YOUTH PERSPECTIVES:
NAVIGATING AND NEGOTIATING TOP-DOWN URBAN CHANGE IN HANOI, VIETNAM

By

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A Thesis Submitted to McGill University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of B.A in Geography Honours Degree

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April 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to carry out this research project, to have seen it take shape, transform, and come to a close over the course of the past year and a half.

This project would have not been possible without my supervisor, Dr. Sarah Turner, to whom I would like to extend my endless gratitude and respect. Not only for making possible my going to Hanoi, Vietnam to conduct my field research, but for her imparting of invaluable knowledge, skills, and ideas. For her feedback, countless suggestions, and for the incredible devotion she gives to every student working in the research lab, I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to work with her. I am also grateful for my reader, Natalie Oswin, for agreeing to review and read through my thesis in its final stages.

I am indebted to the support and guidance of my translator and friend, Hạnh Ngo, during my fieldwork period. For her rigor, flexibility, and for inviting me into her home so many times, thank you so much. I am likewise thankful to the friends I made and worked with while in Hanoi, Kieu Anh and Sumner Murphy. I look forward to seeing you all again, endless thanks for making me feel at home.

To those in both Hanoi and Montreal who were willing to take part in my research and share their stories with me (and to help me with my Vietnamese along the way!)—this project would have not been what it is without your insights.

To my colleagues and friends in the Southeast Asian Massif Research Lab, at both McGill and Laval University, your feedback and support throughout this year has been immeasurable. To be working in an environment with individuals who are dynamic, enthusiastic, and passionate about their work and that of others is a privilege I do not take for granted.

To my friends and family in Montreal, New York, and Paris who listened to me stress and worry, thank you for putting up with me and sticking around. You are my bright lights at the end of the tunnel. Finally, I'd like to extend my love and thanks to Hugo Sinha, who went above and beyond this past year.

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ABSTRACT

Since the introduction of the Đổi Mới reforms in 1986, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has undergone a series of major shifts across social, political, and economic spheres. Today, top-down actors, such as the one-party state and private firms, are shaping the capital city of Hanoi to fit with ideals of a 'modern' and 'global' cityscape with little or no prior public consultation. This research focuses on how rapid urbanization within a fairly authoritarian context is impacting one cohort: youth. As such, this research aims to investigate how youth (18 to 32), in Hanoi, Vietnam perceive, interact with, and negotiate the built environment they are set to inherit. Based on qualitative fieldwork conducted in Hanoi in the summer of 2017, my research analyzes how this generation of youth is responding to rapid urban change through engaging in forms of everyday politics and in the production of urban spaces that fit their needs.

Key words: hybrid urbanization, youth, post-socialist urban landscapes, Hanoi, everyday politics

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Situating the Study: Youth in Hanoi, Vietnam

Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam, is situated along the Red River, in the north of the country, shown in Map 1.1 (Leducq & Scarwell, 2018). With a population of more than seven million, Hanoi's urban fabric reflects more than just its history as an imperial, colonial, and socialist center (Logan, 2000). In 1986, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam introduced a series of economic reforms, known as *Đổi Mới*. In doing so, the Vietnamese state relinquished partial control over resource allocation and economic activity, in tandem with fostering foreign investment and promoting its urban centers, such as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, as the economic drivers of the nation (Labbé, 2016). Of a population of 92.4 million, 30 percent now live in an urban area, with a growth rate of 3.4 percent per year (Cities Alliance, 2011; General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2016). The *Đổi Mới* reforms created an economic environment which has made it viable, if not desirable, for individuals to pursue work outside of the state (*biên chế*) and public sector (Nguyen, 2002). Yet, the removal of the state's 'hands' in spheres like industry and employment, as well as housing, welfare, and education, has not come with a diminishing political stronghold of the one-party state (Turner, in press). The market socialism that Vietnam, and by extension Hanoi, is pursuing today is hence simultaneously informed by socialist and neoliberal visions, discourses, and planning approaches to urbanization.

In the three decades since the start of the *Đổi Mới* reforms, Hanoi has undergone significant urban growth, densification, and transformations. In 2008, Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng announced that Hanoi's boundaries were to be tripled overnight, as shown in Map 1.2, to 3344km^2 and its population doubled to 6.5 million (Turner, in press). Hanoi currently consists of 12 urban districts, 17 rural districts, and 1 town. Seeking to engender a global and modern city that is on par with neighboring economic 'powerhouses', such as Singapore and South Korea, state actors in Hanoi are turning to the experiences and urban development models of these countries to inform their own urbanization schemes (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011).

In 2011, Hanoi officials released a Master Plan for the city's future to 2030 (Map 1.3)[1]. With an expected population of nine million by 2030 and eleven million by 2050, this plan is an attempt to meet the demands and consequences of rapid urbanization, such as pollution and traffic density, and to do so in a way that engenders "one of the most livable, sustainable, and attractive world capital cities by 2050" (Perkins

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[1] This Master Plan is a joint effort between Contact PPJ, an international consulting firm composed of US-based firm Perkins Eastman Architects, two South Korean firms, Posco E & C and Jina, and the Vietnamese Urban Planning department (Söderström & Geertman, 2013).

Eastman Architects, 2011). Past Master Plans were created in 1998, 2003, and 2008, but none were fully implemented (Leducq & Scarwell, 2018). This plan conceptualizes Hanoi being composed of five satellite cities, three eco-townships, green corridors and parkways connecting residents to commercial, residential, educational, and cultural sites (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011).

Map 1.2 The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (OnTheWorldMap, 2018)
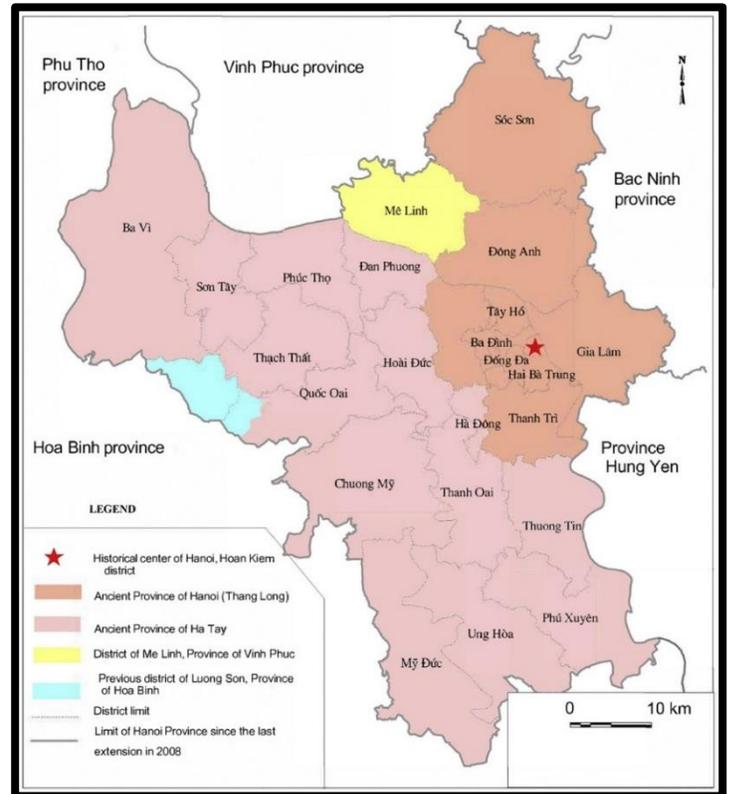
Map 1.1 Hanoi Following the 2008 Boundary Expansion (Leducq & Scarwell, 2017: pp. 71)

Vietnam has also undergone significant social and cultural changes in the past three decades. A burgeoning middle-class has tastes and consumption preferences that are playing a role in the production of new urban spaces in Hanoi (Drummond, 2000). Furthermore, this group's greater purchasing power is fostering increasing autonomy from the state sphere. The Vietnamese state has responded to this by subsuming the middle-class 'way of life' within discourses of a new 'urban normal' (ibid.). Coming of age today are contemporary Vietnamese youth, one of the first generations to grow up without a direct recollection of war and the subsidy, or *bao cấp*, period (Nguyen, 2002). In 2009, youth between 18 and 30

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comprised 33 percent and 25 percent of Hanoi and Vietnam's total population, respectively (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2009). This large cohort is hence set to inherit a built environment shaped by socio-economy transformations and two sets of dominating actors: the state and private actors, both foreign and domestic. These two actors often overlap in urban initiatives, such as during the development of the proposed Master Plan or the provision of funding for new metro lines. Concurrently, investment from private actors is also taking the form of gated enclaves, mega-malls, and a range of commercial enterprises.
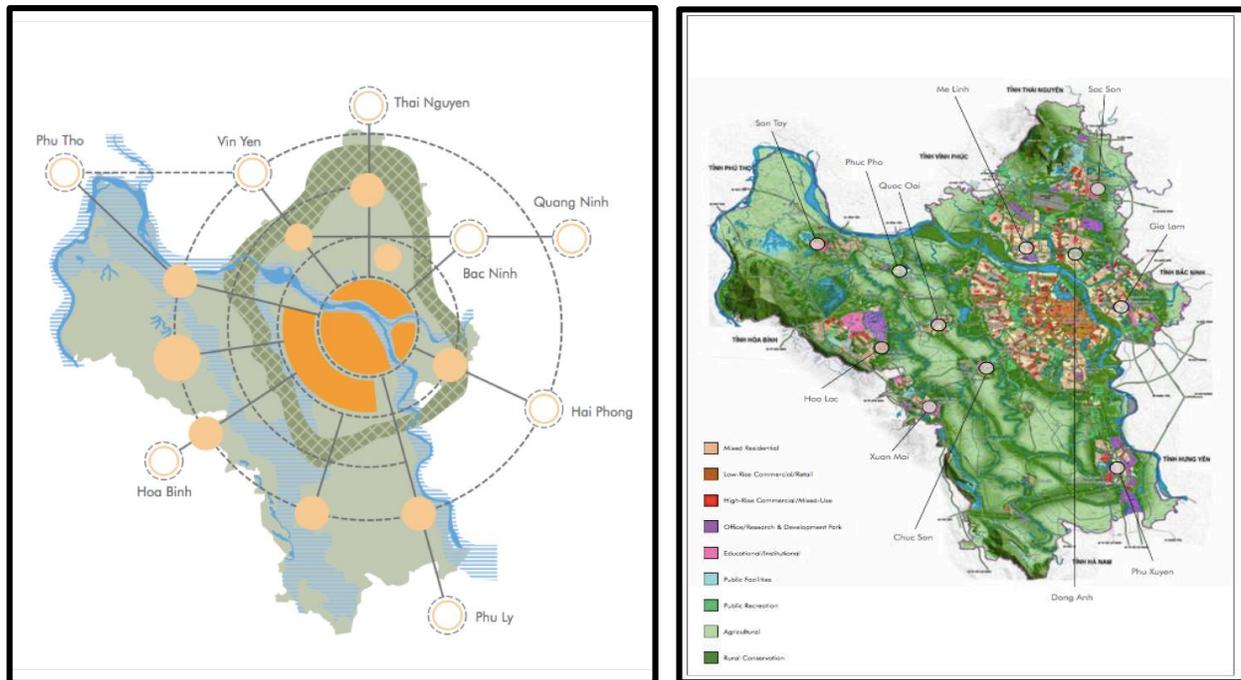
Map 1.3 Planned Satellite Towns and Urban Areas (Left) and Official Uses for Areas (Right) in Hanoi Master Plan for 2030 and Vision to 2050 (Perkins Eastman, 2011: pp. 18-19)

1.2 Research Aim and Research Questions

Given this context of a rapidly expanding city, numerous large scale infrastructural and private development plans, and a youth population increasingly influenced by regional and global culture, the **aim** of this research project is: **to investigate how young adults (18-32) in Hanoi, Vietnam, perceive, interact with, and negotiate the changing urban landscape they are set to inherit**.

In order to approach my aim, my project is guided by three research questions. 1. **How and why do youth use or avoid different spaces within the city?** To answer this question, I examine the spaces that youth frequent and the reasons underpinning these choices. **2. How do youth perceive recent and current urban change in Hanoi's built environment?** To approach this question, I interrogate youth perceptions of foreign influence in the urban environment, sources of capital, and ongoing projects, such as a planned metro line and a proposed motorbike ban. **3. How do youth negotiate the current and future built**

environment of Hanoi? My final research question is informed by an analysis of the overlaps, or lack thereof, of my first and second research question, taken in tandem with the proposed Master Plan. This question gets at the core of my research aim, namely how the perceptions and uses of the built environment reflect a range of everyday politics strategies that youth carry out to produce urban space that is suitable to their needs. Here, I consider how youth (im)mobilities bolsters not only processes of hybrid urbanization but also informs the changes that they support, comply with, modify or avoid, and resist.

1.3 Thesis Layout

In the following Chapter 2, I develop the conceptual framework that guides my research. I draw from three conceptual bodies of literature, namely critical approaches to global cities research, hybrid urbanization, and everyday politics. In Chapter 3, I situate my research in the context of Hanoi, Vietnam. Here, I focus on recent and current changes to the urban environment—economic, social, and in the built form—and discuss how these changes are related to the current generation of youth. In Chapter 4, I provide an overview of my methodology, focusing on the design process, the methods I employed in the field, the analysis phases, and the ethics underpinning my research throughout. Furthermore, I situate myself in the context of my research by considering my positionality and how it influences the results of my research. In Chapter 5, I present research findings from interviews with youth and non-youth in order to answer my first research question concerning how and why youth use sites and spaces of Hanoi. In Chapter 6, I answer my second research question focusing on youth perceptions of recent and current urban changes in Hanoi. My final chapter, Chapter 7, explores how the (dis)use of parts of the cityscape, the perceptions of powerful actors and ongoing urban change translates into specific everyday politics carried out by youth. I conclude that chapter with a summary of my thesis and future research directions.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Within this chapter I develop a conceptual framework (Figure 2.1) that informs my analysis on how youth in Vietnam's capital city Hanoi, perceive, negotiate, and navigate the urban environment in the face of top-down state-enacted change. To establish this framework, I weave together three bodies of literature. First, I review current literature that critically approaches global cities research in order to deepen my understandings of the distinct ways that cities are pursuing a 'global' status and defining their own forms of 'modernity' in ways (dis)similar to Western-borne constructs and paradigms. Second, I analyze literature concerning hybrid urbanization to inform my understandings of how the process of urbanization is a heterogeneous product of interlocking, and at times contradicting, forces of government stronghold and freer market mobilities. Finally, because my research focuses on the dynamic between youth and processes of hybrid urbanization, I examine literature on everyday politics to inform my understandings of the different ways in which this cohort may react and respond to urban change. This framework guides my analysis in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.
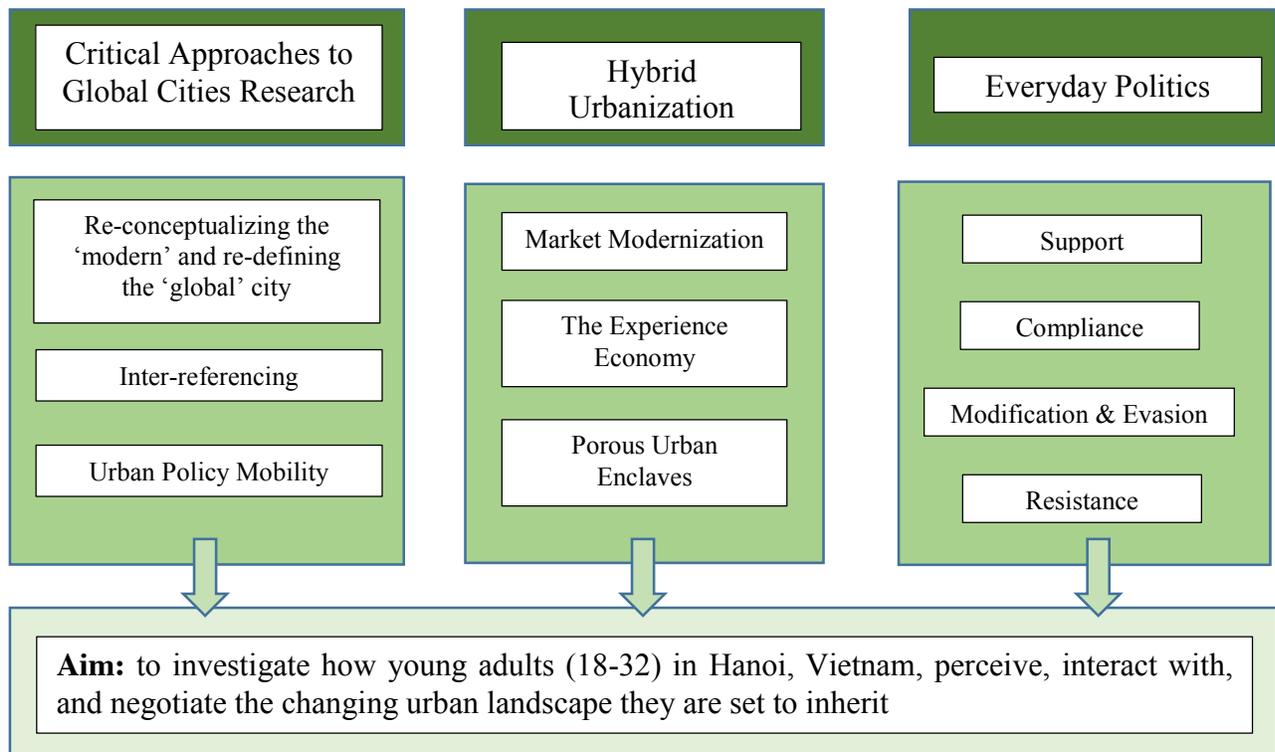
Figure 2.1 Thesis Conceptual Framework (Author)

2.2 Critical Approaches to Global Cities Research

2.2.1 Re-conceptualizing the 'modern' and re-defining the 'global' city

Informing my understandings of critical approaches to global cities research is a line of analysis that focuses on the definitions and conceptualizations of what constitutes the 'modern' and the 'global' city. Global cities have been characterized by their role as central nodes in the circulation of economic and technological flows, inputs, and outputs (Sassen 1991, 1994). Scholars critiquing this analytical standpoint argue that the deeming of cities as 'global' through this formulation risks ignoring the ways in which cities are connected to transnational flows through other channels, such as the movement of people, culture, and ideas (Robinson, 2006). Cities, while defined by some form of absolute boundary, are never static in composition or form because they are constantly shifting in response to economic, political and cultural change (Scott, 2008). Furthermore, definitions of a 'modern' city are often treated as those paralleling Western cities in both physical and social make-up, hence perpetuating dominant-subordinate divisions and reinforcing colonial binaries, such as modern-traditional, developed-undeveloped, and West-East (ibid.).

