POST/SOCIALIST AFFECT: Ruination and Reconstruction of the Nation in Urban Vietnam

CHRISTINA SCHWENKEL
University of California, Riverside

In the decades following World War II, an East German director of a collaborative film about the Vietnamese revolution explained in an interview, "There was much enthusiasm and hope for the future. People were excited to build a new society, a new world. We saw ourselves as deeply connected to the people who were still fighting for their independence from imperialism. The belief in socialism and solidarity was very strong." Such utopian sentiments and ideals may seem difficult to comprehend in a moment of widespread global cynicism and economic uncertainty, yet they reveal the affective forces, what I refer to in this article as *socialist affect*, which motivated political thought and social action at the time. Following Nigel Thrift (2004:62), I use the term *affect* to identify not individualized emotions and autonomous states of feeling, but the manifold passions that, Spinoza once argued, manifest intersubjectively and collectively through embodied actions and alliances (see also Richard and Rudnyckyj 2009:62). Thrift notes that cities, in particular, are "roiling maelstroms of affect" (2004:57). And given the historical-political role that socialist cities have played as the engines of national reconstruction and development (Ihle 2002:85), in this article I take up Thrift's call to examine more closely the engineering of affect in postwar socialist urban space. I am interested in the materiality of urban infrastructures through which socialist affects have been harnessed by the state to produce new, feeling subjects committed to the work of socialist nation-building. Whereas Thrift is concerned with the politicization of affect in late capitalist cities, here I compare and contrast the affective registers

of socialist and postsocialist landscapes in a rapidly growing city in north central Vietnam. To illustrate the optimism and utopianism that shaped the ethos of the post–American War era, I begin with a poem, a love poem written by a man for his girlfriend in 1978 that captures both the sorrow and the elation of socialist reconstruction; a poem that sets the stage for an "affective urbanism" (Anderson and Holden 2008), which charts historical shifts in the topography of sentiment, and conveys a particular utopian aesthetics of the future built on the ruins of a dystopic past:

> After working hours I visit you
>
> At the construction site strewn with bricks
>
> Holding your hand fragrant with the scent of fresh mortar
>
> I understand how terribly hard you are working
>
> > Our red city continues to grow
>
> You have taken on this struggle with much passion
>
> We have never spoken openly of our love
>
> Through these buildings we can speak of our loyalty
>
> > We returned to our old quarter of Quang Trung
>
> And were surprised by how it had changed
>
> The suspense of the midnight light through the door
>
> Captivated us even more
>
> > We feel content to live among these buildings
>
> That are rising from our city, poor and destroyed by war
>
> Happiness has grown from a landscape of broken bricks
>
> To recall past events make our hearts burn with hatred
>
> > Nothing is more beautiful than your hands
>
> The hands of a builder fragrant with fresh mortar
>
> We care deeply for one other, but have yet to say so
>
> But through these buildings we can express our love.

This poem by Quang Thành (1978), entitled "Hands of a Builder," published in the lunar New Year issue of the Nghệ An provincial newspaper, foregrounds the complex historical, ideological, social, and gendered meanings and sentiments attached to a particular construction material that forms the basis of this article: bricks. The setting is a series of housing blocks in Vinh City, called Quang Trung, built by the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the late 1970s as a material expression of political and humanitarian solidarity. It is also the site where I lived and conducted ethnographic research in 2010–11. Although often ignored or seen as ordinary and banal, bricks, I argue, are symbolic cultural objects that convey complex messages and ideologies about cities and the people who build, manage, live in, and experience them. Bricks matter—politically, materially, and affectively, for a political economy of material affects, catalyzed by the state, was crucial to postwar nation-building and the production of new socialist citizens. As the poem suggests, bricks evoked feelings of pride, grief, love, hope and joy. As "vibrant matter" endowed with affective agency and potency (Bennett 2010), they stimulated the lovers' senses—sight, smell, touch—and triggered deeply melancholic memories. In this article I show how bricks came to represent utopic objects of desire, or "clusters of promises," in Lauren Berlant's terms, that unleashed the imagination and gave shape to an engaged politics of hope and belief in future betterment, even as such attachments belied a state of compromised possibility, a condition that Berlant identifies as "cruel optimism" (2006:20–21). Although Berlant is concerned with liberal individualism and an ethos of hope deeply intertwined with market logics (culminating in the unrealized American dream), here I borrow her insights into capitalist culture to explore the unfulfilled promises of the socialist state and the collectivist ideals and hopes of building a new world that animated these attachments.

