

Straddling the city borders: urban waste conflicts and their subjects in Paris and València (1880-1930)

This paper proposes a comparative study of the multiple significations of social conflicts related to urban wastes through the exploration of two subjects who had an important physical and symbolical role in the recollection and reuse of household waste in Paris (France) and València (Spain). Between the end of (the) 19th century and the first decades of (the) 20th century, garbage accumulation on the streets could be seen by local politicians and cultural media as a problem, but also was an economic resource or a way of life for some inhabitants in the industrial and agrarian hinterlands: sometimes, as a complement for another uses; in other cases, as the main job. Taking into account their different social conditions and the different territorial conditions and urbanization processes of both cities, Parisian *chiffonniers* and Valencian *fematers* were, from the decade 1880 to 1930, protagonists of social conflicts and municipal debates about the convenience and regulation of their tasks.

Closely linked to the agrarian hinterland of València (L'Horta) as peasants who fertilised their fields with household waste, *fematers* went on strike several times together with the market vendors, against the corporation tax impositions and toll controls, even in situations of severe limitations of political rights. In 1901-1903 and 1917-1920, their relations with the Blasquist¹ municipal government were deteriorated, especially after the banning of *fematers* tasks and licenses in 1920. On the other hand, but without the same countryside relationship, *chiffonniers* were also associated with some areas of Paris urban periphery (especially la *Zone*). In 1883 and 1921, changes in the garbage recollection system boosted their protests and the creation of labour unions, despite some groups would be attracted by the corporation employment offers. Moreover, 1920 would be known in Paris (maybe unfairly) as the year of “la peste des chiffonniers”, whereas in València, the hygiene of *fematers* and their hypothetical effects on the population health were also criticised after the 1918 influenza pandemic. Why their functions were questioned by some authorities? How evolved the municipal government perceptions about their existence and vindications, in the light of growing concerns about urban hygiene and the industrialization of garbage? How were redefined the cultural and environmental urban frontiers in the widening of the metabolic rift

¹ Blasquism was a republican movement who was the main political force in València and some towns in its agrarian hinterland between 1898 and 1923.

between cities and hinterlands? In summary, the differences and similarities in Paris and València will be explored through the cultural representations and valorisations of both collectives and their ways of protest, negotiation, and appropriation of streets and squares. For that purpose, it will be examined not only press and municipal reports, but also literary sources and memories about them and their daily routes.

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The physical borders of the historic Cairo between 1952 and 2011: a morphological analysis

The historic core of Cairo, has been exposed to uncontrolled development, deterioration and rapid changes especially after the 1950s, losing most of its authentic characteristics. This paper explores the spatial transformations evolution of the historic Cairo borders and delimitations from 1950s to 2011. The early national period of the republic under the social regime of Nasser (1953-1970) was critical in the transformation of the historic core as well as in the development of Cairo that was reshaped into the modern city icon of the middle east. This notion continued throughout the following six decades with rising deterioration of urban management and socio-economic situation of the historic city.

Based on cartographic materials of the research period, this paper focuses on the physical evolution of the historic city through comparative analysis based on three principles: urban circulation, land use patterns, urban fabrics and its surrounding borders. Situating the historic core in the bigger context of metropolitan Cairo, the research puts special focus on the impact of politics and economy on conservation and urban planning of the historic city on the studied period. The morphological analysis resulted that the historic core of Cairo was subjected to considerable transformation specially during the early days of the social regime in 1950s and during the war era between 1967 and 1973 as a result on the interventions brought by historic events and decisions,

Keywords historic Cairo, spatial transformation, urban transformations, urban borders .