Robinson (2006: 109) suggests that in order to dislocate modernity and development from Western constructs, scholars ought to look beyond simple economic flows and see cities as "unique assemblages of wider processes" formed through overlapping networks and/or within nuanced spheres of interactions. In doing so, cities that have been marginalized in prior analyses can be seen as attaining a form of urban life that is dynamic and distinctive. In this lens, such 'ordinary cities' can be seen as both a product and producer of global relations. While the conceptual underpinnings of seeing cities as 'ordinary' is pertinent to my research, as Hanoi is not deemed a global city, I would argue that the approach Robinson (2006) takes is too idealistic, as she suggests that scholars should ignore the reality and presence of a global hierarchy that is (re)produced between and within countries competing for global status (see also Leaf, 2007).

Another approach to re-conceptualizing and re-defining these two concepts of modernity and development is also offered by Robinson (2016: 191), suggesting that urban theory be reframed in both scope and style by thinking cities "through elsewhere" in order to better understand patterns or processes occurring in (dis)similar contexts. Using this lens, comparative urbanism can enhance platforms through which scholars revise current urban theory, analytical tools, and "understandings of different outcomes or to compare the wider interconnections and extended urbanization processes themselves" (ibid.: 195). While comparative urbanism can offer vital insight into how transforming urban fabrics do or do not parallel one another, it also risks abstraction and providing insufficient temporal or contextual reference (Gough, 2012).

Conversely, Perera and Tang (2013: 9) employ an 'inside-out' perspective in order to better understand the nuanced interactions between people, place, and space in processes of urban transformation poised at engendering a 'global' and 'modern' city. Rather than applying theory and definition *to* the urban fabric, this perspective combats the inadequacy of frameworks understood through a Western lens by engaging with changes in urban fabrics in a contextually and temporally specific analysis. Hence, the aim is to "provincialize useful mainstream and traditional knowledge to develop room for discussing Asian cities from contemporary Asia vantage points." For example, rather than suggesting that the pursuit of (Western) neoliberalism is the reason for questionable and inadequate urban (re)development policies in Asian cities (see He & Wu, 2009), this analysis posits that historical and social distinctions must be interrogated in order to understand the inner workings and rationalities underpinning new economic pursuits that are linked to larger global flows (Parnell & Robinson, 2012). Finally, other analyses of how cities are looking to gain 'global' status beyond explanations borne in economic inputs and outputs have recognized the importance of fostering cultural capital (Kong, 2007). Some cities have engaged with this 'creative city' strategy, taking their cue from Richard Florida's (2002) 'creative class' hypothesis, in a three-fold manner, through a people-oriented, product-oriented and place-oriented strategy (ibid.). This approach recognizes the similarities in overall frameworks within cities, but provides space and flexibility for differences due to history, culture, people, and ideologies (ibid.).

In the context of my research, I agree with Robinson (2006, 2016) that there is a necessity for dislocating modernity and development from Western definitions and markers. However, the approach employed by Perera and Tang (2013) offers a stronger platform through which one can first interrogate temporal, spatial, and social specificities, and then turn to larger conceptual frameworks. This is relevant because I am new to the research process and hence may approach the 'field' with certain preconceptions that could skew my ability to understand and answer my research aims. Furthermore, the three-fold strategy discussed by Kong (2007) lies at the intersection of an 'inside-out' perspective and a thinking of cities 'through elsewhere' while also enabling an analysis of how cultural capital is fostered through three avenues—people, place, and product. Hence, this enables a temporally and spatially appropriate framework that is *self-defined* by formal urban actors through city rhetoric, strategy, and policy.

2.2.2 Inter-referencing

My understanding of current critical approaches to global cities research is further informed by the concept of 'inter-referencing'. This refers to how the aim of cities to 'be global' can be bolstered through engaging in

practices of "citation, allusion, aspiration, comparison, and competition" with one another (Ong, 2011: 17). Conceptually, inter-referencing provides insights into how discourses concerning urban change and proposed mega-projects, such as creating a 'green' or 'tech' city, are formulated with reference to other cities that have been perceived as successful in implementing such visions (Phelps et al., 2014). Furthermore, the mentioning of a place 'elsewhere' as the inspiration for an urban model can serve to legitimize these endeavors and the high levels of investment they entail. This process can be spurred by the imaginaries of elite actors, political leaders, developers, among others and are at times central to justifications for forced relocations of people (Ong, 2011; Siu, 2011). Concurrently, inter-referencing can enhance understandings of how competition between urban spaces and actors is fueled by "invoking desirable icons of 'world class' amenities […] as symbols of desirable urban attributes" (Ong, 2011: 18). Hence, this conceptual approach enables scholars to interrogate various ways that cities interact with one another through spatial practice. In the case of my thesis, this is with regards to the Singapore Model.

The 'Singapore Model' is one example of the 'inter-referencing' process occurring within and between cities in Asia and the Middle East (Huat, 2011; Ong & Roy, 2011). Due to its incredible growth and (re)development in such a short period of time, Singapore has become a source of inspiration for urban elites and leaders elsewhere in the world (Huat, 2011). Cities sharing a legacy of colonial rule, such as Bangalore, or other similarities with Singapore often see their urban futures in Singapore's present state (ibid.). The existence of an urban model, such as Singapore, is predicated on two factors: firstly, the existence of a model itself and second, instances where said model becomes an example for future emulation (Hoffman, 2011). One can extend this even further by adding the dimension of perceived success, not just in physical urban form but in the appeal of utopian rhetoric—a 'green' or 'sustainable' or 'cultural' city. Yet, looking at the presence of urban modeling and processes of inter-referencing does not offer suitable scope to understand the multi-faceted ways in which these urban policies are transplanted. Hence, an analysis of urban policy mobilities is required in order to further interrogate how concepts of 'global' and 'modern' are (de)constructed through the process of urbanizing cities.

2.2.3 Urban Policy Mobility

The process of inter-referencing frequently involves the movement of urban policy models, reproducing global relational geographies in the process. The analysis of urban policy mobilities can help scholars understand the various networks, nodes, and transfer agents involved in this process (Pow, 2014). Furthermore, this conceptual lens can demonstrate how notions of what makes a 'good' city or what

constitutes a 'best practice' regarding how to attract (foreign) investment serve different means to an end depending not only on the actors involved in the transfer process but the regions in which they are being applied (ibid.). Scholars, such as Bunnell & Das (2010), have looked at how the various forms of seduction are used in the process of urban policy mobilization to ensure some degree of replication. More specifically, the role of transfer agents, both human and not[2], as nodes in the process of urban policy transfer that are central to the (re)creation of new norms and notions regarding how cities should be run and built (ibid.; Moser, in press). Pow (2014: 289) uses the conceptual lens of urban policy mobility in tandem with the notion of 'assemblage' to demonstrate how "'global cityness' and seductive neoliberal urban futures and knowledge are being (re)produced within the shifting urban political economy […]". Using the example of Singapore, the author considers how 'worlding practices' are inspired by the perception of Singapore as an ideal place to reside, the pinnacle of safety and orderliness, and the promise for high levels of connectivity. Pow argues that the Singapore Model is deconstructed by various agents and urban actors, the concepts removed from context and, in the process, 'orientalized' in a performative manner. In this circulation, the Singapore model is atomized, consumed and embedded in urban environments in a multiplicity of ways (ibid; see also Prince, 2017).

In this thesis, I draw on urban policy mobility to underscore the ways in which (urban) transformations in Hanoi are underpinned by rhetoric put forth by human transfer agents and embedded in non-human transfer agents, such as the recent Master Plan. I consider how various forms of inter-referencing are not only evident in the built environment but emerge in the perceptions and opinions of youth living and working in Hanoi. Analyzing how urban policy mobility and inter-referencing 'play out' in the city is also pertinent to understanding the multi-faceted ways in which Hanoi is theming itself as a modern and global hub. However, this lens alone does not provide a strong enough platform to interrogate the *means* through which urban residents reinforce or undermine these transforming aspects of the city. In the next section, I expand my conceptual framework to consider this.

2.3 Hybrid Urbanization in Post-Socialist Cities

The second conceptual body of literature guiding my research is hybrid urbanization. McGee (2009) argues that in the context of post-socialist city planning, hybrid urbanization has emerged as a response to transitions away from centrally planned economies and towards de-regulation in tandem with growth in the

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[2] For example, both a Master Plan and the consulting firm authoring a Plan are examples of transfer agents (Bunnel & Das, 2010).

private sector and foreign investment. In a socialist state, this occurs within the sphere of a one-party system. Here, the urban form of the city comes to be produced by and be the producer of linkages between the state and private capital, or public-private partnerships. As such, McGee suggests that as local actors respond to an economic transition, the urban space that they produce takes on a hybrid nature (ibid.). Other scholars, such as Diener and Hagen (2013) have argued that three distinct themes emerge in the crystallization of post-socialist urban landscapes. First, a tendency to craft and commemorate 'national' narratives through the active preservation, rebuilding, or creation of new historical landmarks. Second, rhetorical devices that place emphasis on an 'all-inclusive' urban landscape often come into tension with the presence of "local, minority, and various 'other' identities" (Diener & Hagen, 2013: 489). Finally, post-socialist urban transformations attempt to "reconcile traditional notions of local and national identity with new norms of regional and global integration" (ibid.: 490).

Nonetheless, while these dimensions of post-socialist hybrid urbanization are evident in cities across Vietnam and China, they can also be seen in other urban milieu's not considered 'post-socialist', such as Singapore (see Chang, 2016; Chang & Pang, 2017) or the Philippines (see Guazon, 2013; Choi, 2014). This suggests that the concept of hybridity in the urban environment reflects a relationship between a specific form of governance and private incentives. While my research focuses on a 'post-socialist' urban landscape, I think it is important to consider how hybrid urbanization may emerge in cities not considered 'post-socialist'.

2.3.1 Market Modernization

One key dimension of hybrid urbanization is the emergence of market modernizing processes. This thread of analysis looks at the production of urban space through the growing presence of large-scale private capital in post-socialist cities (Leaf, 2015). Closer analysis of market modernization suggests that private urban enclaves are a common consequence of this concentration of capital (ibid.). However, these urban enclaves as an outcome of market modernization are better understood with regards to larger social and economic shifts, discussed below.

2.3.1.1 Middle-class & Consumption Practices

The growth of the middle-class has played a role in shifting consumption practices, changes to the sites frequented for leisure, and a transforming of the overall production of urban space (Drummond, 2012). Global aspirations and greater disposable income, as well as the inter-referencing of 'model cities', has

bolstered perceptions in middle- and upper-class groups that the urban environment is chaotic and disorderly, hence justifying a retreat into private urban enclaves (Leaf, 2015). Drummond (2012) has analyzed the role of a burgeoning middle-class in Vietnam, arguing that this socioeconomic group's changing preference partially explains the increasing demand for private spaces that facilitate a removal from the everyday urban fabric and provide proximity to 'modern' sites of consumption, such as malls and supermarkets.

Concurrently, spaces for leisure, and the practice itself, are increasingly constructed around consumption (Drummond, 2012). Hansen, Nielsen, and Wilhite (2016) compare the relationship between consumption, capitalist development, and sustainability in both India and Vietnam to better understand how the middle-class produces new patterns and processes that construct distinct global-local synthesis. For example, the shift from the motorbike to the car as a status symbol in Vietnam suggests an idealized form of comfort and cleanliness (ibid.). Or, the reclaiming of public spaces as sites for specific forms of leisure and the exclusion of certain urban groups deemed 'non-modern' through the development of new urban areas in Vietnam also points to shifting patterns of consumption and leisure (Waibel, 2006). Hence, taking into consideration the role of the middle-class in shifting consumption patterns and the production of the urban environment can enable a deeper understanding of how individuals (re)produce this market modernization. Yet, I argue that it does not enable scholars to necessarily investigate how larger urban development schemes are made desirable to local elites. Hence, there is a need to consider the relationship between the production of space and practices of consumption and how this produces sites that are marketed as a certain 'type' of place, offering a specific set of expectations and benefits to the local elites who occupy it.

2.3.2 Experience Economy and Theming

To better understand how the growth of the middle-class is suggestive of market modernization and forms of hybrid urbanization, the second body of my conceptual framework is also informed by notions of the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Also referred to as the 'entertainment economy' (see Wolf, 1999), this theoretical approach suggests that "as goods and services become commoditized, the customer experiences that companies create will matter most" (ibid.: 97). Proponents of an experience economy approach argue that rather than making goods or delivering services, economic value is increasingly garnered through the staging of experiences (ibid.). An 'experience' is an amorphous concept, open to varying interpretations and approaches dependent on the economic good intended for consumption. Hence, within this broad and seemingly unwieldy theoretical approach, I will employ Pine and Gilmore's definition

of this new economy typology with regards to the theming of private urban spaces and places. The importance of theming within the urban space is linked to macro-level aims to create cities that are world-renowned, while being simultaneously locally representative and globally competitive (Erb & Ong, 2017).

Broadly, theming "involves the use of an overarching theme, such as 'western', to create a holistic and integrated spatial organization of a consumer venue" (Lukas, 2007: 1). Theming is also a "symbolic narrative process" that is "intrinsic to the way that human beings make sense of, and create sense of, the world around them" (Erb & Ong, 2017: 145). It induces desire through immersing individuals and engaging in 'imaginaries' to sell its given thematic. This concept has been employed by scholars to look at the role and success of amusement and commercial theme parks in attracting both tourists and locals to sites like Universal Studios Singapore (Chang & Pang, 2017) and Euro Disney (Altman, 1996). Yet, one can also suggest that theming is central to urban development schemes, such as the packaging and selling of a 'green' or 'sustainable' city.

In the context of hybrid urbanization, theming emerges in smaller-scales—at the level of the private enclave or gated urban development. Hence, middle-class consumers may expect a certain form of life when moving to these new urban areas and in turn, developers will market their urban model accordingly. I believe that this might be the case in Hanoi, with regards to developments like 'Eco-Park', 'Royal City' and 'Times City'. Finally, state-sponsored theming of future urban enclaves using rhetorical devices focusing on aesthetics and beauty can also become a mechanism of control that legitimizes displacement (Harms, 2012). Hence, on the one hand, the creation of an urban 'paradise' facilitates middle-class movements at the expense of less-powerful individuals being displaced but, on the other hand, it "produces a new kind of social control largely depicted through the lens of positively charged terms such as 'freedom', 'consumer choice' and harmony" (ibid: 742).

Lukas (2008) argues that through immersion, theming renders feelings of fragmentation created in the 'outside' world, whole, projecting a powerful experience of unity and connection. However, there is also a need to critically approach how the theming of certain aspects of the urban environment, such as new forms of public transportation, signal larger and more long-term projects of theming entire city spaces. Through this lens, disconnects between intended perception and consumption in hybrid urban spaces may contribute to an expansion of the experience economy approach. As such, I will draw on this concept of theming, along with the experience economy when I focus on the ways in which youth in Hanoi, Vietnam describe and perceive both recent and future changes to the urban fabric, such as the proliferation of mega-malls.

2.3.3 Porous Urban Enclave

The final thread of analysis informing my conceptual approach to hybrid urbanization is that of the porous urban enclave. Broadly, Harms (2015: 153) defines the porous urban enclave as "an urban social form that emerges when South East Asia's porous city meets the enclave form of transnational inter-Asian urbanism". More specifically, this refers to various ways in which the formal boundaries of exclusive urban enclaves, demarcated by security guards or gates, originally intended to house the elite, are transgressed by consumers and everyday users of urban space (ibid.). Important here is the understanding that 'porosity' is itself not a physical object, but rather a set of social processes that are "forged through the articulation of people living in social or geographical spaces described as isolated from each other" (Harms, 2015: 153). These urban enclaves are often framed as 'new' or 'foreign' developments that promise physical and social separation from society itself but do not fully enforce this schism. Instead, porous urban enclaves are reliant on the local urban fabric to cater to different spheres of their residential, commercial, office or industrial spaces— be it through the entry of mobile coffee vendors or Uber drivers (ibid.; observations). The enclave, attracting residents and consumers through various discourses of 'modernity' and 'development', is itself a form of theming which is made available to those who can afford to buy into its luxuries.

Analysis of how urban enclaves are made porous can enable a deeper understanding of the ways in which these spaces reflection both inclusion and exclusion. Labbé & Boudreau (2011) trace the integration of the urban enclave model into Hanoi's urban landscape and argue that rather than becoming sterile or disconnected suburban communities, the contexts in which these new urban areas are erected contributes to the forms of porosity they reflect. The authors argue against a 'dual city' approach by showing how the seemingly absolute boundaries of these 'heterotopias' (see Foucault, 1984) are rendered porous through (informal) socioeconomic relations and practices by both developers and surrounding community members. For example, the extending of houses into coffee shops and karaoke bars and the presence of upmarket cafes frequented by youth (Labbé & Boudreau, 2011). Domestic investment and designs of these enclaves also orients the 'ideal' residential consumer away from strictly wealthy individuals and families to towards the growing middle-class (ibid.). In sum, the porous urban enclave reflects the physical consequences of hybrid urbanization, made attractive to members of the experience economy through forms of theming, and reliant on shifts in consumption practices in order to exist. By bringing together these conceptual angles, I hope to better understand the ways that spaces in Hanoi are not only themed or re-themed but how this process is facilitated through porosity.

2.4 Everyday Politics

The final conceptual body of literature informing my research is everyday politics. Boyte (2004: 36) frames everyday politics as a process that "involves people reclaiming politics as an activity owned and engaged in by citizens, in environments that reach far beyond the formal political system". Kerkvliet (2009: 232) approaches everyday politics through a different lens, defining this conceptual body as "people embracing, complying with, adjusting, and contesting norms and rules regarding authority over, production of, or allocation of resources and doing so in quiet, mundane, and subtle expressions and acts that are rarely organised or direct". He further distinguishes between four forms of everyday politics, namely "support, compliance, modifications and evasions, and resistance" (Kerkvliet, 2009: 233). This theoretical lens emphasizes that these actions are rarely overt in nature, such as loud protest or active civil disobedience, but rather covert actions that are not necessarily political in intent.

This approach provides a conceptual platform through which scholars can interrogate the ways in which subordinated and/or marginalized groups navigate and negotiate urban changes stimulated by dominant political actors (see Eidse et al., 2016). The various actions carried out by marginalized or subjugated groups in response to these urban changes are not necessarily political, though they can potentially play a role in amending government politics and policies (Kerkvliet, 2005). Scholars have employed this conceptual approach in tandem with others, such as a mobilities approach, to understand how street vendors respond to government bans on their informal livelihoods in Hanoi, Vietnam (see Eidse et al., 2016). Others have used an 'everyday resistance' lens (Scott, 1986) in order to understand how government rhetoric concerning ideal urban spaces and inhabitants function to control workers in Bangkok, Thailand (Brody, 2006) or how covert resistance takes on overt forms (Adnan, 2007).

Vinthagen & Johansson (2013: 10) extend the concept of everyday resistance by considering the constitutive relationship between power and resistance. Arguing that previous definitions risk defining 'everything' as resistance, they propose that everyday resistance is resistance "that is done routinely, but which is not politically articulated or formally organized". While this parallels Scott's definition, they contend that his analysis fails to incorporate the dynamics *between* and *within* power and resistance. Hence, their definition not only treats everyday resistance as an everyday act, but one that done in opposition to a power or powers and therefore exists simultaneously independently and in relation to a given oppressive force. Vinthagen and Johannson's (2013: 32; 2016) analysis of everyday politics provides an important contribution to the field: the consideration of how "subaltern identities are embedded in complex overlapping social networks in which individuals simultaneously assume positions of domination and

subordination" and how everyday resistance never resists 'Power' in its entirety, only pieces here and there. From this lens, everyday resistance, and everyday politics as well, can be understood as a myriad of informal actions that serve to push back against or re-inscribe power within a given space.