Historically, bricks have figured prominently in radical and recurring urban transformations in Vinh, both in the creation and the destruction of urban spaces and architectural forms. In this article I ask: What does an analysis of bricks, as gendered, classed, and racialized markers of status, power, and belonging reveal about the vast political and economic changes that have taken place over the past century in northern Vietnam? How might one study the history of a socialist city through bricks and their affective resonances? And how might cities be a fruitful site for thinking through the usefulness of the term *postsocialism*, particularly in Vietnam where capitalist reforms have been sustained by particular cultural and economic continuities to produce variable recombinations of state socialist and market-based initiatives (Schwenkel and Leshkowich 2012:384)? Is it possible to talk about cities

as being "postsocialist" without assuming an absence of enduring spatial logics and social arrangements commonly associated with socialism?[1] Likewise, how to read and "feel" socialism and its lingering affectations and sentimentalities on the urban landscape?

Socialist cities differed significantly from one another in design and planning owing to distinct cultural and historical forces that shaped their material landscapes. Some cities, like Prague, had long pre-socialist pasts that impeded extensive transformations to the urban fabric (Smith 1996:72). Others, such as Nowa Huta, Poland (Stenning 2000) and Dunaújváros, Hungary (Fehérváry 2012), represented newly built and planned urban utopias, whereas cities like Dresden (Ten Dyke 2001) and Vinh required extensive reconstruction after massive aerial bombardment. Unlike Dresden, however, Vinh emerged as a "hybrid" Vietnamese-East German city, collaboratively redesigned and rebuilt in the spirit of international solidarity, as described by the film director at the start of the article. Given the heterogeneity of urban forms both across and within socialist countries, it is not surprising that postsocialist urbanisms would be equally diverse. In Vinh City, capitalist transformation has not been continuous—a new memorial house to the female revolutionary Nguyễn Thị Minh Khai stands adjacent to a cinema and entertainment complex—nor is such transformation perceived to be antithetical to the socialist values that postwar urban design aspired to produce. Officials and residents are regularly reminded by party leaders to engage in productive economic practices: "theo tấm gưởng đạo đức Hồ Chí Minh" [following the moral example of Hồ Chí Minh], whose birthplace lies to the west of Vinh. In this article I use the term *postsocialism* in relation to specific urban projects and to "spaces of exception" that are shaped by market logics and practices of urban governance identified as "neoliberal" (Ong 2006), rather than in relation to the city in its entirety.

One of the hallmarks of Vinh City has been Quang Trung public housing, a carefully planned living environment intended to produce socialist urban citizens with evolved tastes, conduct, and modes of sociality through its architecture and spatial design. Bricks, the main construction material used in the five-story blocks, came to be associated with the utopianism and postwar enthusiasm of the era: side by side East German and Vietnamese men and women worked collectively toward national recovery, "building socialism" in the form of modern housing that made "use of the materiality of dwelling to produce new social forms and moral values" (Humphrey 2005:2). Optimism was but one affective state at the time; female construction workers recalled both the tediousness of labor and the playful moments

255

with male coworkers and German supervisors. Persistent scarcity also made it increasingly difficult to hold on to dreams of abundance and future prosperity. Nonetheless, the deeply affective attachments forged during the construction of Quang Trung bound particular bodies, objects, and technologies to bricks to produce a "utopic geography" of hope and potentiality (Anderson 2006:693). Over time, as Vinh's urban identity shifted from a model, international socialist city to a regional center of trade and industry, the potency or "affective intensity" (Massumi 2002) of the bricks and their material formations (social housing) diminished greatly, and they increasingly came to signify the dystopic ruins of a socialist past that today stand in the way of capitalist redevelopment.

