the Department of Indigenous, North Africans and Colonial Labors (also known as MOI - Service de la Main - d'œuvre indigène, nord-africaine et coloniale"). Private enterprises or state agencies in France at the time could use colonial workers through contracting with MOI without their knowledge of the terms of these contracts. The net amount that MOI paid the workers, after deducting living expenses, was a meager sum. It was only 1 franc a day. It was worth a mere soap or a toothbrush.

***"We worked with 5000 women. They were French women whose husbands either joined the war, or were imprisoned in Germany."***

By June 1940, the majority of the workers who served in the Defense Industry: 70% of them worked in the gunpowder factories - an extremely toxic working environment. In the period of 1941-1942, 15% of them switched to salt or rice farming. Roughly 30% switched to logging or coal mining. In the period of 1942-1944, when France surrendered to the Nazi, the workers were transferred to the factories under the supervision of the Nazi.

Sickness, hard and dangerous work, poor living conditions and homesick despair resulted in the death of 1061 people during World War II. According to MOI statistics, this number accounted for about 7% of the Indochinese workers in France at the time.

In the minds of many of Vietnamese workers, the memories of hunger were still fresh as they reminisced:

***"Only two days worth of food was provided to us, but to last one week. "***

***"It got worse in the winter, our hunger much worsened. We had to steal chickens, wandering sheep, or wheat from fields. Then we put wheat into a blanket, pounded it to remove husks then brought it home to cook."***

***"There were these plants grown on the road sides called Topinambour, looking a lot like the arrowroot back home. So we shoveled the snow to pull them out to eat."***

***"Rice began to run out. Rice from Indochina had been shipped to areas with workers. Before, we were given 300 grams a day, which was then reduced to 150 grams only."***

***"We were terribly hungry. We searched bins for cow bones to extract marrow."***

...or even for illnesses that were not treated properly:

***“Sick, we would be taken to Le Dantec hospital. It was dedicated to the Vietnamese. I’m telling you, the doctors there took all our food and water. They were greedy people, they embezzled the hospital medicines to sell for their own profit.”***

In 1941 alone, 5000 Indochinese workers were repatriated; however, they were faced with difficulties caused by the war. The last official repatriations of some of the workers took place as late as 1952. The number who remained in France (about 1000 people) assimilated to the local life through vocational training and marriages with French women.

The repatriated workers became disadvantaged, for two reasons. First, the compensation for them had never been satisfactorily resolved. In the years 1989-1990, petitions from 500 to 600 former workers in Vietnam reached the French government, but were rejected. Second, they had difficulty adjusting to life in their home country. Many of them returned to their hometowns and found out that their loved ones, home and their properties were no longer there. Ashamed of their work for the colonial regime, some people hid their former identity, even from their children and their grandchildren.

The Indochinese workers were victims of exploitation and injustice from the colonial regime. In recent years, their turbulent and miserable life has been mentioned more in the research works of historians in France. However, this is still the blind-spot in the official history of Vietnam, and the issue of pensions for the workers is yet to be mentioned by the media in France.



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Lam Lê. ***“Công Binh, la longue nuit Indochinoise”.*** ADR Productions, 2013.