In the context of my research, an everyday politics approach enhances my ability to understand the ways in which youth, as both individual and as a cohort, react and respond to changes in Hanoi. Moreover, because the youth I will be speaking with will inevitably occupy different positions of power, established through age, socioeconomic class, ethnicity, and gender, the consideration of how resistance is itself a blurred or porous category is important.

2.5 Chapter Conclusions

In this chapter I have constructed and outlined the conceptual framework underpinning my research with youth in Hanoi, Vietnam. My conceptual framework rests on three bodies of literature: critical approaches to global cities research (2.2), hybrid urbanization (2.3), and everyday politics (2.4). The first conceptual body of literature focuses primarily on lines of analysis that seek to understand how the role of top-down actors (ranging from urban scholars to city and country leaders) in (re)producing and (re)defining notions of what is a 'modern' and 'global' city. Second, a hybrid urbanization approach serves to illuminate how cities are shaped by an amalgamation of the ideas and actions of top-down and bottom-up actors, focusing on how both sets of actors are involved in the production of urban space. Finally, an everyday politics approach looks at these multiple urban dynamics including, in the case of Hanoi, the actions of state officials in a socialist state, and focuses on the various subtle actions and (a)political maneuvers of urban space users in response.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT: HANOI'S URBAN FORM AND YOUTH POPULATION

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss recent and current urban changes in Hanoi, Vietnam. First, I provide a brief historical background to changes in Vietnam over the last century. Then, I turn to recent transformations in the cityscape, specifically transportation and private urban developments. Following this, I interrogate the production of (pseudo-)public space in Hanoi in recent years. Finally, I discuss this generation of youth in Hanoi, their position in relation to housing, employment, and (dis)use of the urban environment. By interweaving these contextual threads, I show how my research is pertinent and contributes to current and future research on everyday experiences, perceptions, and encounters of rapid urbanization across cities in Southeast Asia.

3.2. Backdrop to Current Urban Change

For centuries, Vietnam was a primarily dynamic agricultural society, reliant on the cultivation of a variety of crops, such as rice (Thrift & Forbes, 2012). Hanoi, particularly the Ancient Quarter, was central for merchants to trade and ply their wares (Turner, in press). During the French colonial period (1883-1945), foreign powers upheaved and altered much of the region's (urban) form, education, and political system (Logan, 2000). Following Vietnamese independence, President Ho Chi Minh's development discourses in Northern Vietnam focused on even distribution of the population, the development of provincial towns, and a restriction of urban-to-rural migration (Labbé & Musil, 2013; Thrift & Forbes, 2012). After Vietnamese Reunification in 1976, which brought the North and South together again after two brutal wars, Hanoi was established as the capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Thrift & Forbes, 2012). During the subsequent subsidy era, industry was socialized and as the 1980s began, the economy was stagnant, resulting in the state seeking new policies that would foster economic growth and renewal (Thrift & Forbes, 2012; Turner, in press). As mentioned in my Introduction Chapter, the economic renovations of *Đổi Mới* were a centripetal force shifting the country away from its strictly socialist framework and towards one that wed a one-party socialist system to a market-driven economy (Thrift & Forbes, 2012).

3.2.1 Historical Changes in the Built Environment

The introduction of the *Đổi Mới* reforms in 1986 brought an end to subsidy period (1975-1986) housing provisions, such as government subsidized collective living quarters and fixed rents. This provided residents

with access to housing ownership, the right to rent, alter and transform their homes to improve their quality of life in the ways they saw fit (Turner, in press; Labbé, 2015). Concurrently, the state transitioned away from previously anti-urban rhetoric emphasizing equal dispersion and collectivism to rhetoric framing urban growth as the machine through which the country would revolutionize its position in the global hierarchy (Labbé & Musil, 2013). Since then, officials have positioned urban growth as an "inevitable component of a national development programme founded on modernization and industrialization" (ibid: 1149).

In the time since 1986, government discourse has actively sought to transform Hanoi into a 'modern' city, frequently linking this status to the proliferation of high-rise apartment and office buildings (see Kong, 2007). While the authoritarian angle of new policies and regulations fit within a socialist state, some of the inspiration has come from outside – not only China, a regular source of inspiration of socialist urban planning and visions, over the years, but also increasingly Singapore (Ong & Roy, 2011; Gibert & Segard, 2015; Yeoh et al., 2005).Yet, scholars have argued that these national and municipal decisions often trickle-down to the local level with little local or public input and without a complete set of urban land management tools (Gibert & Segard, 2015; Hornidge & Kurfürst, 2011). While a shift towards neoliberal housing policies favoring private apartments has benefitted some, families and individuals lacking sufficient financial capital to rent or purchase are at a disadvantage (Gough & Tran, 2009).

The growth of a contemporary Vietnamese middle-class is also underpinning the expansion of private urban developments. This socio-economic cohort is playing a role in the production of new urban spaces typified as global ideals of urban and suburban lifestyles, offering prospective residents a "physical retreat from the city and wider society" (Drummond, 2012: 84). Moreover, the middle-class is also contributing to changes in consumption patterns, leisure preferences, and the production of a contemporary society through the interweaving of heritage and 'new culture', in both urban fabric and everyday life (Nguyen-Marshall et al., 2012; Hansen et al., 2016; Drummond, 2012). Hence, the state, the private sector, and portions of Vietnamese society are agents linked to the perpetuation of 'modern' and 'global' city discourses.

Despite the confluence of certain ideals about urban life being framed as necessary and positive, the horizontal and vertical expansion of Hanoi is also contributing to tensions between state and society (Labbé & Musil, 2013). This is in part due to opaque platforms for urban change acting as the foundation for both private and state actors to parlay capital into peri-urban (farm)lands, giving rise to mega- developments (discussed in Section 3.3.2); this usually requires collusion between state and private industry in order to forcibly remove farmers from their land and is a phenomena not exclusive to Vietnam (Goldman, 2011; Zhang, 2017). Also present are tenuous peri-urban land relations (Labbé, 2015; Karis, 2017), regulations

concerning sidewalk and trade that are restricting the viability of informal livelihoods, such as street vending (Eidse et al., 2016), and a loss of public spaces (Pham & Labbé, 2017).

3.3. Recent Changes to Hanoi's Urban Form

In the wake of the unveiling of the '2011 Master Plan Guiding Hanoi to 2030 and Vision to 2050', municipal authorities have unleashed a series of urban transportation-related plans across the metropolis. Concurrently, private peri-urban contractors are installing a series of mega-developments across the skyline. This section discusses recent changes set forth by both state and private actors and shows how these plans affect both current and future of Hanoi.

3.3.1. Transportation Infrastructure

Since the 1990s, motorbikes have been Hanoians primary means of transportation. A 2015 estimate states that 4.9 million motorbikes are used for individual transport in Hanoi (Hansen, 2015). However, the municipal government has partially attributed the worsening congestion, pollution and noise to the density of motorbikes (usually 50-150cc scooters) on the road (ibid.). Indeed, high pollution levels and ceaseless traffic jams stand in stark contrast to the state's goal of becoming a 'modern' and 'global' city by 2030. In response to this congestion, in 2016 Hanoi deployed a new bus rapid transit (BRT) system. Financed through a series of World Bank loans, this $53.6 million-dollar development spans 14.7km and has its own traffic lights and lanes (Nguyễn, 2017). Despite free BRT transportation during the month of January 2017, public transit ridership remains low (ibid.).

In 2017, the Department of Transportation announced a bolder plan aimed at addressing road congestion and noise pollution: to ban motorbikes from the city by 2030 (Hodal, 2017). Authorities have justified this endeavor through citing that roads are currently holding four times as many vehicles as was intended (ibid.). Whether or not the government will be successful in its attempt to forcibly remove private vehicles is a question that only time will answer. What remains at stake now is the possibility that millions of Hanoians who rely on their motorbikes not only for everyday mobility but for their livelihoods, such as *xe om* (motorbike taxi drivers) (see Turner, 2018), will be left 'in the dust' in lieu of the state's diminishing support of activities that do not conform to its 'modernizing' discourses and approaches.

In 2008, Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, then Prime Minister of Vietnam, approved the construction of an urban rail network, outfitted with eight lines and spanning 318km, as part of the Master Plan, (Leducq & Scarwell, 2018). The first line of the Hanoi Urban Railway System, Line 2A, has been under construction since 2011 (Map 3.1). Originally slated to be completed in 2016, the inauguration has been pushed back multiple times, with a new date set for 2020 (Tatarski, 2017). Spanning 13km from Cát Lính to Hà Đông, Line 2A has encountered more than just construction setbacks, its reputation being tarnished by contractor choice, numerous accidents, and public skepticism over accessibility and convenience (ibid.). A recent study suggests that citizens' intentions to use the urban railway is most strongly influenced by the attraction of alternative transport means, such as motorbikes and cars, and perceived behavioral control, namely the "ease of use and self-decision making ability" (Nguyễn et al., 2017: 319). In other words, the quantitatively measured factors deterring future urban railway use are those that the project, and the city as a whole, may have the most difficulty with.
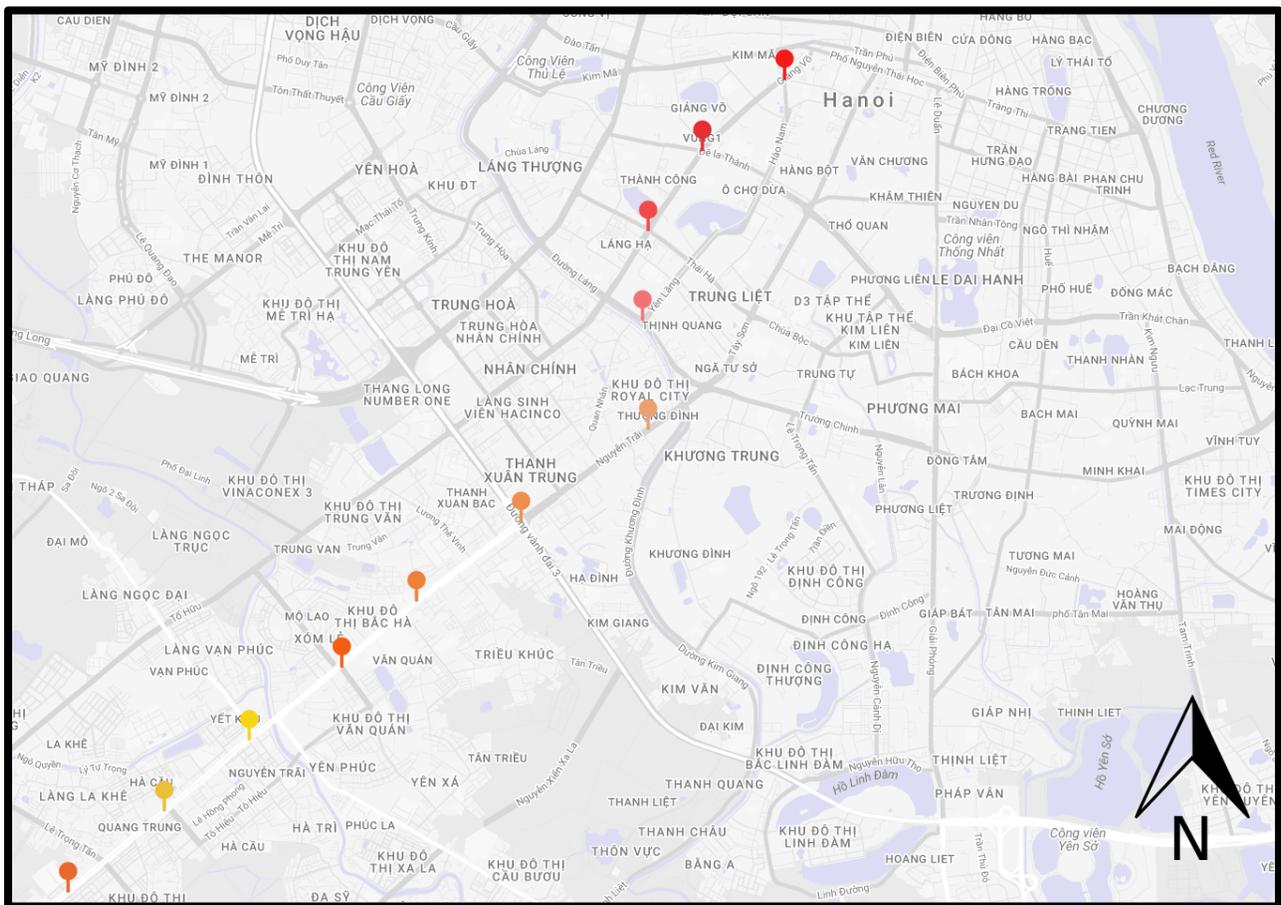
Map 3.1 Approximate Locations of 12 stop for Metro Line 2A (Author; Adapted from Technical Design Line 2A, 2008)

3.3.2 Private Urbanization Schemes

On the eve of the 2008 boundary expansion, large swathes of peri-urban land were purchased by wealthy Hanoians who had prior knowledge of the imminent growth through state connections. These purchases were directly aimed at either investing in the land through development or re-selling it after the official expansion to capitalize on the inevitable price increases. Today, the developments of shopping malls, gated communities and other large housing complexes on these lands cater to the desires of the growing middle- and upper-classes. Many also boast a range of amenities, from underground entertainment centers to private education and medical care that attract wealthy foreigners and locals. Projects of this form, such as Royal City, Times City, and Ecopark (see Figure 3.1, 3.2 and Map 3.2), are physical and symbolic manifestations of increasingly hybridized urban spaces. Symbolically, these developments attempt to merge the Master Plan 'pillars' of order, modernity, and sustainability. Many of the enclaves emerging in Hanoi reflect aspects of a 'Singapore Model', growing vertical rather than horizontal (Ong & Roy, 2011). Physically, and through a process of inter-referencing, these developments nonetheless take on a character of their own as they "interact with and depend on the local urban spaces surrounding them" (Harms, 2015: 153). I introduce each in turn here, as they return in my results chapters through the statements of youth interviewee with regards to places where some like to 'hang out' or aspire to live.

Figure 3.1 Royal City in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

Figure 3.2 Ecopark Township in Hưng Yên Province (Ecopark, 2017)
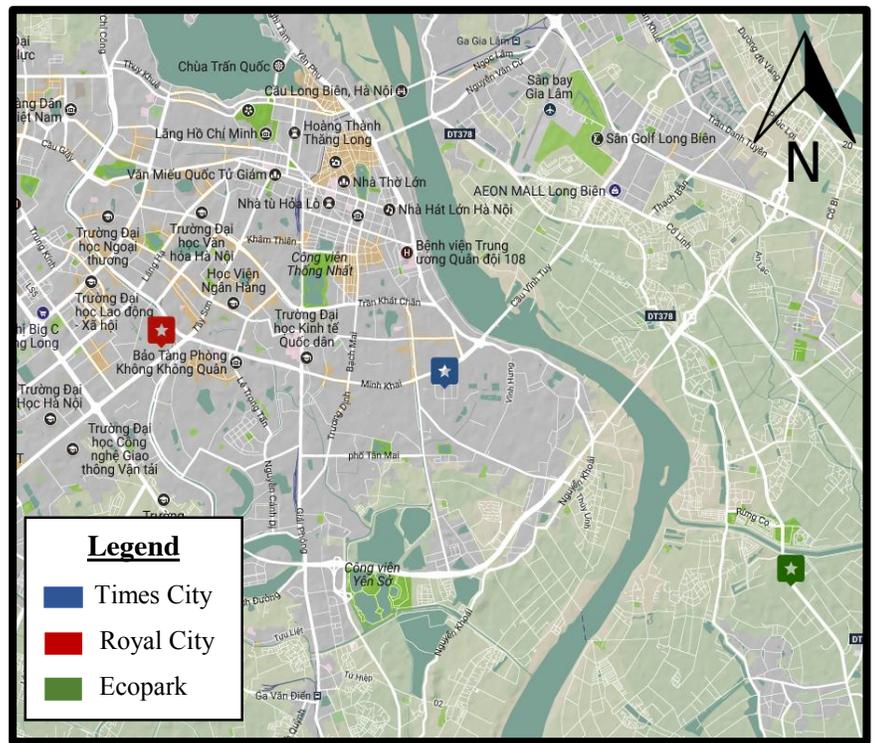
Map 3.2 Location of Times City, Royal City, and Ecopark in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

20

Royal City and Times City are two mega developments in Hanoi built and owned by VinGroup, one of the largest Joint Stock Companies in the country (Kroll, 2013). Phạm Nhật Vượng, the country's first billionaire, is the leading developer who sits at the helm of Vingroup's array of private shopping centers, luxury resorts, and urban development (ibid.). While construction of the 'Royal City Project' began in 2010 the location and project was officially 'handed' over to Vingroup in the subsequent year (Vingroup, 2013a). Built in just under 30 months, the 12-hectare private urban enclave was designed by a French firm and modeled after European architectural facades with Roman and Greek statues greeting both visitor and residents, shown in Figure 3.1 (Nguyet, 2012).

Attached to Royal City is Vincom Mega Mall Royal City, the supposed largest underground mall in all of Asia (Kroll, 2013). Opened in 2013, this underground entertainment and retail complex spans over 230,000 meters^2, and includes shops, restaurants, an aquarium, an ice skating rink, a grocery store, and a movie theater (ibid.). The Vingroup website emphasizes that the amenities available within the mall satisfy "the highest international standards" (Vingroup, 2013a). Indeed, the complex touts itself as an "all-in-one concept" that satisfies the "criterion of community contribution" by offering *customers* the ability to "combine sightseeing, consumption, interaction, social gatherings and, especially, family entertainment" and residents with additional access to a hospital and school (Vingroup, 2013a, 2013b).

Times City, the 'sibling' of the Royal City project, is a 36-acre complex built on the same 'all-in-one' concept. This "city of the era" opened in the same year and offers similar amenities and sites of consumption as its counterpart: an amusement park, aquarium, restaurants, and retail stores in its underground mall, see Figure 3.3 (Vingroup, 2012a, 2013c). Words such as 'premium', 'luxury', 'world class', 'unique' and 'extraordinary' litter official press releases and news reports describing both these private enclaves.

Figure 3.3 Times City, Hanoi. Entrance to Complex (Left) and Underground Mall (Right) (Author)

The third mega-development that this research focuses on is Ecopark (Figure 3.4), a new eco-township in Hưng Yên province, neighbouring Hanoi to the east. Built by Viet Hung Urban Development and Investment Joint Stock Company, or Vihajico, this massive master-planned and 'super-luxury' township covers 500 hectares and is set to be completed by 2020 (Provost & Kennard, 2017; Ecopark, 2017). Various developments in the complex refer overtly from places such as Dubai and Singapore (ibid.). In 2012, the first residents were welcomed and by 2016, the complex had over 1,500 apartments, 500 villas, and 150 shop houses for sale (Provost & Kennard, 2017). While the reported project totals around 9 billion USD, no traces of the sources for credit and loans has been found (Schiedel, 2015).