CAPITALIST DEBRIS AND POSTSOCIALIST AFFECT

Once a scarce resource and object of theft, bricks are now ubiquitous in Vinh, as they are in urban spaces throughout Vietnam. Piles of unguarded bricks can be found on sidewalks and street corners, at clearance sites, behind public buildings, and in courtyards of private homes, signifying impending changes and "improvements" to the cityscape. Bricks are a sign of creation, innovation, construction and growth, typically preceded by the semiotic inverse: acts of demolition and destruction, or the symbolic erasure of architectural forms, and their affective histories, from the landscape. For many stakeholders, this vision of urban futurity demands a radical break from the past, a *tabula rasa* to build a new urban aesthetics of high modernity, one in which height and verticality become a signifier of progress and prosperity—the higher, the wealthier, the more technologically advanced (Scott 1998).[2]

Such techniques contrast sharply with acts of restoration and renovation, which are less concerned with property values and models of economic rationality than with notions of architectural and historical continuity. At issue here is how to determine value: which structures are "worth" preserving and which are architecturally, historically, and culturally "worthless"? As William Bissell has argued in the context of colonial urban planning, "The city is a precipitate shaped by history, and what remains or endures is hardly accidental. . . . [P]lace—and what stays in place—is always linked to social processes and broader questions of power" (2007:11). In Vietnam, the assessment of architectural worth is contingent upon carefully cultivated networks of power and influence, and motivated by political and economic interests that identify value in the land under urban structures rather than in the structures themselves. This transformation in the logic

of organization and valuation of space is consistent with the shift from socialist to capitalist modes of urbanization (Castells 1977). Urban growth in postsocialist spaces thus necessitates the identification of "ruins" that are lacking in worth so as to facilitate their removal from the landscape and clear the way for land privatization and real estate speculation. Construction and demolition thus emerge as interdependent processes, not so much contradictory as they are cyclical and recurring, and thus constitutive of a particular biography and life history of a city.[3]

It is important here to emphasize cycles—cycles of ruin and renewal—for Vinh City, in particular has had a long and complex historical relationship with what I call "capitalist debris": that is, ruination and its residuals as the byproduct of capitalism and its logics of expansion, whether contemporary urban demolition to enable privatization and market reforms, or urban devastation to disable socialist growth and productivity during the Cold War (see Figure 1).[4] While these very different acts of demolition have wounded the city and its inhabitants in notably dissimilar ways, it is critical to recognize that neither historical (American War) nor contemporary (postreform) destruction in Vinh City can be disconnected from global capitalism and the mass trauma it has inflicted upon the population, including loss of life and property, and widespread experiences of displacement and resettlement (Schwenkel 2009:201). Most significantly, urban redevelopment in postsocialist spaces has evoked traumatic memories of such loss and instability, generating anxiety and despair among populations whose homes are targeted by investors for "renewal." As state support withers and forced evictions increase (see also Harms 2012b), the apprehension and uncertainty that have gripped residents in public housing have produced new sentiments of disenchantment and desires for state care and belonging, what I refer to as "postsocialist affect," as part of their everyday experience of capitalism. Berlant's notion of "post-Fordist affect" has been useful to thinking through these new affective experiences as engendered by the "productive instabilities of the contemporary capitalist economy" (Berlant 2007:277). Scholars of postsocialism have similarly pointed to growing sentiments of discontent and disaffection from the state as market reforms have produced new forms of socioeconomic exclusion and stratification.[5] Like post-Fordist affect, a focus on postsocialist affectivity recognizes "the present as fundamentally intertwined with and even dependent on sensitivities generated in the past" (Muehlebach 2011:62), and on the lingering feelings and yearnings of the socialist period that shape urban subjectivities today.
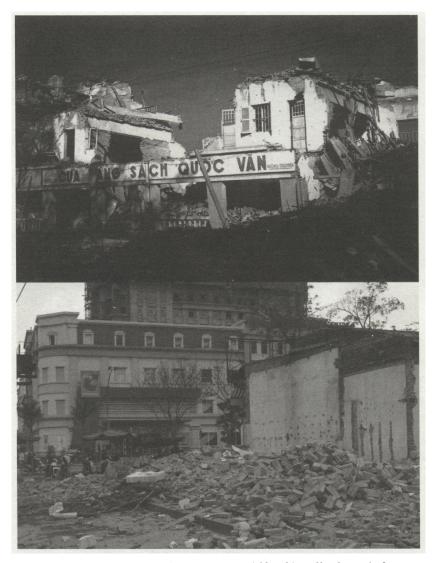
257

FIGURE 1. Cycles of Destruction: Then and Now. Aerial bombing of bookstore in downtown Vinh, 1972 (above; photo by Hồ Xuân Thành) in same location as contemporary demolition to build a new shopping center, 2010 (below; photo by the author).

