Of Vietnam

Identities in Dialogue

Edited by
Jane Bradley Winston and
Leakthina Chau-Pech Ollier

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OF VIETNAM

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*To our mothers,
Lucille McNeely Winston
and Kheng Khuot Ortiz.*

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A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

Of Vietnam: Identities in Dialogue was conceived across what scholars including Homi Bhabha and Renato Rosaldo have taught us to recognize as “borders.” It took its first shape three years ago as we talked over dinner after an academic conference where we had met for the first time at our panel on Vietnamese literature. Due to accidents of birth, we both had “over-determined” relations to Vietnam: one came of age in the Vietnam War era; the other’s life trajectory commenced in Asia and was profoundly impacted by that same war and its resolution. From the beginning, our dialogue, which had no choice but to weave itself across the borders between our cultural backgrounds and their respective ideological and imaginary representations of Indochina/Vietnam, amazed and pleased us. From it sprang forth, as we sat and talked, the idea of co-editing a volume on Vietnam, a project that conjoined our journeys for the space of its duration and beyond.

Many other individuals and institutions have permitted this volume to become a reality. To all of them, we extend our most profound thanks. We are particularly thankful to our contributors for agreeing to add their voices to this dialogue, for their insights, their thought-provoking work, and their generosity. We are deeply grateful to Linh Dinh and Monique T. D. Truong for their invaluable help with this volume’s creative sections. We extend a heartfelt thanks to our editor, Kristi Long, for giving us free rein to frolic in the borderzones of the academic and the creative. We thank Bowdoin College’s Department of Romance Languages and the Freeman Foundation for funding a trip to Vietnam during summer 2000, and Northwestern University’s French and Italian Department and Comparative Literature Program for funds that allowed us to work together for several days at a particularly crucial juncture. Finally, we warmly acknowledge the support of Sarah Davis Cordova, Jerry Gorman, Françoise Lionnet, Antoinette Sol, Erin and Shannon Winston-Dolan, and Jeffrey Woodbury—colleagues, friends, and family members; our displaced and constantly displacing compagnons de route: we thank you for being.