Whereas Royal City and Times City boast their amenities through a modern lens, Ecopark takes this a few steps further by encapsulating "a symbol of a new living concept, where the residents can experience and enjoy fully every single moment of happiness" (Ecopark, 2015). Ecopark's mission is to create and maintain the new living standards for Vietnamese; by pursuing the philosophy encapsulated in 5 "E": ecology, emotion, edu-entertainment, economic, and elite (ibid.). Clearly, encapsulated in these five factors is another 'all-in-one' marketing concept, catering to middle- and upper-class penchants for refuge from the city in a peaceful and close-to-nature setting where they can raise their children, have access to healthcare clinics, and live in a high-price point enclave. Embedded in its organized streets and 'public' spaces is a "special culture" and 'old town', offering a market where "traditional handicrafts, cultural festivals and other traditional activities" can be accessed (ibid.). While Ecopark has opened its gates to the public, offering a free shuttle—equipped with wifi—for service to and from the downtown area, entering the compound still instills a need to 'fit in' with the elite status imbued within (observations).

All three of these developments share common threads of offering 'modern' spaces that, by virtue of their enclosure, suggest a schism between those inside, those who are modern, and those outside, those who are not. Moreover, each of these developments overtly refer to an 'elite elsewhere', such as Europe or Singapore. For Ecopark, the linking of elite status and luxury with environmental sanctity and sanctuaries suggests something even more troubling: that the land there before was unable to 'tap' into the pureness provided through purchase and mobility. For youth or new residents to Hanoi who visit and aspire to live in these communities, what needs interrogation is the extent to how these enclaves are perceived, and to what degree mission statements and press releases shape these perceptions and aspirations to reside.

3.4. Locating Public Space in Hanoi

In tandem with the government's modernizing agenda has been an acknowledgment of the importance of fostering public spaces (Pham & Labbé, 2017). In this section, I focus on public space in Hanoi, a focus that returns in my results chapters where I examine the various ways in which segments of Vietnamese society perceive, use, and negotiate access to these sites.

As noted in my Introduction Chapter, in 2008, Hanoi tripled its boundary size and doubled its population overnight. That same year, revisions to the Vietnam Building Code engendered a new law specifying a range of requirements for urban spaces (Pham & Labbé, 2017). The subsequent year, the Urban Planning Law required that all urban construction plans meet the demands of social infrastructure and enhance the amount of parks, trees, and water surfaces (Matsumura, 2012). While municipal authorities are taking cues from cities around the world for public space design, particularly from the work of Healthbridge, a Canadian NGO active in Hanoi, scholars have argued that public space policy remains rooted in socialist planning principles and reliant on quantitative 'per capita' benchmarks for its design (Söderström & Geertman, 2013: Healthbridge, 2015). Hence, attempts to enhance the urban quality of life continue to reflect a "two-dimensional conception of the city", or *diện tích đất công cộng*, that rests further on Soviet-planning influence and emphasizes built infrastructure—such as transportation—rather than social infrastructure, or *không gian công cộng* (Pham &Labbé, 2017: 5; Söderström & Geertman, 2013).

In the most recent Master Plan, the emphasis on 'greening' the city is evident, with green corridors, linear parks to engender leisure space, and green belts reminiscent of Howard's Garden City (Söderström & Geertman, 2013). Yet, recent estimates show that despite increases in the total area of parks in the first decade of the 21st century, these areas are predominately concentrated in private urban districts, and hence not equitably distributed or easily accessible by all (Pham & Labbé, 2017). Coupled with population growth, the total area of parks per capita has decreased from 2.09m^2 to 1.48m^2 (ibid). Hence, it appears that despite municipal decrees, other formal calls to increase available social infrastructure, and the boasting of 70 percent green space in the 2011 Master Plan, realities have fallen quite short (ibid.; Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011).

3.4.1. Formal Public Spaces

Formal public spaces, in the form of squares and parks, were established in Vietnam during French colonial rule and inspired by Haussmann's transformation of Paris (Hornidge & Kurfürst, 2011; Söderström & Geertman, 2013). Following Vietnamese Independence, these sites were reserved for national events and

gatherings. Beginning in the 1990s, the state came under public pressure for increased access to these sites as spaces of leisure in tandem with its diminishing capacity to draw large numbers of citizens to state celebrations. Eventually, such spaces, such as Ba Đình Square, were opened in the morning and evening for recreation. Despite increased use for self-organized activities, Ba Đình Square remained tightly state-controlled (perhaps not surprising as it faces Hồ Chí Minh's Mausoleum and the State National Assembly Building) and thus, subject to closure for any state-organized event. The negotiation here between public use and state exertion of ownership at any given point in time highlights again a gradual citizen-led co-opting of spaces for preferred use (Hornidge & Kurfürst, 2011). However, the State remains reluctant to create more public spaces that could foster any form of contestation (Söderström & Geertman, 2013).

3.4.2. *(In)formal Public Spaces*

The historical composition of urban Hanoi has played a role in fostering a dynamic sidewalk culture that contributes to the production of informal public spaces (Labbé & Boudreau, 2015). Drummond (2000: 237) notes that "the distinction between public and private space in Vietnamese cities is transgressed or blurred both from the 'inside out' and the 'outside in'". This bleeding of public and private into one another is a product of concurrent increases in privatization, low availability of (formal) public space, and high levels of sidewalk appropriation (ibid). The extensive sidewalk culture of Hanoi cuts largely across socio-economic lines and reflects the continuation of a collective social structure. Not only is the sidewalk as an informal public space a response to lack of its formal counterpart, it is a means through which many survive (Turner, 2015). However, certain municipal officials and private property developers view the sidewalk as a site of chaos and unruliness that deters both investment and tourism. As a reflection of this stance, in May 2017, Hanoi's city authorities engaged in a city-wide 'Clean Up The Sidewalk Campaign' that translated into the forcible removal of street vendors, motorbikes, and even concrete ramps leading into private homes (Huy, 2017). Copying a similar campaign in Hồ Chí Minh City, this sidewalk clearing is bent on increasing the walkability of the sidewalk for pedestrians, yet it infringes on the rights of access of residents and vendors to an important public space (ibid.). As such, public space in Hanoi is formally created by the state, but actively extended and remodeled by its citizens through informal self-organization that frequently blurs the lines between the private and the public sphere.

3.5. Hanoi's Youth

Definitions of 'youth' differ between cultural and historical context, and are further complicated by "social context, gender, race, ethnicity, and class" (Nguyễn, 2002: 222). With regards to formal age categories, the

Vietnam Youth Law typifies the period of 'youth', or *tHạnh niên*, as between the ages of 16 and 30 (Ministry of Home Affairs of Vietnam, 2012). Conceptually and socially, belonging to the category of 'youth' is often positioned as membership to a cohort that is "oppositional, bounded, and distinctive from each other", coming to an end only after one begins to have children (Valentin, 2007: 301). Yet, in Vietnam, youth are seen as drivers of the nation who are dynamic, driven, and hopeful (ibid.). Concurrently, the role of Confucian ideology and its fundamentally hierarchical relations remains evident in contemporary Vietnamese society, with the relationship between youth (or subject) and the state as an extension of filial devotion. Hence, 'youth' have been seen as central to nation-building projects in periods prior to and after French colonial rule (ibid; Logan, 2011).

While recent literature has focused on youth in Southeast Asia (see Cohen, 2009; Manderson & Liamputtong, 2002; Nilan, et al., 2011), less research has explored youth in the context of rapid urban change in Southeast Asia's capital cities such as Hanoi (but see Nguyen, 2002; Turner & Nguyen, 2005; Valentin, 2007; Labbé & Boudreau, 2016). As such, this section focuses on youth in Hanoi and how they interact with the post-socialist landscape in different ways.

Following the country's transition to a market-led economy from the mid-1980s, 'real' employment in Vietnam shifted from away its ties to *biên chế*, or state-sector employment, and towards *làm ngoài*, or "work outside" (Nguyễn, 2002: 231) (see Appendix B). Today, youth with access to higher education are the social group "most exposed to social transformation and economic changes" (ibid.: 223). Youth, like any (demographic) group, experience and use urban space in diversified ways, dependent on gender, age, ethnicity, education and socioeconomic status. The intersections of these factors also produce different perceptions of the areas in which they live by virtue that "human beings are not only *in* places, but also *of* places, and therefore human experience is always emplaced" (Valentin, 2008: 82). For example, youth living and employed in the Soviet-inspired administrative district of Mại Ninh perceived their area as having been subject to 'social evils', such as drug use and prostitution. Conversely, youth in the wealthier district of Trúc Tuyệt envisioned their urban space as being one of hope and promise of a future in a world beyond Hanoi (Valentin, 2008).

With regards to housing access, youth are particularly disadvantaged when trying to access housing independently from their families (Gough &Trận, 2009). While most youth will remain in their family home until marriage, university students coming from outside of Hanoi are faced with the added financial burden of finding housing. Housing in proximity to universities is often more expensive, hence, there is the added cost of either purchasing and maintaining a motorbike or, having to rely on public transformation. Moreover, access to the city can be intensified when state actors, such as security guards and police, are

involved (Valentin, 2008). More specifically, the social and political spaces of youth are often politicized by gatekeepers, such as parental guardians and state actors, as well as the neighborhoods they live in or come from (ibid.).

Other research with youth in Hanoi has focused on the ways that this cohort uses and negotiates access to public spaces in the city. While formal public spaces, such as parks and squares, provide outdoor space for youth to socialize, engage in sports, and relax, recent case studies have found that the unequal dispersion of these spaces limits the ability for youth to access these sites (Boudreau et al., 2015). Other factors, such as vendor presence and perceived safety (particularly for young women), also contribute to reasons for which youth (dis)use these sites. However, consistent spatial and temporal use of certain public areas by groups has led to negotiation and consensus on which groups can be present in a given space and time. (Geertman et al., 2016). Of the youth in Hanoi who rely on public spaces to engage in respective street disciplines, such as skateboarding, they often engage in a range of non-confrontational and non-ideological spatial appropriation tactics in order to lay a collective claim to these sites. This pushing back against a slowly diminishing sphere of state control in public spaces parallels the gradual opening of Ba Đình Square in the decade previous or the rights based claims employed at Lenin Park (ibid; Hornidge & Kurfürst, 2011; Coe, 2015).

3.6. Chapter Conclusions

In this chapter, I have provided a contextual foundation for my research with youth in Hanoi, Vietnam. Since the introduction of economic reforms in 1986, Vietnam has departed from a strictly collectivist framework and, in turn, witnessed increases in foreign investment, influence, and presence. While the state has removed its sphere of control from housing and private enterprise, private-public partnerships play a central role in shaping the urban fabric of the city today, such as the deployment of new metro lines. Concurrently, the growth of a middle-class culture has transformed the production of (public) space in Hanoi, resulting in a blurring of public and private space, an increase in consumption practices, and changes in housing preferences and form. Finally, youth in Hanoi lie at the intersection of these top-down and bottom-up shifts, simultaneously shaping the future of the city through their own (middle-class) practices and being shaped by larger urban change.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In order to approach and understand my research aim and questions, I carried out six weeks of qualitative fieldwork in and around Hanoi (July-August, 2017). This chapter begins with an overview of my fieldwork methods (Section 4.2), including semi-structured interviews and overt participant observation. I then describe how I carried out qualitative data analysis (4.3). Following this, I consider ethics in my research design and process (4.4) and conclude with a critical consideration of my positionality (4.5).

4.2 Fieldwork Methods

My qualitative fieldwork was guided by a mixed methods approach using semi-structured interviews with youth, semi-structured interviews with key informants, including planners, academics and long-time urban residents of Hanoi, and participant observation at a range of sites around the city. While youth were the focus of my research, seeking out the opinions of older individuals enhanced the ability for a comparison between demographic groups and to, ultimately, enhanced the rigor of my research approach.

4.2.1 The Interview

Qualitative researchers can employ three types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured (Dunn, 2016). Whereas structured interviews follow a pre-determined set of questions, a semi-structured interview format provides more flexibility. Interview dynamics and content inevitably vary between interviewees depending on interests, experiences, views and overall willingness to share (Valentine, 2005). Additionally, semi-structured interviews enable an eliciting of information otherwise lost in a structured format, providing a better understanding of how and why differences or similarities exist (ibid.).

To utilize semi-structured interviews, I developed an interview guide with a range of questions (Longhurst, 2016). During my six weeks in Hanoi, Hạnh, my translator, and I conducted 39 interviews with youth and an additional three interviews with key informants who were long-time urban residents and academics. I conducted an additional two key informant interviews once back in Montreal, one of which was over Skype.

4.2.2 Interview Components: Informed Consent

Gaining informed consent from any interviewee is central to the research process (Dowling, 2016). Without carrying out this step prior to any interview, I would have been in violation of my REB ethics approval

(Appendix C) and would also be going against my own morals as a researcher. I relied on oral consent rather than written, as I wanted to maintain an informal atmosphere during my interviews and ensure that participants felt they would retain a degree of anonymity, given that some questions were politically sensitive.

4.2.3 Interview Components: Strategy

Interviews were conducted in public spaces, such as parks, private sites, such as coffee shops, or in private homes. Interviews usually lasted between thirty minutes to an hour and a half, depending on the setting and the interviewee's schedule. In public spaces, Hạnh and I approached youth who were alone or with one or two friends. I would introduce myself, share information about I was and why I was here, and ask youth about themselves. As I spent more time in Hanoi, I found that public spaces were a desirable site for initial contact, but not for the full interview. As such, potential interviewees would inform me of a more convenient a one-on-one interview, at which point we would meet in a coffee or tea shop. Hence, interactions in public spaces were focused on building rapport and getting to know potential interviewees. Interviews conducted in private homes were with connections made through my research assistant, Hạnh. Access to these private dwellings provided me with greater insight into respondents because I was also able to observe family dynamics, the interior of the house, and gain a better understanding of certain youth. Thus, strategies for interviewing differed based on the spaces that Hạnh and I were working in and my approaches to these spaces shifted as time in the field elapsed.

4.2.4 Interview Components: Sampling

To produce an illustrative sample, I employed two forms of non-probability sampling during the research process: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling refers to the selection of individuals from the larger population, in this case youth, based on researcher judgment (Gregory, 2009). In public spaces, this meant gauging an individual's age and, through conversation, including them in my sample if they met certain criteria, such as how long they had been living in Hanoi. Because my research also takes into account the role of socioeconomic class in shaping uses of space, consumption, and leisure, I determined the general socioeconomic class of youth we spoke with through four factors: consumption habits, transportation means, consumer items, and level of education (see Drummond, 2012).

As I spent more time in the field, I increasingly used snowball sampling to interact with and interview youth. With snowball sampling, one gains access to individuals in the population through

gatekeepers, such as my translator and former interviewees (Gregory, 2009). Snowball sampling provided two key benefits to the data collection process. First, I was able to have some form of rapport prior to meeting a prospective interviewee by virtue that I had been introduced through a gatekeeper. Second, I could still make use of purposive sampling techniques by asking youth participants if they had friends who met my sample population criteria. This latter benefit became increasingly important as I collected more data because I wanted to ensure that my sample population was illustrative of the true population in terms of age distribution, gender, and socio-economic status[3] .

4.2.5 (Participant) Observation

To better understand how youth use and navigate Hanoi, I carried out periods of overt participant observation. Observation enables the researcher to watch and note a prescribed phenomenon as it occurs, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of the life world of participants and how, in my case, how space is produced, as well as how it is made exclusive or inclusive (Kearns, 2010).[4] As a complete observer (not at all being involved in the actions of those I was observing), I carried out participant observations in public and private spaces, such as parks and lakes as well as cafes, tea shops and new shopping-residential complexes, such as Royal City and Times City. During these periods, I would sit and either take field notes or videotape my surroundings (Watson & Till, 2010). This form of uncontrolled observation enabled me to approach periods of observation with an open mind.[5] I observed whatever was going around me, whether it was families waiting for Royal City to open or a youth cycling competition beginning at Hoàn Kiếm Lake. When filming, I ensured to film predominantly buildings or the ground, focusing on sounds to jog my memory later on rather than intruding in people's privacy by taking overt videos of them.

Often, I would transition from a complete observer to an observer-as-participant without the intention of doing so. For example, some youth had mentioned to me in interviews that they liked to walk around Hoàn Kiếm Lake to practice their English with foreigners or that they liked to skateboard at Lenin Park. At both of these sites, I inadvertently became a foreigner teaching English or a temporary

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[3] Women make up approximately 49.9% of the population as of 2017 and 16% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 24 years (CIA World Factbook, 2018). However, because my age range begins at 18 and ends at 30, I wanted to ensure that I had an even distribution of youth within this age span.

[4] Kearns (2016) distinguishes between two forms of observation: controlled and uncontrolled. Both are informed by research goals and ethical considerations. However, the former focuses explicitly on a what, how, and when to observe whereas the latter is not restricted to noting some anticipated phenomena (ibid.). In addition, Gold (1958) asserts that there are four classifications of participant observation: complete observer, observer-as-participant, participant-as-observer, and complete participant.

[5] These videos were only for my own viewing and have since been destroyed to protect the confidentiality of any individuals I might have taped.

skateboarder. Hence, overt participant observation had two major benefits. First, the observation of youth and other everyday users of urban space in a range of settings, provided me insight into minute dynamics and interactions. Second, I was able to better understand and confirm the information, opinions, and insights that youth shared with me.

While observations were usually static, meaning I stayed in one place for an extended period of time, I also found that non-static observations, such as taking a motorbike through the city, provided insight into what it is like to move through the cityscape. If going from one side of the city to another, I would ask the motorbike driver to take a longer route, or to go through a specific area so I could record the sounds of traffic and observe general urban life. While these insights are not explicitly included in my findings, using this method of mobile observation enabled me to better understand the diversity of youth responses, as well as understandings of the places they described to me in interviews.

4.3 Analysis

Coding is not a pre-analysis process but rather an iterative process central to qualitative data analysis that enables the researcher to find categories and patterns that arise between and within interview data (Cope & Kurtz, 2016). Strauss (1987) suggests that there are four 'overarching' themes within data: conditions, interaction among actors, strategies and tactics, and consequences.