URBAN HISTORIES OF COLD WAR RUINATION

In his analysis of images of nuclear ruination deployed by the U.S. government as an affective strategy of nation-building, Joseph Masco links the orchestration of fear of nuclear attack to the emergence of a "complex new political ideology" directed toward "mobilizing the global project of Cold War" (2008:364). Cold

War anxieties about the end of the democratic nation-state, he argues, still resonate today, justifying military expansion and a sustained "war on terror" under the guise of saving American lives. There is another unsettling component to this Cold War history and national defense policy: while the U.S. government preoccupied itself with creating "emotional management strategies" (Masco 2008:367) to psychologically discipline the population and preemptively prepare for nuclear war, elsewhere—namely, in Vietnam—the United States was engaged in another operation of ruination, that of obliterating a communist country by bombing it "back to the Stone Age." Mass bombing, according to W.G. Sebald in his controversial thesis on the taboo of representing the material ruin of postwar Germany, is "in perfect sympathy with the innermost principles of every war, which is to aim for as wholesale an annihilation of the enemy with his dwellings, his history, and his natural environment as can possibly be achieved" (2004:19). Across Vietnam, and especially in Vinh City, massive air strikes produced landscapes of mass death and material ruination, turning America's apocalyptic power into global spectacle. In David Crowley's words, the duality of Cold War modernity— "the dialectics of progress and disaster and of utopia and dystopia"—in the end did not produce secure and prosperous futures, but war-torn, post-apocalyptic landscapes (2008:251). In the current, post–9/11 political climate, the belief that "bombing campaigns can produce democracy abroad" (Masco 2008:389) has its roots in this history of the bombardment of Vietnam.

For more than half a century, Vinh has endured cycles of urban destruction and reconstruction owing to its violent history of colonial domination, revolutionary uprising, and protracted aerial bombing, first by France and then by the United States. In the late 1940s, under a scorched earth policy that followed Hồ Chí Minh's call to "phá hoại để kháng chiến" [destroy as a means to resist], much of the colonial urban infrastructure was dismantled or demolished (Phạm and Bùi 2003). With the defeat of French colonialism in 1954, government officials in Vinh, following the directives of Hanoi, implemented a large-scale project of urban recovery that aimed to transform the segregated and underdeveloped *thị xã* (township) into a modern and industrialized *thành phố* (city). This first experimentation with socialist urbanization was abruptly halted with the onset of the war with the United States. After a decade of postcolonial reconstruction and repopulation,[6] the city was again reduced to rubble and ash. Fierce bombing raids carried out between August 1964 and January 1973 targeted the area's port and expanding industry, much of it located within the city, and demolished the entire urban cultural and economic

259

landscape, as Sebald conjectured—the churches, pagodas, markets, cinema, bookstore, hospitals, and housing.

When I spoke with older residents about the destruction of Vinh during the war, they frequently described their city as having been *phẳng* (leveled) and *tàn phá nặng nề* (completely ravaged), covered with *đống gạch đổ nát và trò tan* (piles of debris and ash). The terms commonly used to denote rubble and debris—*gạch vụn* and *gạch đổ nát*—literally, crushed and crumbling brick, indicate how bricks were closely linked to the materiality of ruined cityscapes. The association of ruins and debris with pulverized fragments of baked clay indexes a long history of racialized class relations in pre-revolutionary Vinh. Historically, bricks were associated with architectural forms and construction materials that were not readily affordable to the majority Kinh population, who lived predominantly in thatched houses. Brick structures typically comprised the political and administrative centers of the city. Along with cement—which was brought to Vietnam by French industrialists in 1899—bricks came to symbolize the aesthetics of colonial rule and state power (Harvey 2010).[7] Bricks signified status, wealth, and commerce; for example, French colonists and Chinese traders typically lived in brick houses (Phạm and Bùi 2003:52–53). Under colonialism, racial and socioeconomic inequality mapped onto the architectural landscape as brick structures demarcated the borders between wealthy French and Chinese quarters and poorer local neighborhoods. During the revolution, the destruction of grand colonial buildings that once suggested the stability and permanence of imperial rule were symbolic public displays of crumbling state power and of political and economic systems reduced to mere rubble.