Proposal for CFP: “Borders, Limits and Environment: Times, Spaces, Methods”

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Title Liquid Spine: Huế’s Urban Heritage Spaces in Time

Abstract

Vietnamese tend to figuratively refer to our country as ‘non nước’ (literally “mountains and river”), such as in songs and poetry. Similarly, locals oftentimes call Huế, Vietnam’s former capital and the seat of the Nguyễn, the country’s last dynasty, ‘sông Hương núi Ngự’ (“the Hương river and the Ngự mountain”), the city’s two most sacred sites. A map of Thuận Hóa (encompassing today’s Thừa Thiên Huế) in Hồng Đức Bản Đồ (Hồng Đức period maps from 1470-1497), the most comprehensive of pre-1800 Vietnamese cartography, shows an understanding of the territory as such: the land - mountains and the water - rivers/ ocean as fingers intertwined. Huế’s early urbanity, whose traces can still be seen in habitats within and surrounding the city, demonstrates this ideology: a hybrid conglomerate of interdependent micro linear settlements and agrarian tissues embedded within the topography along the Hương river system, integrated into diverse geologic floors from mountains, delta to the lagoon and the sea. The waterways not only structured the formation and spatial configuration of each village and enabled their mutual circulation and exchange, but also functioned as a sacred thread connecting them throughout the landscape, attesting to the fertility cults of an agrarian civilization. This also represents locals’ cosmology where agronomic practices did not lead to natural vandalization but exhibit a respectful attitude toward their natural environment. Sometimes inheriting this ideology to a certain degree, while other times fragmenting the territory, succeeding settlers and regimes, especially with the official establishment of the Nguyễn in the 19th century, however, have left deep marks on the fabric. A borderland and battleground between the Việt and Champa Kingdoms (11th to 16th century), the North-South Civil War between the Trịnh and Nguyễn families (16th to 18th century), the French conquest and colonial rule (19th to 20th century), then the late 20th century Vietnam War, Huế is essentially a postcolonial frontier territory and its people one of diaspora. These displacements and coercions caused not only constant demographic changes, political turmoil, but also boundary shifting, whereas the once seamless landscape got divided by various spatial dichotomies: urban/ rural, colonizer/ colonized, city/ village. Nowadays, with its postcolonial identity construction project, Huế has gone to great ends to construct a dynastic identity closely associated to the royal heritage and push fast urbanization to get rid of its provincial status. These piecemeal and short-term development schemes have reduced Huế’s diverse natural and cultural assets to discrete sites valued only for economic production and profit generation, which deepen its identity reconstruction struggle, cause extra stress on the ecosystem, and further the estrangement of humans from nature, the city from its waterways. The river network that was once the spine of the landscape has now been reduced to mere heritage status whereas the city has receded into the hinterland. Still, such artificially drawn boundaries and zoning by no means reflect the flow of the river, people and things, only contradicting further the city’s claim as a heritage city. Analyzing archival materials (text, images, maps) as well as the city’s built environment through architectural typology and urban morphology methods, the paper seeks unravel the substratum of Huế’s urban water morphology to unravel the fading cohabitation between nature and culture, which manifests a comprehensive use of the territory and a spiritual relationship with the land. It also challenges the contemporary distinction among concepts such as *city*, *village*, and *forest* while proposing an alternative perspective on urban heritage, not as a top-down retrospective act but as an on-going bottom-up collective project and process of inhabitation and conservation, blurring the established boundaries between nature-culture, tangible-intangible.

Short biography

Phi Nguyen is a PhD candidate in the Lab of Urbanism, The Doctoral Program Architecture and Sciences of the *City* (EDAR) at EPFL, and a doctoral assistant at Geneva School of Art and Design (HEAD-Genève). She holds a Master in Architecture from Harvard University, Graduate School of Design (2016) and a Bachelor of Arts (valedictorian, summa cum laude) from Berea College, USA (2011). Phi is a fellow in Hué team within the research project Site and Space in Southeast Asia, organized by the University of Sydney and supported by the Getty Foundation as part of its Connecting Art Histories Initiative (2018-2021). She received the Graham Foundation grant to coordinate an exhibition at Hué Museum of Fine Arts about local architectural heritage in Hué City, Vietnam (2018-2019).