Being new to the research process, I found the data analysis phase particularly challenging at first. Moving from "rich, detailed and multi-layered" (Valentine, 2005: 128) material to larger codes and themes was labor-intensive and demanded a level of rigor I was not yet accustomed to. Initially, I transferred my interview notes into a document to which I added additional notes from memory and my field notebook. I then began preliminary coding after completing about five interviews. After completing fifteen interviews, I began organizing responses based on *a priori* codes, created around my interview guide. I then employed a combination of manifest and content analysis—the former referring to the use of surface content, such as word count, to create codes and the latter focusing on themes emerging in the interview transcript to guide interpretation (Dunn, 2016). For example, responses regarding the proposed motorbike ban (discussed in Chapter 6.3.2) were grouped together during the first phase. Then, responses were further categorized based on respondent opinions regarding the ban. Finally, similar opinions were grouped together based on justification and/or form of explanation (Cope & Kurtz, 2016). During this process, responses that did not fit with an *a priori code* or newer code were set aside and returned to at the end for analysis.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

To conduct fieldwork in Hanoi, Vietnam for a six-week period, I applied for and was granted the Research Ethics Board I (REB) through McGill University (Appendix C). Ethics approval required my demonstrating that my research participants would not come under personal harm or threats to their safety by participating in my interviews (Dunn, 2016).

When conducting qualitative research, one must be cognizant of the dangers of 'moral imperialism'; referring to a researcher relying upon a code of ethics in which definitions of what is (un)ethical are under the control of a "rule-making body" that need not refer to "the values, beliefs, and feelings of those Others" (Hay, 1998: 62). Hence, as a foreigner entering the field for the first time, I had to take care to ensure that I was not letting unintentional biases guide my actions. First and foremost, I had to think critically about the power dynamics inherent in using the interview method. The interview terrain presents the researcher with various points in which they can 'tip' the power scales in their direction, be it through choosing the interview location, concealing their agenda during the interview, or manipulating data afterwards (Kvale, 2006).

To navigate these pitfalls, I let respondents choose where to meet for an interview (Sin, 2003). Second, I made my clear my intentions as both researcher and student and aimed to make the interview setting one which was safe, comfortable and as equal as possible (see Elwood & Martin, 2000). Finally, when I conducted interviews in English or French by myself (most often for key informant interviews), I made sure to allocate time for a feed-back session during which the interviewee and I informally went over the things that they had said and clarified any confusion (Dunn, 2016).

4.4.1 Thinking through my positionality

Positionality can be understood as relational, non-static characteristics, such as gender, race, class, political leanings, life experiences, and sexuality, that reinforce the images that we (re)present of ourselves, peoples and places (England, 1994). A central component of being an ethical and rigorous researcher is acknowledging positionality and the (dis)advantages it may cause (Dowling, 2016). As a geographer, positionality does more than influence the validity of research processes and findings. One's 'situatedness' in a space and place is constantly shifting and shaping researcher identity, research itself, and everything 'in between', thus making positionality a process of constant reiteration (Rose, 1997).

I am a young, educated, white, female researcher whose internal and external identity is in a state of constant flux. Let us interrogate these non-static characteristics in turn. Due to my age, twenty-one, and the largely fixed rate at which one can contribute to and 'move up' in academia, I am in a position of lower

prestige. Additionally, being new to the theory and practice of conducting research, I have only begun learning how to *be* a researcher. Learning how to thinking critically, reflexively, ethically, and rationally is integral to this progression. To garner respect within academia, I must utilize these skills to contribute heavily and consistently to the knowledge production process (MacKenzie et al., 2015).

However, access to these skills is a privilege that I have because of my socioeconomic background. Since a young age, I've been cognizant of the (dis)advantages available to those around me. My adolescence, marked by moving from Paris to Connecticut to New York and attending a private institution often positions me as an elite in the eyes of others. While the area I lived in on Long Island is known for its abundance of 'one-percenters', I was raised by my mother, an artist, and financially supported by my father, a musician. Growing up, I was acutely aware of my lower socioeconomic position in relation to my peers and most of my community. As such, I held myself to a high academic standard not only out of interest but in order to prove that my capabilities could surpass socioeconomic barriers. In high school, I was able to travel with my peers and teachers to places around the world, such as San Francisco, Italy, Myanmar, and China, in order to learn from communities about their culture, traditions, languages, and concerns. During these trips, I was often confronted with with the privileges that I had observed in my peers, but had not yet seen in myself. I felt frustrated and shocked by the inability to 'escape' my white, elite, academic group and the ways in which we were perceived by locals in both rural and urban settings. In reflecting on these opportunities and experiences, I have come to see how they continue to shape the way I approach and think about the research I have conducted and hope to conduct.

Today, as a young, white, female attending an elite academic institution, my positionality straddles positions of domination and subjugation. Being a woman working within a historically male-dominated discipline, I am aware that in the future my ability to contribute to larger bodies of literature and knowledge production may be hindered by my biological sex and gender. While my gender places me in an asymmetrical power relationship in patriarchal and male-dominated environments, such as Geography, as a (white) researcher I too take on a potentially dominating role. The power of knowledge and the prestige it grants me means that over time, I may be positioned in increasingly asymmetrical relationships. While in the field, I was in a position of greater power and prestige in certain contexts because of the advantages given to me by this "accident of birth within [a] particular geographical border" and "sheer luck of descent" (Shachar, 2009: 7). I often felt out of place, unable to entirely own the role of researcher because of my age and frustrated, as mentioned above, by my inability to 'shed' my privilege. However, the intersections of these characteristics also made it easier to approach youth and connect with them. Hence, my age became an

equalizer in some ways, and my status as a white foreigner translated into youth being keen on speaking with me.

4.5 Conclusions

In this chapter I have detailed the methods I employed in the field, namely semi-structured interviews and participant observation. I then described the analysis process I undertook, ethical considerations, and my positionality. By outlining my methodology, I have laid the foundation for presenting and discussing my research findings in the following three chapters.

CHAPTER 5: 'I can go everywhere': Youth Preferences of Hanoi's Urban Space

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents key findings from my analysis that answer my first research question: ***how and why do youth use or avoid different spaces within the city?*** In the subsequent sections, I discuss youth demographics and their general take on Hanoi as a place to live (Section 5.2); youth leisure in public and private spaces, with a focus on where youth go and what they prefer about these locales (5.3); and mobility and concerns youth have with specific transportation options (5.4). In this chapter, I show how my findings support the literature to date regarding the blurring of public and private space in Hanoi, Vietnam. Second, interview data suggests that youth are largely deterred from both current and planned public forms of transportation. Finally, I discuss how I found youth in Hanoi to have different perceptions and preferences for leisure spaces based on their marriage status.

5.2 Participant Demographics

The 39 youth I interviewed range in age from 18 to 32, with the average age being 25. Of these 39, 69 percent have lived in Hanoi their whole lives and 31 percent migrated to Hanoi from nearby provinces. Fifty-nine percent of my respondents were women (see Appendix A for youth characteristics).[6]

Out of the 39 youth, eleven (29 percent) were married and one was engaged. Of those married, all but one—age 24—were older than 28. Historically, marriage has signified the end of youth, and in Confucian and Vietnamese culture, family formation is central to finding unity and harmony (Barbieri & Bélanger, 2009). In a post- *Đổi Mới* context, marriage has been subtly politicized and made part of a larger nation-building project where notions of unity are merged with economic stability (Brickell, 2013; Phạm, 1999). Given the blurred boundaries between youth and non-youth, and taking the dynamics between familial commitments and neoliberalism into consideration, I decided to include interviews with young parents to understand if their roles at the cusp of youth shape (dis)use of spaces in the context of urban and cultural norms and changes.

As noted in my Introduction Chapter, Hanoi consists of 12 urban districts, 17 rural districts, and 1 town. While the youth I spoke with came from across Hanoi, the majority (62 percent or 24 youth) were living in urban districts (Map 5.1). Sixteen youth (41 percent), all between the ages of 18 and 25, lived

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[6] Despite trying to get an even mix of men and women, women generally seemed more receptive to myself and my female interpreter

with their families. Of the thirteen renters (33 percent), ten rented a room that they shared with others and three rented apartments alone. Finally, the eleven youth who were married were all living with their partner and children, with three of these couples living in the familial, multi-generational home.

As outlined in my Methodology Chapter, I determined the general socioeconomic class of my respondents from four factors: consumption habits, transportation means, consumer items, and level of education (Drummond, 2012). Based on these divisions, 31 percent of my interviewees were lower-class, 53 percent middle-class, and 16 percent upper-class. However, when analyzing my findings, it became clear that these categories often blur and make it hard to delineate fixed categories. Hence, my results regarding differences between socioeconomic class should be read with this in mind, and I have added specific clarifications where people tended to deviate from the class patterns that I found overall.

Map 5.1 Residence of Youth Interviewees (Author, Adapted from Brandes et al., 2016)

The youth I talked to not only ranged in age and origin, but also in educational background and employment. Eighteen (46 percent) were university graduates, ten (26 percent) were enrolled in a university in Hanoi, and ten (26 percent) did not hold a tertiary degree (one declined to answer). Of those holding a university degree, only one held a Master's degree, obtaining it abroad. In total, twenty-six (66 percent) of the youth respondents were employed full-time, ten (27 percent) were unemployed and three (7 percent)

employed part-time. Of the ten unemployed, four were not enrolled in a university, with two actively looking for work, one unsatisfied with the salary options available to him, and the fourth having opted to stop working to help his wife support her hairdressing business.

What did these young adults think of Hanoi in general? The busy nature of Hanoi as an urban hub, and the convenience the city provides for accessing goods and services was one of the more attractive features that over half (22) of the youth we interviewed spoke of. Additionally, youth suggested that convenience is increasing because Hanoi is becoming more modern and providing more opportunities for its citizens. Toan[7] explained: "For example, you can purchase whatever you want in a very short period of time compared to other provinces. I also like the opportunities that the city creates for people who come and live here" (20/07/17). Youth respondents were able to reflect on the way that others might see the city too, with a number commenting that Hanoi is more attractive for youth than for the elderly, for whom it is simply "too much for them here" (Dụng, 12/07/17). Youth who preferred the dynamism and bustling sides of the capital's urban fabric positioned it as conducive to the (individual) needs of their generation. Furthermore, youth often placed the drive to earn money and improve their skills as factors central to their demographic cohort, and thus, something they saw being offered to them in Hanoi. About one-third of youth noted that the city's appeal lay in its green space and delicious food. Overall, youth positioned the city as one well suited to the needs and desires of their generation, providing them with hope, opportunity, and access to a range of spaces for leisure.

5.3 Leisure in Public and Private Spaces

To start to understand how and why youth use or avoid different spaces within the city, I asked youth where they spent their leisure time when either alone, with friends, or with family, and why they chose the places and activities they did. Delineating between public and private spaces, two-thirds of my youth interviewees (25) spent their leisure time in private spaces, while the other third preferred to spend their free time in either public and private sites, or primarily public spaces.

As mention in Chapter 3.4, the Vietnamese state approaches public space through two lenses, one more quantitative and two-dimensional and the other is three-dimensional and encapsulates social infrastructure (Söderström & Geertman, 2013). As such, I asked youth if they could provide me with their own definitions, of which 31 did, in order to compare their conceptions with formal state definitions. All of

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[7] All names are pseudonyms.

their descriptions included a variation of 'the space where everyone can go'. Giang described public space as "the place where people can gather together, chatting, talking and playing with entertainment, you can do whatever you want to do, and you don't have to be scared of anyone, but of course you should be aware of the rules and respect other people around you" (18/07/17). For her, public space represented primarily a place for anyone to gather, whereas Tâm, a mother from Bắc Từ Liêm District, saw public space as also offering the ability for people to "reduce their stresses every month. For example, we can walk at the park to relax, breathe the fresh air and enjoy the scenery" (20/07/17). In these two comments, more specific elements are important to tease out: namely, the equating of *public* with *rules and regulation* and the denoting of *public* with relaxation and access to fresh air. When I inquired about examples of public space, answers were not limited to just parks, squares, and lakes. Fourteen youth (45 percent) included some form of 'private' site, such as shopping malls and cinemas. Đụng, a twenty-two-year old living in Ba Đình District, explained to me that a mall is considered a public space because, "there is enough space for our motorbikes" (10/08/17). Here, Đụng links the ability to park motorbikes, a private good regularly parked on the sidewalk—a public space—in Hanoi, as a factor in delineating between the two spheres. In tandem with other interview data, this suggests one way in which youth may blur more academic lines between public and private space.

The endogenous categories from my youth interviewees used to distinguish private and public spaces did not follow those most commonly found in the academic literature but did parallel the three-dimensional definition, as noted by Söderström & Geertman (2013). Youth saw both privately-owned establishments ranging from commercial centers within/exterior to gated communities, cinemas, cafes, and tea shops, as public spaces, just as much as squares, parks, lakes, gardens, and cultural sights. This categorization becomes further tangled by the definitions of spaces other youth determined were private, discussed next.

5.3.1 Private Places

Of the 25 youth who said that they spent most, if not all, of their leisure time with friends and/or family in private spaces, the majority cited locales such as shopping centers, cinemas and cafes as their favourite places to relax, with a minority citing private homes. As such, the public-private sphere was often blurred between interviewees.

Younger unmarried youth between the ages of 18 and 24, tended to frequent cafes, shopping malls and the cinema with their friends when they had leisure time. While shopping malls, such as Royal City and

Times City, offer these youth (and others) refuge from the hot summer weather and options for entertainment, most of the youth I interviewed could not afford to engage in the intended purpose of these spaces: shopping. As Nhân, a 22-year-old who moved to Hanoi four years ago for university studies, explained to me: "Hanoi does not have any places for young people to hang out, so we go there for fun, for playing around, and entertainment but we don't have enough income to shop at these malls" (18/07/17). Participant observation data from across different shopping centers in Hanoi mirror Nhân's statement. Often, specific retail stores in Royal City and Times City were nearly empty while the spaces around and between them were occupied by groups of youth taking photos together (or selfies) and socializing. The comment by Nhân was echoed in the responses of other youth, suggesting that these private sites are treated as public spaces because they offer an air-conditioned placed to gather freely and dynamically even though they cannot afford to purchase goods in these complexes.

Older youth, 25 to 32, tended to spend their leisure time at cinemas and cafes, like their younger counterparts, as well as at restaurants, or beer, coffee, and tea shops. As they grew older, youth both married and not felt that they had outgrown certain leisure spaces, such as shopping malls, citing that malls are "for people that are a bit younger" and hence, not suitable for their age (Cục, 13/07/17). Parents within this age-range explained that if they did go to a shopping mall, it was so that their children could play. Quy, a thirty-year-old mother of two brought her children to these sites because "in the parks, there is nothing for them to play with or to entertain them" (21/07/17). Hence, the lack of suitable public spaces for children to play is mediated through the frequenting of indoor and privatized leisure spaces.

When asked *why* they wished to spend their leisure time in these sorts of indoor environments, Hanoi's coffee culture often came up as an important aspect of the city that youth loved. Nonetheless, a couple of youth expressed dissatisfaction with the increasing move of this coffee culture from the sidewalk to indoors. Lực, a thirty-year-old skateboarder from Hanoi who we interviewed at Lenin Park, told us how the sidewalk coffee culture of "my city" used to be something he loved but now, "with the sidewalk ban, young people can't go to the street anymore for coffee. This was and is something very special about Hanoi. Now, young people have to go to entertainment centers if they want to hang out, or indoors" (27/07/17). Indeed, the coffee culture of Hanoi, while still evident in the built environment, is increasingly moving indoors as entrepreneurs open up their own private coffee shops to attract tourists and affluent locals alike.

Not only did the majority of the youth I interviewed prefer private spaces for leisure, there was a clear distinction *within* youth regarding the type of private space preferred. Married youth were less likely to go to the mall with their friends, going only to bring their children. Moreover, these findings suggest that

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youth are aware that there are less options for them to spend time together as friends, hence the selecting of private malls and cafes. Concurrently, the shift of the city's coffee culture, in the eyes of youth, from the sidewalk to an indoor location reflects an increasing privatization of a formerly public experience.

5.3.2 Public Spaces

It was less common amongst the youth whom I interviewed that they spent their leisure time in outdoor public spaces. Of the quarter who said they did spend some leisure time in parks, lakes, gardens, and squares, only a further quarter listed these places as a primary destination for free time (12 percent of total responses). Public spaces were a destination for youth who engaged in outdoor activities, such as skateboarding or running, those who wanted to meet new people, and those who felt that open green spaces were peaceful to relax in. Youth, such as Đung, wanting to practice their English with tourists go to Hoàn Kiếm Lake, a prime tourist site: "I come to Hoàn Kiếm Lake because it is so beautiful, I can meet new people and practice my English. At night, the lights are turned on and it's very nice to hang out" (12/07/17). Youth skateboarders and free-style soccer players congregate together at Lenin Park to engage in their respective activities because this park offers both flat surfaces and space for the skateboarders to place the half-pipe they built (see Hanoi Youth Public Space). While proximity to a park tended to play a key a role in the frequency of and desire to visit those areas, some youth were limited in their leisure options due to socioeconomic class impacting their transport options, limited leisure time or physical disabilities.

In September 2016, Hanoi inaugurated in a pilot project of turning the vehicle-laden streets around Hoàn Kiếm Lake into pedestrian-only walkways, shown in Figure 5.1 (Dan, 2017). Every Friday evening through midnight on Sunday, this area becomes a hotspot for visitors and locals to engage in outdoor activities (ibid.; observations). For the youth I spoke with, these walking streets are seen as attractive, safe and environmentally-friendly spaces that enable them to relax in nature (the lake is surrounded by large trees) and spend time with friends. Some youth suggested that one particularly appealing factor of the walking streets is that they are lively and crowded. For other youth, this is also a space in which they can carry out their preferred outdoor activity, such as freestyle soccer on the blocked off streets. Observations from this area confirm the link between this initiative and the increase in youth present in these areas during these times —be it in the form of martial arts troops in the would-be car laden streets, friends sitting and eating ice cream, or young couples taking photos together by the street performers.

Figure 5.1 Image of Walking Streets around Hoàn Kiếm Lake in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

While youth did love the street life of the city, those who preferred the outdoor spaces and street life of the city often listed the Old Quarter and Hoàn Kiếm Lake as their favourite places to relax (Figure 5.2). Proximity to nature, food, small shops, and the ability to feel at peace were included in descriptions of both these spaces and their favorite aspects of the city. Hậu, who loves the quietness of her city, how many lakes it has, and spending time in the Old Quarter, also explained that recently, "there are so many less lakes because of new buildings, I don't like this" (13/17/07). Similarly, ten other youth who loved the peacefulness of outdoor spaces and the ability to engage with Hanoi's diverse street activities explained that these aspects are increasingly changing. Giang lamented that "because Hanoi develops so fast, there are many cultural values or ancient values that are being removed. Hanoi is losing its character by having trees cut down, instead of many places for natural sightseeing, there are many high buildings and shopping malls. Even though Hanoi is developed, it causes a loss of some values that it had before" (18/07/17).

Feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction with changes to the built environment are discussed further in the following chapter. However, an important point to consider here is how these changes require youth to use the city differently. For example, Lính, an 18-year-old living in Long Biên with her parents, told me about the destruction of a dyke near her home, which used to be her favorite locale in her district: "It's more difficult now for me to hang out with my friends because the street is bigger and more dangerous. We used to go there because there was grass and we could fly kites, but now it's all cement" (11/08/17). Other youth told us that they actively avoided areas near places like Royal City or Times City because of the increased congestion, or that they would go so far as to sleep at a friend's place to escape the sounds of nearby construction beginning at the crack of dawn.