With the cessation of U.S. bombing raids, few urban structures remained standing among the contiguous rows of bomb craters that had severely scarred the landscape. "There was nothing left —no buildings, no trees. One could look out over the horizon without anything obstructing your view," one elderly man reminisced in an interview. "It looked like a moonscape," a GDR architect commented to me, comparing Vinh with Dresden. Germany's transformation into a "rubble nation" and its astounding recovery (Sebald 2004) forged an almost natural alliance between the two countries, and prompted Hanoi to approach Berlin with a request for aid in the reconstruction of Vinh. One of the central problems that urban planners faced in the aftermath of the war was how to make the city rebuildable, and where to even begin. Like the *Trümmerfrauen* (rubble women) in Germany, a local, mostly female labor force worked industriously to clear the rubble and create a level landscape. Teams of workers manually broke up and removed the

remaining debris, bailing out stagnant water from craters and filling them with rubble, sand, and gravel from nearby waterways. As represented in the poem by Quang Thành, new buildings, industry, relations, and aspirations materialized from a "landscape of broken bricks." Crushed brick and stone, recycled and reused, provided the bedrock for a re-envisioned society and era of humanity that would eliminate inequalities through restorative and transformative urban planning.

HARNESSING PASSION: AFFECTIVE LABOR AND THE GENDERED CARE OF URBAN RECONSTRUCTION

Bricks not only reconstituted the urban foundation, the very ground beneath the city, they also gave shape to its material structure and form. As the building blocks for a more egalitarian society, bricks, and the architectural landscapes they created, cultivated political passions and loyalties through material and discursive practices of inclusion, collaboration, and care. I use the term *care* here to identify three registers of socialist affect engendered by postwar reconstruction: First, in the moral sentiments of care expressed by citizens, such as the romantic love conveyed in the poem through the materiality of the buildings, or the patriotism of workers who performed the hard labor of construction. Second, in the paternal care of the state, which sought to bring modern brick housing to the urban population in recognition of their sacrifices and service to the nation. This new affective relationship between citizens and government fostered politically efficacious attachments that could be harnessed in the interests of state power and socialist modernization. In the words of Ann Stoler, sentiment became the "substance of governing projects" (2004:5). And third, across socialist states and their kindred populations, as the GDR government pledged aid and support to their "socialist brothers" abroad. Feldman and Ticktin argue that the governance of care is closely tied to a "philosophical ideal of universal humanity," which itself becomes the object of management and intervention (2010:6–7). East Germans were similarly "practitioners of humanity" (2010:5) insofar as assistance to Vietnam was likewise driven by universalist ideals, although here a Marxist notion of socialist humanism inspired ideologies of care that saw in the practice of international solidarity a means to emancipate humanity on the path to building global socialism.

On Building a "Radiant City"

After air strikes ended, much of northern Vietnam lay in ruins, its industry and infrastructure decimated and its population dispersed. In line with the tenets of socialist internationalism and humanitarian policies of the 1970s, COMECON

nations launched a large-scale program to assist Vietnam in its national recon-
struction and economic recovery. While the war raged on in the south, leaders in
Hanoi, in counsel with their communist counterparts abroad, divided the hardest
hit regions among participating nation-states according to their respective technical
strengths. This had the effect of creating a distinct topography of socialist fraternity
delineated along lines of national expertise; for example, Russians worked in Hanoi,
Hungarians in Thanh Hoá, Cubans in Quảng Bình, Poles in Hải Phòng, and so on.
Projects focused on a range of collaborations, from scientific development and the
expansion of large-scale agriculture and industry, to the rehabilitation of urban
infrastructures and modernization of public utilities. In the case of East Germany,
a bilateral agreement signed in October 1973 committed the GDR government to
the work of rebuilding the destroyed capital city of Nghệ An.

   This massive *Wiederaufbau* project entailed a comprehensive redesign of the
city according to principles of socialist urban planning that emphasized industrial
productivity and egalitarian modes of living. All equipment and materials—from
cranes to nails—were imported from East Germany, with the exception of natural
resources, such as sand and clay, thus configuring the city's hybrid character as
technologically global and yet intrinsically "Vietnamese." This was not "blank slate"
urbanization in the style of Le Corbusier; urban planners adapted the colonial-
era street grid to give structure and order to the new city. They did, however,
reorganize space to reflect new relations of production (i.e., no private ownership)
and new forms of settlement based on ideologies of unity and classlessness. This
effectively continued the early stages of socialist urbanization interrupted in the
1960s, but in distinctly different ways owing to East German planning interventions
and the millions of deutschmark invested in reconstruction.

   Le Corbusier's concept of the functional city, did, however, have a strong
impact on city planners. Developed in his work on the "Radiant City," the functional
city advocated efficiency and rationality in centralized planning, with separate zones
for living, working, leisure, and commerce, and broad boulevards with central
axes to facilitate the smooth movement of traffic (Le Corbusier 1967). In Vinh, the
application of Le Corbusier's principles of design served to radically transform the
cityscape. Over the course of eight years, a rotating group of GDR experts (more
than 200 total), along with Vietnamese colleagues and teams of skilled workers,
implemented large-scale urban development projects in the industrial, residential,
commercial, and cultural sectors. Infrastructure initiatives focused on widening
roads, laying electric lines, and installing modern water and sewage systems.
Cement, brick, stone, and textile factories were newly assembled or renovated.

FIGURE 2.   Quang Trung Housing Estate, central Vinh, 1978. (Courtesy of the Nghệ An
Provincial Museum.)

New daycares, elementary schools, and vocational training centers emerged on the
landscape. Parks were designed, a sports stadium erected, and a badly damaged
cinema restored. At the crossroads of the city, a large indoor marketplace was built
across the street from the remodeled state department store.

The largest and most ambitious urban project was the construction of the
Wohnkomplex, or microdistrict of Quang Trung (see Figure 2). In Soviet urban
planning, a microdistrict was a self-contained residential area with apartment
blocks and public services conveniently located within the immediate neighborhood
(Castillo 2007). This method of urban design traveled globally to Vinh via East
German experts and Vietnamese architects who had studied in Moscow or Weimar.
Urban planners generally felt the *Wohnkomplex* was the most efficient solution to
mitigating the city's severe postwar housing shortage, as it had been in Eastern
Europe and the Soviet Union.[8]

Microdistricts were typically built between major roadways, without any
intersecting through streets. Traffic could thus be kept to a minimum and public
space reserved for playgrounds, communal areas, and gardens. To execute this
design in Vinh, planners chose a tract of open land in the city center that had once
housed the colonial railway station. In its early stages, Quang Trung had a targeted
capacity of three thousand units to house more than 15 thousand residents. By 1981,
however, funds had run out and construction was brought to a halt. In the end,
planners completed more than half of the project, with 1,800 units in 22 blocks that

263

provided housing for eight thousand residents, mainly "priority" workers and civil servants. As one of the few microdistricts in Vietnam, Quang Trung boasted an integrated complex with a youth clubhouse, cinema, trade center, hotel, library, market, culture houses, daycares, and primary schools. As such, it brought the city national recognition as a model for socialist modernization and centralized urban planning directed at the needs and interests of workers and their families.

The Gendered Work of Bricks

Vinh's postwar reconstruction and recovery were represented by a symbolic object—a brick—and a symbolic action: the inauguration of the construction of Quang Trung. On May 1, 1974, the Minister of Construction, Đỗ Mười, in a public performance of state care, laid the first brick to rebuild the city and provide much-needed housing for its citizens. With its brick, high-rise construction—the first in north central Vietnam—the apartment blocks unsettled the hierarchies and inequalities once associated with foreign construction technologies by bringing bricks, mortar, and concrete to the masses. Priority citizens, allocated apartments in what they referred to as *nhà gạch* (brick houses), were considered to have the best and most modern housing in the city, while their colleagues continued to reside in makeshift *nhà tập thể* (collective housing with shared facilities). Quang Trung occupants had a high social status; they lived in permanent, self-contained units with indoor kitchens and plumbing, also a first in the city (Schwenkel 2012:449–450). Education campaigns carried out by local officials endeavored to teach residents, most of whom had relocated from rural areas, how to live in and properly care for their housing. For example, residents were instructed not to raise animals in the apartments or throw trash down the drains. Modern brick facilities demanded that residents exemplify and embody *nếp sống mới, nếp sống văn minh* (new and civilized ways of living).