This section has presented three threads with regards to youth and their use of public and private spaces. First, it reveals the complexity of understanding what are deemed public and private spaces by Hanoi's youth, with no clear distinctions beyond public spaces as sites with state 'rules and regulations' and where relaxation and access to fresh air is possible. Second, it reveals a differentiation of public and private space based on marriage status. Third, it suggests that the decreased use of public space for leisure over time is a conscious choice made out of both preference and necessity due to the apparent lack of other options.

Figure 5.2 Youth around Hoàn Kiếm Lake in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

5.4 Mobility

5.4.1 Bus Transit

Of the youth I interviewed, over two-thirds (27; 69 percent) traveled through and around Hanoi predominantly by motorbike. Another ten percent relied on both bicycle and bus to move to and from places, while a final five percent traveled primarily by either electric bicycle, a combination of motorbike and bus, motorbike and walking, or just bus. Some did note that they took the bus in the past when they were students, but that they no longer used it because they had access to private transport options now. As a whole, interviewees complained about the bus services, including hassles with quality, convenience, and overall dissatisfaction.

Interview data suggests that youth attribute the low quality of the city's buses to a lack of maintenance, other customers' behavior, the poor attitudes of drivers, and concerns for personal safety. Nhung, a 25-year-old accountant from Hanoi told us: "When I was a student, I travelled by bus and I think that it is quite convenient but it still needs to be improved a lot for the bus travelling culture (*văn hóa đi xe buýt*). People still throw away litter on the bus, bring some strong smelly foods, and the drivers don't drive carefully" (25/07/17). Lính, introduced at the end of Section 5.3.2, added that she used to take the bus, "but it's really crowded and the AC [air-conditioning] is bad" (11/08/17). Ha, a university

graduate from Nghệ An province added that "the quality of the Vietnamese bus is low, the drivers mainly drive very carelessly and the people's awareness is not good…people don't feel safe when they travel nearby or on the bus" (24/07/17). Ha avoids the bus not only because she questions the quality, but because she feels unsafe. Other young women listed similar concerns of personal safety as reasons for not using this form of transportation.

The inconvenience of the bus was also attributed to Hanoi's over-saturated roads by other youth. Minh, a 30-year-old interviewed at his workplace, Lotte Center, said that the bus is good if you are traveling outside the city, "but if you try to go into the old quarter or center of the city, it is a nightmare. For example, if two buses come side by side in this area, no one can get around. It's terrible" (29/07/17). However, the inconvenience of the bus was also a factor determining use amongst non-youth. Four of my five key informants [KI] listed that the bus, despite recent upgrades, is not a desirable mode of transportation, citing a mix of the same factors as youth: inconvenience, questionable quality and personal safety. For Hạnh, a mother of two living in Long Biên, the changes in bus routes and increased connections that her son has to take to get to school makes her worry more for his safety (13/08/17). Tho, a thirty-five-year-old academic, expressed similar worries for her son (05/08/17). This extends concerns of personal safety beyond the individual, in the case of parents with older children. As key informants from Hanoi who were born during the subsidy period, both Hạnh and Tho offered significant insights into the changes of city.

Nonetheless, a smaller number of youth (10 percent) felt the opposite with regards to overall convenience. Giang told us that, "it is very convenient to travel by bus, there is no change of bus routine since I started using it" (18/07/17). Giang's experience of the bus may be due to her living in Sóc Sơn, a rural district of Hanoi where congestion is lower and busses may be less packed. Minh agreed, explaining that "[…] the bus is good on the outskirts of the city" and adding that "but, if you try to go into the old quarter or center of the city, it is a nightmare" (29/07/17). Similarly, Thuy, a Tày ethnic minority, only feels the bus is convenient "when I go further but not inside the city […] if it is 60 to 80km from downtown then I will travel by bus" (19/07/17). These comments suggest that proximity to the downtown core is a factor in the perceived convenience of the bus as a form of transportation (Figure 5.4).

Youth also discussed pollution, traffic and the degradation of Hanoi's built environment, with responses closely linked to their specific modes of transportation. These were the features that 90 percent of youth highlighted as their least favourite about the city. Traffic jams affected both youth and long-time residents in their ability to get to work on time, to feel safe, and to feel less stressed. Gya a thirty-eight-year-old PhD candidate, told me that when he is in Hanoi he works primarily from home, but when he has to make an appointment or leave the house by car, everything is timed around the traffic schedule (10/11/17).

For Gya, his higher class position and wealth enables him to navigate around traffic and other road-related inconveniences that other Hanoians are often unable to.

Figure 5.3 Intersection with Car, Bus, and Motorbike near Trang Tien Plaza in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

5.5. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has sought to better understand how youth define public and private spaces in Hanoi and the factors that play into why youth use or avoid certain spaces within the city. I found that youth respondents primarily used private spaces for leisure time, with younger (unmarried) youth, spending time predominately at malls, cafés, and cinemas, whereas older (married) youth that were married frequented cafes, cinemas, restaurants, and beer and tea shops. While older youth framed shopping malls as being not age appropriate as a space for leisure, young parents often return to these sites with their children to play as they do not feel that other public spaces (such as parks) provide their children with enough entertainment or shelter from the heat. However, none of the youth I interviewed were able to engage in the 'primary' mall activity: shopping. Hence, these sites are rendered into pseudo-public spaces, as suggested by Drummond (2012), where money may be spent purchasing small amenities, such as a drink, but the focus is on spending time socializing with friends.

Second, the use of these private spaces was linked to an absence of other options for leisure, such as in public spaces, for youth. This supports the findings of Pham & Labbé (2017). Concurrently, youth are largely deterred from using public transportation, such as the bus, due to their opinion that it is inconvenient and of questionable quality. Furthermore, this deterrence is bolstered by a link between the motorbike and contemporary Vietnamese urban culture, or, put another way, the right to private ownership is seen as ever more embedded in Vietnamese culture. In the context of an increasingly neoliberal framework, many of Hanoi's youth appear to be members of the 'experience economy', hence bolstering processes hybrid

urbanization and increasing porosity of urban enclaves through their desires to engage in specific activities and experiences at private complexes. Finally, youth show their support for changes to the urban fabric, such as the recently created Walking Streets around Hoàn Kiếm Lake, through visiting these sites. Yet, their resistance of other changes, such as the push for more public transportation, is made clear through active critique and avoidance.

CHAPTER 6: 'It's difficult politics to explain to you': Youth Perspectives on Recent and Current Urban Changes

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present research findings from my interviews with youth to answer my second research question: **How do youth perceive recent and current urban change in Hanoi's built environment?** In the subsequent sections, I detail the insights that respondents provided regarding changes to the built environment (Section 6.2), the politics and sources of financial capital underpinning these changes (6.3), and the changes that they would like to make to the urban fabric (6.4). I show here how my findings support the literature to date regarding the role of inter-referencing and the presence of the 'Singapore Model' in Hanoi's built environment. Second, I consider how connotations of urban change are influenced by residential location in Hanoi. Finally, in this chapter I discuss the schism between top-down urban changes and decision making, and bottom-up everyday uses and how this schism influences the way that youth navigate and negotiate the cityscape.

6.2 Hanoi's Urban Form

6.2.1 Influences

I asked youth about their perceptions regarding where the architectural and structural influences were coming from for both city-level and peri-urban developments, such as Royal City, Times City and Ecopark. When discussing what the main influences were on urban form at the city-level (Table 6.1), 42 percent of youth interviewees explicitly cited Asian influence, 28 percent were unsure, 17 percent linked urban form to European influences, 11 percent said influences were coming from everywhere, and 2 percent said they were domestic. For peri-urban developments (Table 6.1), 33 percent cited a mixture of Western (e.g. Europe and/or America) and Asian influences, 36 percent of whom specifically referenced Singapore. In turn, 27 percent saw the city's architectural influences as being primarily Asian, coming from countries such as Singapore, Korea, Japan, and China. An additional 27 percent were unsure what models the government was following and the final 13 percent cited clear French and European influence.

City-Level Influence	Percentage	(Peri-)Urban Enclaves	Percentage
Asia	42%	Europe/America and Asia	33%
Unsure	28%	Asia	27%
Europe	17%	Unsure	27%
Everywhere	11%	Europe/France	13%
Domestic	2%	--	--

Table 6.1 Youth Perceptions of Design Influence for Changes across Hanoi and in Peri-urban Enclaves (Author)

The Singapore influences noted by some youth were both positive and negative. Hai, a thirty-year-old middle-class mother living in Long Biên with her two children explained enthusiastically, "they [the developers] are following models from Singapore where each living quarter has a park, they are also developing public transit and reducing waste" (12/07/17). For Hai, these changes are positive, whereas Nhan, who moved to the city four years ago from Hải Phòng city, explained with some exasperation:

> In Singapore, they don't have many cultural or sightseeing [options] like Vietnam but there are many shopping malls instead which attract many tourists. These malls are one of the reasons Vietnam wants to learn from Singapore…we build more high buildings and shopping malls to attract more *big* foreign investment to the *big* urban [city] without using our available natural resources. (18/07/17).

Nhan's emphasis on 'big' accurately reflects what is happening in these urban pockets where retail and housing developments – far more sizeable than in Hanoi's past – are attracting developers who are often key players in both the domestic and foreign economy, and residents with 'big' money. Furthermore, Singapore is touted as a modern and developed city, suggesting that these descriptors—high buildings and shopping malls—are emblematic of this categorization. Conversely, Hai's preference for a Singaporean approach is with regards to residential development, rather than the city as a whole. Indeed, youth who mentioned Singapore as a source of inspiration framed this model as positive at the level of Royal City or Times City, but not necessarily desirable for the entire metropolitan region.

In describing other Asian influences, one respondent, Toan, highlighted the role of Chinese influences for the recent Royal City and Times City residential-retail complexes. He added that this model has been selected because China is a "very developed country" (20/07/17). While some were not sure what model was being followed or saw a broad stroke influence rather than a specific 'model', just over a third of the youth interviewed (12) could name the companies behind specific developments, for example the ownership of Royal City by Vingroup.

Royal City is marketed as being inspired by European architecture (Figure 6.1), with quite overt references in the main plaza. The design itself, with a central square and a fountain is reminiscent of 'Western' public spaces. Nhung, a twenty-five-year-old living in Đông Anh District, explained that "Royal City or Time City must be following the European model as it looks very luxurious" (25/07/17). Since the French Colonial era in Vietnam, European-style consumption, commodification, and leisure has been a signal of certain class ties (Nguyen-Marshall, 2012). More recently, wealthy Hanoians have been influenced by European architecture, such as turrets, when designing or altering their homes (Drummond, 2012).

Figure 6.1 Statues in Royal City Plaza in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

6.2.2 Urban Desirability

To understand if youth felt that these various influences on the urban form made urban enclaves, such as Royal City, Times City, and Ecopark, desirable places to live, I asked youth about their opinions on whether or not they would like to live in these three developments. The central concern for interviewees was the ability to afford an apartment in these expensive enclaves, despite many agreeing that there will be more of these projects in Hanoi 's future in order to accommodate a growing population. While these sites are seen as part and parcel of the convenience Hanoi offers them, the cost of purchasing and living in one of these apartment complexes exceeded the financial realities of all the youth we spoke with. Quy told us: "You know, I think that these places are good for people to live in, if I have money, I would love to live there but what a pity I don't have enough condition" (21/07/17). Additionally, this group of youth often placed an emphasis on these sites as being 'modern' and 'developed'. This suggests that these sites, more than anything, are appealing because they offer an individual to *become* part of some more modern and developed way of life.

Interview data suggest that, first and foremost, the desire to live in these enclaves varied with regards to the importance of private ownership. However, nearly all the youth we spoke to raised the financial burden that living in these private enclaves required. While 17 youth expressed a clear hope to live in one of these complexes in the future, noting the appeal of the schools, hospitals, green spaces, stores, and supermarkets frequently incorporated into these developments, the cost of purchasing a unit effectively blocked them from doing so. Just over half the youth (22) did not want to live in the central area's Royal

City or Times City (Figure 6.2). Four expressed a preference for Eco Park instead, on the city's periphery, while financial constraints were again also listed as a central determinant. Nonetheless, youth noted that *if* they had the money, they would prefer to purchase a private house that provided them with more open space and freedom. Hau, living alone in an apartment in Ba Đình, explained that, "there is more money being invested into these [Royal city] living quarters so they have better facilities, are becoming more modern and the living standard is being enhanced" (13/07/17). Despite this, she still preferred the option of owning a private home where she could have space, quiet, and greenery. In a post-*Đổi Mới* period where private ownership, especially of a house, is preferred by this cohort, there is an awareness that residence in a private enclave can provide access to higher quality services. However, enclaves such as Royal City or Times City were also framed as places that cater to wealthy foreigners, domestic elites, and, as Ha put it, "people who are not very real" and plagued by constant traffic and noise in the surrounding area (24/07/17).

Figure 6.2 Buildings and Street-view of Times City in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

Despite these differences of opinion regarding apartment living, all interviewees noted that more such apartment blocks will be built in the city in the near future. An increase in apartment living is thus seen as inevitable. While the majority of the youth we interviewed would not live in a residential apartment development like Times City or Royal City, even if they could afford it, the majority also said they spent much of their leisure time in these types of places. Youth do not necessarily wish to live in complete proximity to the sites where they enjoy hanging out, hence some actively modify its intended 'use' to meet their own needs while others avoid these sites entirely.

6.2.3 Neighbourhood-level Changes

Over half (21) of the youth discussed recent changes that had significant impacts on the urban form of their neighbourhoods in the city. In rural districts, such as Ba Vì, Đông Anh, Sóc Sơn, and Thanh Trì

District, youth listed the biggest changes in the neighborhoods as being new infrastructure that was facilitating more efficient connections to central urban districts, such as new roads and highways. Indeed, youth in these areas often cited a larger percentage change in their specific area than in the city as a whole. An, living in Đông Anh District, explained that while the city has changed by "about half, the area of Đông Anh where I live, has changed about 90 percent. There is the new bridge of Dong Tru, connecting highway 5 to Nội Bài Airport, the roads are upgraded and larger, there are more film studios, but the land price is also rising" (25/07/07).

While Long Biên District is formally an urban district, interview data suggests that recent changes in this area as perceived by youth living there are similar to changes described by youth in rural districts. For example, two youth from Long Biên mentioned a new bridge that had been built, in addition to another three citing the replacement of dirt roads with cement, and streetlights to keep roads lit and safer at night. While these changes were deemed largely positive, one youth, Lính, mentioned in the previous chapter, saw this cement influx destroy a dyke she used to frequent during her free time for its green space and proximity to the river.

Youth living in urban districts, such as Bắc Từ Liêm (2), Ba Đình (3), Đống Đa (3), Hai Bà Trưng (1), Hà Đông (3), Hoàn Kiếm (1), Tây Hồ (6) and Nam Từ Liêm (1), expressed concerns over similar urban changes. For this group, local urban changes were increases in the number of skyscrapers, greater density and traffic, and higher pollution. Overall, youth living in urban districts cited changes that exacerbated already present urban issues.

In sum, rapid urbanization in Hanoi has affected the neighborhoods of youth interviewees differently, and this appears closely linked to their locales' proximity to the urban core. For those most familiar with the city's rural districts, forces of urbanization have engendered changes seen as largely positive and beneficial to local inhabitants, including better and easier connections to the city's center and adjacent areas, safer spaces to traverse through, and overall a more 'modern' and 'developed' landscape. Conversely, those living in the city's core urban districts expressed dissatisfaction with some local changes that had appeared to worsen existing urban issues.

6.2.4 City-level Changes

We asked youth if they could describe what they perceive to be the biggest changes in the city overall in recent years. All provided us not only more than one change, but some began with "everything" before describing specifics. The most cited changes, often discussed together, were the dramatic increase in

skyscrapers and malls (29 percent), followed by the greater density of the city and overall traffic (27 percent) and finally, the construction of bridges and roads (17 percent). Furthermore, city-level changes were described as navigating a modern veneer in tandem with an exacerbation of urban issues. Đung, who completed his Master's degree in the United Kingdom and recently returned to his hometown of Hanoi, explained to me that when he returned the changes were drastic,

> One of the biggest changes I saw leaving and coming back was the increase in activity in Hanoi. By this I mean that there are more bars and clubs. The influence from Western culture and income is increasing too. There is a much bigger demand to spend money here because people have more of it […] yet there still is constant flooding, constant construction and other issues that have yet to be dealt with adequately (30/07/17).

My interview data suggests that despite the massive changes going on in Hanoi, youth felt that the state had not yet addressed urban issues, such as flooding and pollution, in both rural and urban districts. Whereas both areas have seen a significant increase in the number of skyscrapers and overall physical infrastructure, responses regarding neighborhood-change reflected an urban imaginary becoming more connected and dynamic. Concurrently, as Đung comment highlights, youth also expressed concerns that dire urban issues, such as flooding, have not been addressed and hence, the urbanization of Hanoi at both the macro and micro level evoked uneasy confirmations of change.

Biggest Urban Change	Percentage
Increase in high-rise offices and residential buildings	29%
Increase in density and traffic congestion	27%
Increase in number of bridges and paved roads	17%

Table 6.2 Most Frequently Cited 'Biggest Change' Amongst Youth Respondents (Author)

6.3 Politics

The politics of Hanoi, albeit under the umbrella of a one-party rule, are complex with regards to urban (re)development. Sources of financial capital, key private and public actors, and new urban plans produced by such actors are often unclear or not easily accessible to the general public. This section focuses on youth perceptions of sources of capital for urban projects, city-level politics, and their opinions on the clearing of trees to build the metro line, the clean up the sidewalk campaign, and the proposed 2030 motorbike ban.