Quang Trung thus emerged as a symbol of Vinh's rebirth and regeneration— and here I use explicitly gendered terms to bring attention to the ways that bricks were gendered objects closely associated with female labor and gendered practices of care. Images of laboring women in the public sphere figured prominently in the reconstruction of the city (see Figure 3), and brickwork itself—as these images and the poem "Hands of a Builder" show—became an important form of what Hardt and Negri (2000) have termed *affective labor*. By *affective labor*, I do not mean the unpaid, reproductive work of women in the domestic sphere, or the gendered labor of service providers under conditions of global capitalism (Hardt 1999). My use of the term also differs from the new forms of volunteerism that signify "acts

FIGURE 3.   The Gendering of Bricks: Rebuilding a bigger, richer, and more beautiful city (left).
Vinh City newspaper, 1974. Brick production to support the construction of Quang Trung
(right). (Photograph courtesy of the Vietnam-Germany Friendship Association of Nghệ An.)

of redemptive repossession" for retired workers in Italy (Muehlebach 2011:70),
although affective labor in the context of Quang Trung likewise affirmed public
validation and performance of the duties of citizenship. I am interested rather
in the collective subjectivities and the gendered forms of sociality and care that
found their expression in the materiality of bricks, and the ways that images of
women working diligently to rebuild the nation affirmed their social membership
and political inclusion in a new society.

Scholars have addressed the regulation and management of sentiment as cen-
tral to the exercise of statecraft (Thrift 2004; Stoler 2004; Mazzarella 2009). In
postwar Vietnam, women's affective labor emerged as a key component of this
process. The vast majority of bricklayers involved in the construction of Quang
Trung were women, and they had a strong representation in other work brigades.[9]
With bricks and trowels, Vietnamese women xây dựng (built) and metaphori-
cally gave birth to new and đẹp (beautiful) cities and homelands (see Figure 3).
These state discourses and images shaped utopian sentiments and dispositions
that broke with waning morale and mounting wartime despair and could be
channeled into productive enthusiasm for urban reconstruction. New affective

265

communities and solidarities took shape around bricks: love stories between brick-layers and their male superiors peppered interviews, as did anecdotes and fond recollections of East German experts bicycling around the city. The crafting of affects associated with postwar recovery and socialist nation building—joy, excitement, hope, and optimism detached from the drudgery of hard labor—ultimately rendered the feminine work of national reconstruction moral, utopic, and desirable.

In 1974, the year urban reconstruction commenced, female brick workers were routinely celebrated in the local press for their steadfast dedication to rebuilding the nation and a new socialist city. Images documented the strenuous manual labor required of female workers, such as transferring bricks in wooden carts to the construction site at Quang Trung. Newspaper articles likewise honored female brigade leaders who overcame great difficulties, including endemic scarcities, to increase productivity and exceed production quotas. Poems written by city residents made explicit the metaphorical connections between women and bricks, including one entitled "The Meaning of Noontime among Red Bricks," which romanticized and feminized brickwork, linking its affective power and agency to the delicate care and touch of a woman, who—like the clay of bricks—was intimately connected to nature, earth, and nationhood: "You knead and care for each handful of soil. . . . This familiar earth of ours is a marvelous thing; in the past it nourished people, today it shelters them . . . " (La 1974:3).

Under the slogan "Everything for one million bricks to build the city," the mechanization of brick production was also celebrated through the figure of the female worker, and press reports enumerated the notable increase in daily output: from eight thousand bricks manually produced during the war when brick factories relocated to rural areas, to more than 19 thousand "good quality" bricks after returning to the city and incorporating East German secondhand machinery. These statistics steadily climbed through the late 1970s, documenting the growth of socialist industry and the new place and status of women in society. Bricks, brickwork, and the construction of Quang Trung became closely associated with socialist citizenship and the promise of urban prosperity, and with the gendered and affective labor of healing and recovery. To quote again from the poem "The Meaning of Noontime among Red Bricks": "I understand why you chose this job, to wipe out poverty and the wounds of war, to rebuild our homeland and country, and make up for all that we have suffered and lost . . . " (La 1974:3).