6.3.1 Sources of Financial Capital

Of the 39 youth we spoke with, 28 discussed what they thought the sources of financial capital for urban change were. Out of this 28, 16 (57 percent) said that the money for urban changes could not come from the

state alone, as the state budget is too small. Lính explained, "I think the money for these projects is being borrowed. And what comes out of the state budget is a burden on the people so if the quality is bad, it is an even bigger burden on the people" (12/07/17). Hence, this informant, among others, argued that the state must turn to foreign investment from countries such as Japan and Korea. For An, the need for the state to borrow money for these changes was not necessarily a negative thing, "the city develops because the government *calls* the foreign capital, ODA funding, some small stage budget and corporations such as Vingroup. I like this change....it is worth waiting, it makes our life more modern and civilized" (25/07/17). Conversely, a minority of seven youth said that these changes were funded by only the government budget and citizen taxes, and the final five were unsure where the capital was coming from. My interview data suggest that socioeconomic class did not influence awareness of capital sources.
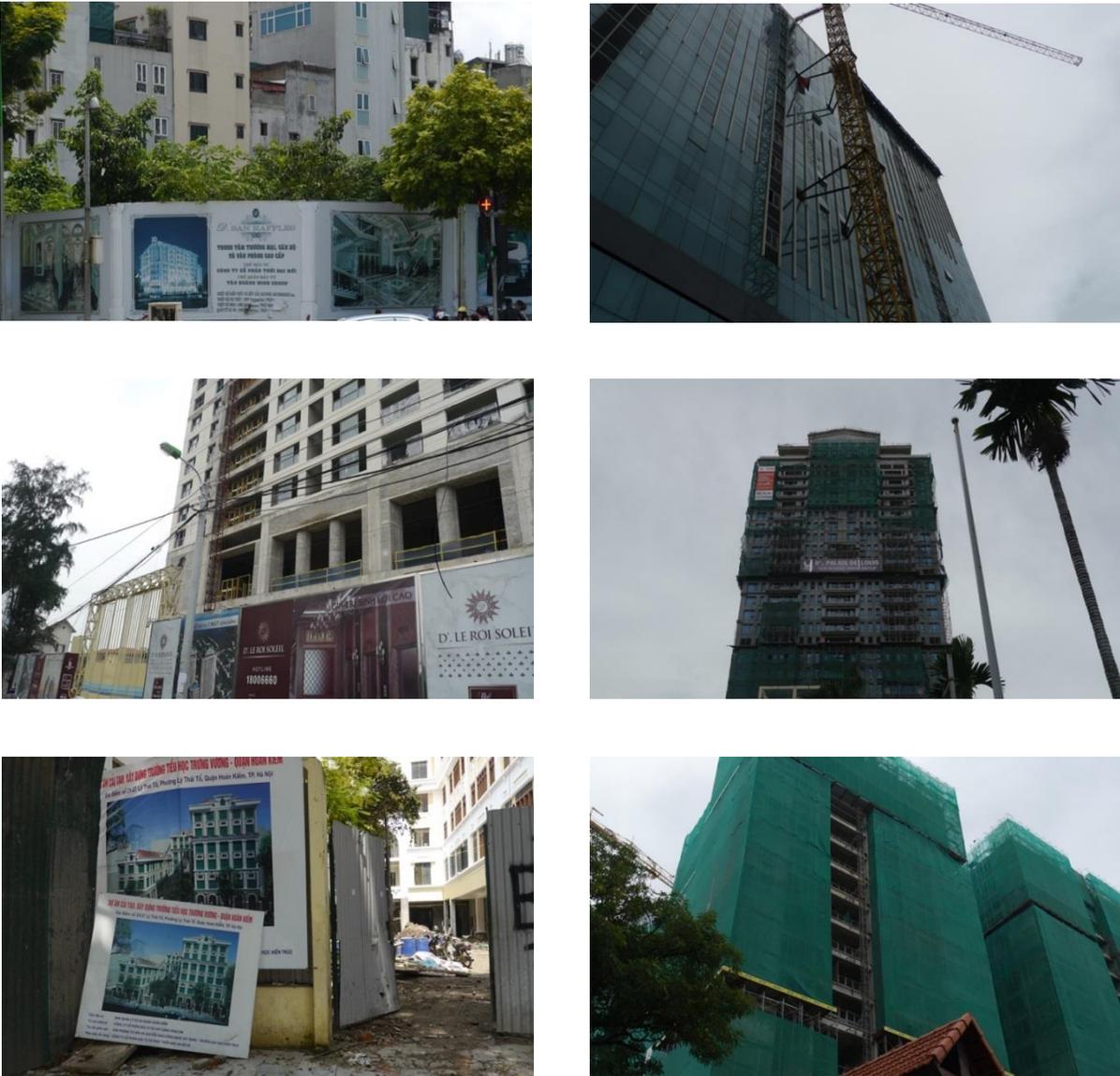
Figure 6.3 Construction Projects around Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

In 2017, countries such as South Korea, Japan, and Singapore, were the largest investors in Vietnam with South Korea investing over $6.02 billion USD alone (Lan, 2017; Vietnam Briefing, 2017). By the end of May 2017, Hanoi had already attracted over 26.2 billion USD in foreign investment (ANT Consulting, 2017). Currently, of the registered capital in Hanoi, real estate is the third most lucrative source of investment (VNA, 2018). Hence, the majority of youth were correct in their assertions that all these changes cannot be supported by domestic capital alone as well large financial support from Asian counterparts.

6.3.2 Frustrations over State-led Urban Initiatives

Youth knowledge regarding sources of capital for general and specific projects in the city did not necessarily mean that they had information on plans before they were set in motion. In the past few years, city authorities have begun cutting down trees around the city and specifically along planned metro lines without public consultation, causing quite rare protests in Vietnam (Quan, 2015). Ly made her stance on this change quite blunt: "I think that the government didn't do well for the campaign for trees. What they did was not legal. They were selling the old trees after cutting them down for money. People complained a lot about this, it was all over the newspapers" (17/07/17). Hai, a university student living in Đống Đa District took a similar position: "the government is not doing a good job. For example, they cut down all these old trees in the city, and no one knows where the money went that they got from selling these trees" (03/08/17). Similarly, when I asked Nhan to explain to me how she felt Hanoi was losing its character, trees having been cut down was her primary example. Overall, the loss of these trees, in tandem with other tree-clearing around the city, fueled a sense of frustration among youth regarding a lack of state transparency. It is important to remember that one of youth's favorite aspects was the peaceful nature of Hanoi, afforded to them by the seemingly endless lines of greenery.

In early May 2017, municipal authorities began a "Clean Up the Sidewalks Campaign", discussed in Section 3.4.3, with the aim of clearing sidewalks of motorbikes, street vendors, and other sidewalk uses deemed 'improper'. Because this initiative has been subsumed within larger state discourses on making the streets more modern and orderly, I asked youth about their opinions on this venture to see if they agreed with the municipal authority's endeavor (Table 6.3). Out of 35 youth who responded to this question, nearly two-thirds (22) responded with an opinion best summarized as "it is good, **but**....". While this policy created more space and made sidewalks cleaner and more orderly, fourteen were concerned for street vendor livelihoods, five said that it can only be good if it is implemented evenly and consistently, and the final three said that it was unrealistic given the economic situation of Vietnam. Eight felt that the policy was good

overall, citing similar benefits as the other twenty-two youth. Three said that it was explicitly not good, primarily due to its impact on young people and street vendors. The remaining two interviewees did not know about this policy.

Vu, a 19-year-old living in Long Biên with his family, felt that "for the street vendors, this [policy] is a problem and shows a lack of investment in poor people. They should be given a market or built a market space and given a stable place to work and sell" (17/07/17). But it is not just a lack of investment in poor people, for Quy, a middle-class woman, her family is affected by this policy: "My husband's mother works on the streets so she has to run away when the police come" (21/07/17). Interestingly, concern for street vendors was not met with an expression that they should continue vending on the street. Rather, youth agreed the policy should be implemented in full and the streets should be cleared, but those affected should be re-located and provided with a more organized alternative. Youth who wanted street vendors to continue plying their trade did not feel that the streets were a 'space' for them and that a central market would be more suitable. Overall, this policy was seen by youth as having potential, yet inconsistent implementation has left its future questionable, and the livelihoods of street vendors even more precarious.

Turning to the proposed motorbike ban for 2030, thirty-one youth reflected on the effectiveness and viability of this initiative (Table 6.3). Two-thirds of these said that while the initiative seemed good in theory, several concerns needed to be resolved before it could become a reality. Similar to the sidewalk policy, these sentiments can be summed up through a stance of "it is good, *but*....". Of these twenty youth, twelve pointed to the low quality and inconvenience of current public transportation options, four said that Hanoi currently lacks infrastructure suitable to any vehicle but motorbikes (e.g. buses and private cars cannot navigate the city's numerous small alleyways), and four felt that the 'but' was a matter of money, namely the steep price of car ownership and high taxes (approximately 200 percent tax for car ownership). Seven did not support the ban at all, because it either seemed entirely incompatible with Vietnamese culture regarding private motorbike ownership and/or was a symptom of unsatisfactory government planning. Only one youth, felt that this initiative was good overall as it would abate traffic congestion.

With regards to the ongoing construction for Metro Line 2A (discussed in Section 3.3.1), 29 youth shared their opinions on the development (Table 6.3). The majority, 12 or 41 percent, felt that it had potential to be a positive development, but for reasons including questionable quality, accidents during construction, and accessibility to the platform itself (such as parking a motorbike or climbing the steep stairs), it was positioned as problematic (Figure 6.4). Of these 12, four said that they will try it when it is finally completed. Đung emphasized that "the main problem with public transportation is that we prefer investors with a high credibility, not China, for example. Vietnamese people don't trust China for a quality

product" (30/07/17). Accidents, delays, and the cost of the project itself were additional factors deterring the willingness of youth to try it out. Thao, a twenty-year-old living in Hà Đông District, was conflicted in her opinion, telling us that "the metro system is good because I live close to it and it will help to reduce pollution and the traffic jams. But, the construction for so many of these buildings is bad because they are cutting down all the trees and it is destroying the atmosphere" (24/07/17). An additional seven (24 percent) said that they thought it was a good project overall, six (21 percent) said that they did not support it at all, while the final four had not heard of it or seen it. Whereas Mai said she will only use the metro "if the government enforces the motorbike ban by 2030", Hai told us, "I did some research and I've already seen that there have been accidents involved with the construction. So even when it is done, I don't want to use it" (21/07/17; 03/08/17). Overall, the plan for the elevated railway evoked similar responses to the previously mentioned urban changes—uncertainty, doubt, and for most, a willingness to wait and see before making a firmer decision.

Figure 6.4 Metro Line 2A Construction (Author)

6.3.3. Access to Information

Did youth respondents feel satisfied with the information they have access to? Approximately 80 percent said that they wanted more information on future and current plans. Many felt that there was a lack of availability regarding both general plans for the city's future urban form and specific initiatives, with some youth citing specific examples when a lack of transparency and awareness has upset them. Generally, youth explained that they learned about changes in the city once they are happening. As Toan explained: "All the plans to develop the city is under the city authorities' control, young people like us don't know anything but we wish to learn more about these plans before they start to be implemented" (20/07/17). Some youth found this opacity frustrating because it meant being unable to know exactly what information they were missing. Thuy, introduced in Section 5.4.1, told us, "I want to know more about the city development plan from the authority for the future and I wish that it is more and more developed; it is good to see it. But maybe the information is not enough because I don't know much about it" (19/07/17).

Similarly, Ha felt that "because youth play an important part in the development process and in the future city development plans, they need to be updated on news that comes from the government. So far, they receive unofficial information that may be wrong. How can they know if it is wrong? And if they believe it to be right then it has a negative impact on them" (24/07/17).

For the minority of youth who did not want more information about the city's changing urban form and plans, all but one were from Hanoi. While youth noted that they do not speak about these changes often with their friends, their comments to me showed that this lack of discussion does not mean that they do not care about the future of their city. Rather, they comply with changes that are considered beyond their control, such as the clearing of the sidewalks or the degradation of environment. Concurrently, they resist proposed changes, like the motorbike ban, through active questioning and critique while modifying the intended uses of private urban spaces to suit their preferences for leisure.

Where did youth learn about plans and sources of capital for current and future urban change? Of those who cited foreign capital as a source of funding for urban change, all got their news from sources beyond government television channels. "The information for now I receive mainly from books, newspapers, in fact the government does not provide enough information on the future plans for us to learn", Nhan told us (18/07/17). Ngoc, a mother in Long Biên, also relies on other channels for information: "I learn about the changes of the city through mass media and the internet" (12/07/17). While most youth did seek out information from multiple mediums, including Facebook, Twitter, and even Instagram, again, few said they spoke about changes with their friends or family.

Finally, I asked youth about their overall perceptions of the government and, if willing to share their views with me, if they felt that the voices of youth were being heard/if there existed a platform to voice their opinions. Responses overlapped between these two categories and often elicited multiple, mixed sentiments. Six youth told me that they felt they have no voice, and it appears that this is what made it hard for five other youth to tell me if they felt youth were involved in the changes of the city. While six did cite youth involvement, eight felt that there was not enough development for them and that you can only do well or get where you want to go if you are the 'right' type of person. These latter comments present the inverse of what had been shared with us earlier on regarding opportunities for youth. The jobs, the hope, and the futures that youth saw in Hanoi were linked more to private sector availabilities. Moreover, youth felt that they were provided with plenty of spaces for leisure, yet investment in their education in the public sector was lower.

State-led Urban Change	Clean Up the Sidewalk (ongoing)	Metro Line 2A (ongoing)	Motorbike Ban (2030)
Youth Opinions			
Good Overall	23%	24%	3%
'Good but…'	<u>Total</u>: 63% Concern for street vendors (63%) Inconsistent (23%) Currently unrealistic (14%)	<u>Total</u>: 41% Questionable Quality & Negative Environmental Impact (50%) Construction time and convenience (33%) Will not help with congestion (17%)	<u>Total</u>: 65% Quality of Public Transportation (60%) Unsuited for Hanoi's Infrastructure (20%) Cost of other Private Vehicles (20%)
Not Good	9%	21%	23%
Do not know	6%	14%	9%

Table 6.3 Youth Interviewees Opinions on State-led Urban Change (Ongoing and Planned) (Author)

6.4 Youth Initiatives To Potentially Change The City

Out of 38 youth, I asked 14 youth what their 'initiative' would be were they able to change the urban landscape in a way they saw best fit. Of the 12 who provided me with their ideas, none hesitated in their responses. Their ideas ranged from how to address traffic and pollution, to constructing condos and living quarters that were sustainable and greener. Hai stated that: "The city I want to have is one that is sustainably developed. If they want to put in a plant or factory, they also have to think about the waste and clean up the environment" (12/07/17). Đung, a 25-year-old living in Đống Đa said,

> If I had power, my initiative would first be to handle transportation, then I would fix the road system, but these two go together...I want to cope with the industrial pollution too. You know there are many industries in the center of the city, lots of industrial zones, and air and water pollution. A lot of countries, such as China, outsource activities here because it is very cheap, Vietnam should not be a wasteland for other countries. By upgrading, we can solve this issue (30/07/17).

There was great emphasis placed on words such as 'upgrading', 'planning', 'sustainably developing', and 'solving'—all components that, as my interview data suggests, youth do not see happening entirely across the city. While there are 24 youth whom I do not have data on for, these sentiments and the descriptions used for the initiatives of youth parallel the responses of the other 24 who, at one point or another, used these words to describe the possible positive long-term product of urbanization or something that is currently lacking in the urbanization process.

Another factor that came up when discussing urban form and politics was that while politics and laws may change, what mattered most for some (44 percent) youth to achieve these desired goals was a shift in the attitudes and awareness of Hanoi's residents. Whether it be travelling on the bus, driving a motorbike on the road, or in other daily actions and interactions, fourteen youth pointed to the duty of Hanoians to be the 'true' arbiters of successful (urban) change.

6.5 Chapter Conclusions

In this chapter I have presented findings that answer my second research question: *How* do youth perceive *recent* and *current* urban changes in Hanoi? My data from interviews with youth show four key findings with regards to this question. First, youth perceive the impacts of urbanization at their neighborhood-level differently based on their proximity to Hanoi 's urban core. Moreover, foreign influence from countries such as Singapore is seen as positive at the neighborhood-level, but less desirable at the city-level because these changes are seen as negatively impacting the culture and beauty of Hanoi. Second, while the majority of youth did not wish to live in private residential apartment complexes cited too high of a price point and a preference for a private detached home, those who wanted the option to reside at these sites also felt excluded by the financial cost. Third, recent spatial changes, such as the implementation of a sidewalk ban, the felling of trees to make space for urban railway projects, and a proposed motorbike ban, elicited doubt and frustration from the majority of youth. Finally, and despite disillusionment with the state, youth expressed a clear desire to have access to more information on current and future plans for Hanoi. Many felt strongly about both the changes that they would like to see in city and the role of urban residents in making these transformations into a reality.

CHAPTER 7: 'Vietnam doesn't want to be any fish, but a special fish': Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6 to answer my third and final research question: ***How do youth negotiate the current and future built environment of Hanoi?*** In the subsequent section, I compare components of the official Master Plan with respondent's current uses and perceptions of Hanoi (Section 7.2). Following this, I summarize my key research findings (7.3) and conclude with a consideration of future research directions (7.4).

7.2 Comparing the Master Plan to Youth Perceptions of Urban Realities

The Master Plan to 2030 and Vision to 2050, introduced in my Introduction chapter, proposes strategies to 'improve' Hanoi across multiple spheres, such as physical and social infrastructure, resource use and management, and social housing provision (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011). In the executive summary of this Plan, the consulting firms involved cite influences and inspiration from sixteen major cities across Europe, the United States, Asia, and Central and South America (ibid: 13). Pulling from urbanization approaches and concerns in these areas, such as a loss of cultural and architectural heritage in China, the consultants identify several important lessons that Hanoi ought to consider throughout its ongoing transformation. While reflecting a cler case of inter-referencing as introduced in my conceptual framework chapter, these lessons included the implementation of strong planning policies, an accessible network of public spaces and the "development of reliable physical infrastructure needed to support a modern city" (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011: 13). Interestingly, the youth I interviewed also raised similar lessons and concerns that need to be addressed for Hanoi's future, such as providing more green spaces and the strengthening of current infrastructure, as noted in Section 5.3 and 6.2.1, respectively.

Despite parallels, there are significant divergences between youth perceptions and intentions of Hanoi and the executive summary of the Master Plan, specifically regarding the preservation of culture and forms of transportation. For example, the Master Plan mentions the words 'modern' 11 times, 'sustainable' (17), 'expand' (23), 'green' (25), and 'culture/cultured' 38 times. These descriptors are used to highlight Hanoi's transformation and what the city will look like in the future, stressing the importance of balancing development and modernization with the preservation of culture and heritage. The authors further assert that assets include "attractive historic development, extensive agriculture and natural landscapes and a young, well-educated population" (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011: 2). While youth did agree that Hanoi was

becoming more modern (Section 5.2), many did not view the current urbanization trajectory to be conducive to greening the city (Section 5.3.2, 6.2.3). Moreover, the loss of green space and razing of certain urban pockets was closely linked to youth discussions of unsustainable tactics and also considered a threat to Hanoi's cultural attributes (5.3.2).

The Master Plan also strongly supports developing a sound transportation network to connect the mega-region, composed of highways and light rail transit connecting the outer regions, metro lines, car-free areas, and cleared sidewalks in the urban core. While the proposed 2030 motorbike ban is part of this 'global' and 'sustainable' city framework, youth resisted this change, arguing that it was incompatible with contemporary Vietnamese culture (Section 6.3.2). Such tensions are underpinned by processes of market modernization and highlight how (especially middle-class) consumption practices are coming into conflict with future state strategies for market growth. Furthermore, public transportation is central to the Plan's advancement of sustainable development strategies, with the Plan purporting that all new development regions ought to be transit-oriented. Yet, the majority of youth respondents did not see public transportation as desirable or even convenient yet (Section 5.4.1). Thus, while the Master Plan frames private transportation as a "threat" (Perkins Eastman Architects, 2011: 32), youth in Hanoi perceive private vehicle ownership as not only central to the ease with which they navigate the city but as a status symbol. With these tensions in mind, I consider below how youth respondents respond the changes going on in Hanoi through their agency as individuals and how these negotiations are covert, at times resisting one strain of 'Power' and/or contributing to the porosity of urban enclaves.

7.2.1 Everyday Politics and Hybrid Urbanization

Citywide theming practices that cater to the consumption patterns and desires of a burgeoning middle- and upper-middle class, as well as attempts to garner international status as a global city have resulted in a range of urban initiatives inspired by other cities. Youth respond to these various inter-referencing practices through carrying out forms of everyday politics in Hanoi. Additionally, these negotiations of the current urban environment and its potential shape in the future is an extension of their own preferences for consumption, leisure, mobility, and comfort. For example, where the state is seen as not providing them with the spaces they desire, youth are turning to other sites which offer them these options, summarized in Figure 7.1. Yet, the desirability of newly emerging retail and accommodation sites extended as far as leisure for most youth, who felt that not only was the cost of living too high but that these sites lacked links to Hanoi's culture. Hence, some youth extended their own conceptualizations of public space into these

locales, thereby modifying their intended purpose. In doing so, youth fostered the porosity of urban enclaves, as discussed by Harms (2015) and the blurring of the boundaries between public and private analyzed by Drummond (2000). Additionally, my research findings further suggest that these processes at these sites, such as Royal City, is a product of two interlocking factors: the formal rhetoric and theming used to sell these sites (Section 3.3.2) and the increasing loss of/and or disinterest in spending time in parks or other public spaces (Section 5.3).
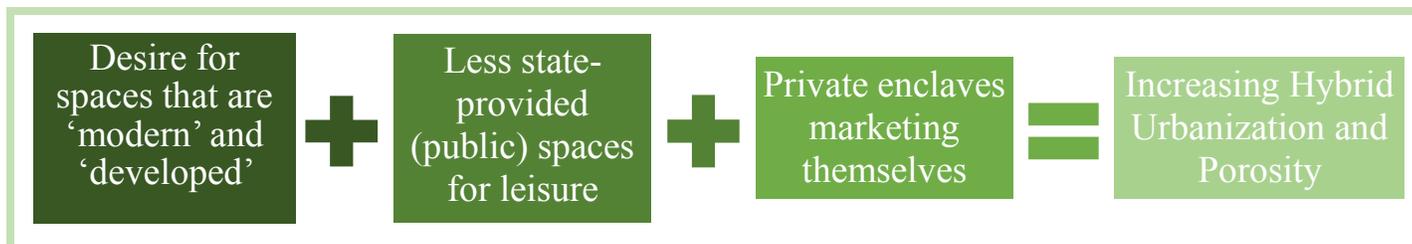

Figure 7.1 Conceptualizing the Role of Youth in Hybrid Urbanization and Porosity in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

Youth also modified state-led changes, such as the 'Clean Up the Sidewalks Campaign', by supporting the ideas underpinning it—for having clean and ordered streets—but also advocating that authorities consider alternative vending locations for street vendors. Concurrently, youth lent support to certain state-led changes, such as the walking streets around Hoàn Kiếm Lake, not only by discussing them positively but by frequenting this site on the weekends. Conversely, youth also resisted the confluence of foreign planning models with state visions for public transportation in Hanoi. For example, the use of a Chinese developer for the metro line, and the deployment of the metro line itself, elicited not only harsh criticisms but many actively avoiding the Line 2A construction site due to incessant traffic and fear for their own safety (Section 6.3.2). Similarly, some youth resisted the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system by actively driving in BRT-only lanes (Section 5.4.1). For both of these public transportation endeavors, youth justified their resistance to 'Power' through linking contemporary Vietnamese culture to private vehicle use as well as the incompatibility between the urban environment and these projects.

Vinthagen and Johannson's (2013, 2016) analysis of how individuals carrying out resistance can straddle multiple positions of power, even when resisting a larger 'Power'—though never in its entirety—is helpful to consider here. The youth we spoke with were not homogenous; they came from different socioeconomic backgrounds, were of varying ages, some still in university while others were parents, they were not all of the same gender nor sexuality. As such, their resistance to state- or private-led urban change took on different forms. For example, while certain youth did support the bus or took it because they did not have another option, these same individuals also resisted state 'Power' in other places, such as the metro line. Overall, however, the emphasis that some youth placed on bottom-up change through increasing

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awareness amongst citizens on how to ameliorate the urban environment extended to each individual, regardless of background. This act that can also be considered as resistance to the state and an active modification of the built environment. Government rhetoric for grand urban transformations, such as the Master Plan, elicit a "not listen and trust, just listen and see" approach by youth (Hạnh, 13/08/17). While top-down change is planned, processed, and deployed, youth are actively molding the urban environment to fit their own modern ideals, their visions of contemporary Vietnamese culture, and promoting that citizens follow suit (Figure 7.2). Put another way, where there exist disconnects between bottom-up and top-down visions of the city's future, youth respond and navigate through a range of tactics, including the reiteration of their aggregate individual power to elicit positive change.

| State unclear regarding future urban changes | + | State engaging less with civil society | + | Youth skeptical of state-led urban change | = | Youth Engaging in Everyday Politics |

Figure 7.2 Conceptualizing Partial Factors Underpinning Youth Carrying out Everyday Politics in Hanoi, Vietnam (Author)

7.3 Summary of Key Points

Within this thesis, I have sought to better understand the responses and tactics of youth in Hanoi, Vietnam with regards to highly centralised urban planning decisions and state-sponsored changes to urban form. To do this, my project centered on the following **aim**: **to investigate how young adults (18-32) in Hanoi, Vietnam, perceive, interact with, and negotiate the changing urban landscape they are set to inherit**. I have examined how differences in age, marital status, area of residence (rural/urban), and socioeconomic status intersect to create a range of responses to current and future urban change. I have considered how decisions regarding leisure, transportation, and use of space reflect an active modification and/or resistance to proposed Master Plans and their implementation. As such, my research has sought to fill gaps in current literature regarding the ways in which youth living in Hanoi, Vietnam interact with the built environment. To fulfill my aim, I answered ***three main research questions***:

1. How and why do youth use or avoid different spaces within the city?
I answered this question in Chapter 5 by presenting results from my 39 interviews with youth. To do so, I based my analysis around current changes to Hanoi's built form detailed in Chapter 3 and the hybrid urbanization outlined in Chapter 2. My results point to three key findings. First, I built off current literature regarding the blurring of public and private space in Hanoi, Vietnam to reveal how the youth I interviewed

spent the majority of their leisure time in private spaces, which they repurposed to use as pseudo-public spaces. Second, the types of private spaces frequented for leisure differed by age, with those between 18 and 24 frequenting malls to a greater degree than those between 25 and 32. Conversely, youth within this latter age range who had children were more likely than those without children to return to malls as a place for leisure because they felt other sites, such as parks, did not offer protection from extreme temperatures nor satisfactory entertainment. Finally, I found that the majority of youth not only relied on private transportation, mainly motorbikes, to move around the city, but expressed dissatisfaction with public transportation options available to them within the city—namely the bus and bus rapid transit (BRT).

2. How do youth perceive recent and current urban changes in Hanoi?

My second research question was answered in Chapter 6. To better understand these perceptions, I drew from my context chapter and grounded my analysis in my conceptual framework, detailed in Chapter 2. Overall, the youth we interviewed expressed hesitation and skepticism towards certain planned urban changes that were supported by state actors, such as the proposed motorbike ban. Moreover, interviewees not only resisted certain aspects of change, but many were dismayed by the limited amount of information they had access to regarding future urbanization plans. Finally, the youth interviewees overwhelmingly felt that the state not only ignored the needs of youth, but that their importance as drivers of economic and national development was marginalized.

Concerning powerful private actors linked to sites such as Royal City, Times City, and Eco Park, the majority of youth felt that inspiration for these luxurious and modern enclaves was coming from outside Vietnam. Yet, the presence of these actors, both foreign and domestic, in the built environment was not unanimously positive or negative. Some youth perceived development paralleling cities such as Singapore to be positive at the enclave-level, where modern amenities were consolidated, but not at the city-level as this infringed on the resilience of Hanoi's cultural dynamism. Conversely, the involvement of a Chinese developer in the Metro Line 2A project elicited harsh critique from certain youth. The majority of youth were also aware that the government's budget is not equipped for the urban overhaul that Hanoi is currently undergoing. Hence, youth perceive recent and current urban change as one that is being significantly shaped by state control and foreign capital, with little consideration of the needs and desires of urban residents.

3. How do youth negotiate the current and future built environment of Hanoi?

To understand these negotiations in the temporal and spatial context of Hanoi, I employed the concept of everyday politics, discussed in my Conceptual Framework chapter. Additionally, I looked at the Master

Plan, introduced in my Introduction Chapter, and tied together my findings in Chapter 5 and 6 to enhance my analysis. While I discussed my final research question in greater depth in Section 7.2, it is important to reiterate that forms of everyday politics employed by youth as a response to urban change suggests four important things. First, my research findings suggest that youth carried out all four forms of everyday politics as discussed by Kerkvliet (2005, 2009), often as a response to clear acts of inter-referencing that promote a modern and ordered city with clear divisions between public and private. Second, and linked to the previous finding, acts of modification or evasion in relation to leisure at private sites contributed to the porosity of these enclaves and the further blurring of public and private space. Third, where youth perceived urban change to be detrimental to the preservation of contemporary Vietnamese culture and/or private ownership, resistance ensued. Finally, these negotiations also came as a consequence of youth disillusionment with the government and a growing sentiment that successful and sustainable urban transformation required bottom-up initiatives.

7.4 Future Research Directions

Future research on youth perspectives, navigations, and negotiations of the built environment in Hanoi as it continues to undergo urban change which is strongly supported by a centralised state and powerful private actors would benefit from a closer analysis of the intersections of 'modernization' discourse, theming, and everyday politics. Using this framework could enhance current understandings of how various actors and/or agents (re)enforce and (re)produce liminal boundaries in urban space. Additionally, as members of this youth cohort complete their studies, enter the job market, and/or start a family, it will be increasingly important to understand how individual consumption practices across gender, class, and ethnicity are shaping the production of urban space in contemporary Vietnamese society.

Building on this Honours thesis, my own future research plans are to complete an ethnographic study of the Metro Line 2A and to document the impacts that this line has had on the local communities living in proximity to the 13km elevated sky rail. Of concern here will be how this new public transit node is affecting the built urban form, housing prices, transportation decisions made by nearby residents, and in what ways the controversy around it may shape its (dis)use.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWEES

YOUTH CHARACTERISTICS

Interviewee	Date	Sex	Age	SES	Transportation	Personal Characteristics
Đung[8]	12/07/17	Male	23	Lower	Biking/Bus (BK/BUS)	• Originally from Đông Anh District • Recently graduated from university, looking for a job • Rents a room with other students near his university
Lính	12/07/17	Female	24	Middle	Motorbike (MB)	• Recently engaged • Living with her family in Long Biên district • Graduated and employed full-time at a bank
Hai	12/07/17	Female	30	Middle	MB	• Married with two young children • Living with her family in Long Biên district • Graduated and employed full-time as a pharmacist
Ngoc	12/07/17	Female	22	Middle	MB	• Currently enrolled a university but does not want a job in the degree she is studying for (accounting) • Lives in Long Biên with her family
Cuc	13/07/17	Female	30	Middle	MB/Walking	• Works at an NGO • Plans to stay living with her parents in Tây Hồ until she marries
Hau	13/07/17	Female	30	Upper	MB	• Comes from a wealthy family • Rents an apartment alone in Ba Đình district • Graduated from university and works an intense job in banking
Kieu	14/07/17	Female	21	Middle	MB	• Moved from Nam Dinh province three years ago to attend university • Works part-time and rents an apartment in Hà Đông
Hien	15/07/17	Female	25	Middle	MB	• Graduated from university and is working full-time • Lives with her family
Quyen	15/07/17	Female	28	Lower	MB	• From Nam Dinh province, moved to Hanoi nine years ago • Has one daughter living back home with her parents while her and her husband work in Hanoi • Did not attend university
Đung	17/07/17	Male	29	Middle	MB/Walking	• Rents an apartment alone in Long Biên District • Single • Moved to Hanoi from Nam Dinh province 10 years ago
Ly	17/07/17	Female	32	Middle	MB	• Lives with her husband and two kids (owns) • Moved to Hanoi 15 years ago for university • Works full-time

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[8] All names are pseudonyms

Thoa	17/07/17	Female	31	Middle	MB	• Lives with her husband and child (rents) • From Hanoi • Graduated from university and is employed full time
Vu	17/07/17	Male	19	Upper	BK/BUS	• Lives with his family in Long Biên district • Disability affects movement • Enrolled in university and is not working
Nhan	18/07/17	Female	22	Middle	BK/BUS	• Moved to Hanoi four years ago for university from Hai Phong province • Recently graduated and is working full-time
Giang	18/07/17	Female	18	Lower	BK/BUS	• Lives in Sóc Sơn district with her family for her whole life • Cannot afford university, currently looking for a job to support her family
Thuy	19/07/17	Female	19	Lower	MB	• Tay ethnic minority • Did not attend university • Rents an apartment with other hairdressers in Tây Hồ district • Originally from Hà Đông District
Nhai	19/07/17	Female	23	Lower	MB	• Rents an apartment with other hairdressers in Tây Hồ District • Did not attend university • Moved to Hanoi from Hoa Binh Province 8 years ago
Hoa	19/07/17	Female	24	Lower	MB	• Rent an apartment with other hairdressers in Tây Hồ district • Did not attend university • Originally from Ba Vì district
Toan	20/07/17	Male	25	Lower	MB	• Lives with family in Tây Hồ district • Works full-time as a hairdresser • Did not attend university
Tam	20/07/17	Female	29	Middle	MB	• Lives with her husband and child in Bắc Từ Liêm district • Did not attend university, currently working full-time
Mai	21/07/17	Female	21	Upper	MB	• Lives with her family in the Ancient Quarter • Enrolled at university and works part-time
Phuong	21/07/17	Female	31	Middle	MB	• Rents an apartment in Thanh Trì District • Graduated university and working full-time • Moved to Hanoi 10 years ago
Quy	21/07/17	Female	30	Middle	MB	• Lives with her husband, his family, and their two children in Hai Bà Trưng • Graduated from university and employed full-time • From Hanoi
Ha	24/07/17	Female	25	Middle	--	• Rents an apartment in Tây Hồ • Graduated from university • Moved to Hanoi six years ago from Nghe An province
Thanh	24/07/17	Male	24	Middle	MB	• Lives with his wife and child in Long Biên district • From Hanoi • Owns a clothing company

Thao	24/07/17	Male	20	Lower	MB/BUS	• Moved here two years ago to attend university • From Ninh Binh province
Nhung	25/07/17	Male	25	Middle	MB	• Lives in Đông Anh District with his family • Graduated from university and employed full-time
An	25/07/17	Female	24	Middle	MB	• Lives with family in Đông Anh District with her family • Recently graduated from university and working full-time
Luc	27/07/17	Male	27	Upper	MB	• Rents an apartment alone in Nam Từ Liêm district • Did not attend university, prefers to skateboard • Is not looking for a job and has never been employed
Minh	29/07/17	Male	30	Lower	MB/BUS	• Did not graduate from university • Lives with his wife and young child in Ba Đình district in a rented apartment • From Hanoi
Suong	30/07/17	Female	21	Lower	BUS	• Rents an apartment in Bắc Từ Liêm • Currently enrolled in university and from Hanoi
Đung	30/07/17	Male	25	Upper	MB	• Lives with family in Đống Đa District • Recently completed his master's degree in the UK and is working full-time
Cai	30/07/17	Male	31	Middle	MB	• Lives with wife and child in Đông Anh district • From Hanoi • Graduated and working full-time
Cuong	30/07/17	Male	32	Middle	MB	• Stay at home father helping with his wife's business • Did not attend university
Hai	03/08/17	Female	21	Lower	MB	• Works part-time to support herself and pay for her rent • Moved to Hanoi four years ago from Tuyen Quang province
Binh	04/08/17	Male	30	Middle	MB	• Moved to Hanoi eleven years ago from Hung Yen province • Lives with wife and two children in Đống Đa District • Graduated from university and employed full time
Đung	10/08/17	Male	22	Middle	MB	• Lives with family in Ba Đình district • Currently enrolled in university and is not working
Nam	10/08/17	Male	24	Lower	MB	• Moved here five years ago from Hung Yen province to attend university • Still enrolled, not working • Lives with family members
Lính	11/08/17	Female	18	Upper	Electric Bike	• Lives with her family in Long Biên District • About to leave for university in New York, USA • Plans to stay abroad

KEY INFORMANT CHARACTERISTICS

Interviewee	Date	Sex	Age	SES	Transportation	Personal Characteristics
Tho	05/08/17	F	35	Middle/Upper-Middle	MB	• Has lived on and off in Hanoi since 2006 • Moved all around within Hanoi Currently living abroad with her one son
Hạnh	10/08/17	F	--	Middle/Upper-Middle	MB	• Born in Hanoi • Mother of two boys • Owns her house and has renovated it • Works for an NGO
Phong	21/08/17	M	68	Middle/Upper-Middle	MB	• Born in Hanoi • Professor at a university • Has travelled all over the world • Fluent in French
Gya	10/11/17	M	38	Upper	Car	• Originally from Ha Long • Wife and two kids still living in Hanoi • Pursuing his PhD in Canada • Fluent in French
Nhi	18/11/17	F	25	Middle	MB	• Born in Hanoi • Completing her Master's degree in China • Actively interested in staying up to date with change in Hanoi

APPENDIX B: REB ETHICS APPROVAL

McGill

Research Ethics Board Office   Tel: (514) 398-6831
James Administration Bldg.   Fax: (514) 398-4644
845 Sherbrooke Street West. Rm 325   Website: www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human/
Montreal, QC H3A 0G4

Research Ethics Board I
Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

REB File #: 11-0617

Project Title: Youth Perspectives: Navigating the Evolving Cityscape of Hanoi, Vietnam as Both a Youth and Urban Dweller

Principal Investigator: Madeleine Hykes   **Department:** Geography

Status: Undergraduate Student   **Supervisor:** Prof. Sarah E.J. Turner

Approval Period: <u>June 16, 2017 to June 15, 2018</u>

The REB-I reviewed and approved this project by delegated review in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans.

Deanna Collin
Ethics Review Administrator, REB I & II

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* All research involving human participants requires review on at least an annual basis. A Request for Renewal form should be submitted 2-3 weeks before the above expiry date. Research cannot be conducted without a current ethics approval.
* When a project has been completed or terminated, a Study Closure form must be submitted.
* Unanticipated issues that may increase the risk level to participants or that may have other ethical implications must be promptly reported to the REB. Serious adverse events experienced by a participant in conjunction with the research must be reported to the REB without delay.
* Modifications must be reviewed and approved by the REB before they can be implemented.
* The REB must be promptly notified of any new information that may affect the welfare or consent of participants.
* The REB must be notified of any suspension or cancellation imposed by a funding agency or regulatory body that is related to this project.
* The REB must be notified of any findings that may have ethical implications or may affect the decision of the REB.