FROM CARE TO NEGLECT: THE AFTERLIVES OF BRICKS AND THE PASSING OF UTOPIA

By the mid-1990s, Quang Trung was no longer a symbol of the city's progress and pride, but its underdevelopment and decay. Lack of state investment in maintenance and repairs had led to the steady deterioration of the apartment blocks over the years. This shift from state paternal care to systemic neglect marked a change in the affective relationship between state and society as responsibility for housing was transferred to urban residents. Bricks, and the architectural forms they created—the modern brick apartment buildings of Quang Trung—no longer represented the utopian prospect of socialist prosperity, but rather unfulfilled state promises. The dreamworlds of modernity, of mass utopia and material plenty, had been shattered (Benjamin in Buck-Morss 2002:x–xi). As Vinh celebrated its 210th anniversary in 1998, images of Quang Trung—once an emblem of the city—were all but absent from the mass media. Not a single image of the neighborhood was included in the September 1998 issue of *Xây Dựng* [Construction], which featured a two-page glossy color insert on "High Quality Buildings in Uncle Hồ's Homeland." In two decades' time, Quang Trung's status had fallen considerably, its association with bright and progressive futures undone, and the city once again became a target of international intervention and urban redesign.

Capitalist restructuring fundamentally altered the landscape of the city and the political affects of its residents. In 1997, a consortium of international development agencies that came to Vinh to assess the microdistrict described it as beset with "dilapidated blocks" and "run-down" public facilities, which stood as "witness to the failure" of socialist mass housing (UN Habitat 2012:7). Accusations of shoddy and hurried construction contradicted official reports and personal accounts of careful and meticulous planning. The solution proposed to the problem of an aging and crumbling Quang Trung lay not with its renovation, but with demolition and new construction of commercial and residential properties. Accordingly, in 2004, building C1—the largest of the blocks—was demolished and replaced with high-rise condominiums and a trade center, displacing several hundred residents who were no longer considered priority citizens in modern socialist housing but disadvantaged urban poor with inadequate living facilities (Schwenkel 2012:457).

Urban redevelopment thus threatened a return to the spatialization of inequality as a post-reform generation of planners and investors saw contemporary urbanization as inextricably linked to market forces, a logic encouraged by the consortium, as well as other international organizations, including those from re-unified Germany. With the aim to "revitalize" the city and "correct" the flaws of

GDR urban planning, Vinh ironically became a Cold War battleground between the former Germanys. In the prevailing logic of capitalist restructuring, private ownership would create a sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency lacking in tenants in subsidized housing, and likewise reform destructive practices that hastened Quang Trung's aesthetic and structural demise. Residents were chastised for their role in facilitating the decay of the housing blocks; for example, for unlawfully building extensions onto apartments or bricking up balconies to expand their living space (see cover image). As matter out of place, bricks, in these instances, were no longer affective objects with "animating potency" (Berlant 2006:21) that inspired utopic fantasies of abundance and recovery, but signified Quang Trung's bleak state of ruin and decline, and the failure of the state to adequately care and provide for its citizens.

In her work on the death of the modernist project of mass utopia, Buck-Morss argues that recognition of the gap between utopian promises and dystopian actualities marks a "moment of disenchantment—of recognizing the dream *as* dream" (2002:209). In interviews and daily interactions with residents, disenchantment over the passing of the socialist dreamworld, of the loss of social prestige, and of the rapidly declining value of the housing blocks to the state and market, remained a topic of deep reflection and frustration. A retired biology professor in building C2 captured this state of disaffection:

> Thirty years ago I was allocated an apartment here. All of us who were priority cadres with high work points and an excellent labor record were offered housing in a new, modern brick building. Those who were lower priority, who did not excel in their work, or whose families did not participate in the revolution, were granted a parcel of land. At that time, an apartment was worth more than land; there was plenty of land then, and people had to live in houses made from thatch. But there were few brick structures. Today all this has changed. The cadres who received land have divided and sold sections of their property. Now they are rich. We in Quang Trung are the poor ones. [Interview with author, Vinh City, March 9, 2011]

The widespread sentiment that people who were most committed to serving the state, to the revolution, and to building socialism have been left behind by capitalist growth (and corrupt bureaucrats) marks a significant shift in the affective register of residents, one in which urban renewal in postsocialist spaces has become associated with sentiments of distrust, disillusionment, and despair. A former vice director of Quang Trung Hotel in Block A5 reflected on the past with some regret.

268

Sitting on low plastic stools in front of her building, she told me: "If I had known then what I know today, I would have chosen đất (land) over nhà (housing). But here I am after 40 years of working for the state and what do I have to show for it?"[10] Like others, this woman, who sells bicycles in a makeshift shack to supplement her monthly pension of 1.6 million đồng (US$80), equated residency in Quang Trung with a now-disadvantaged population that remains impoverished despite the "progress" taking place around them. Tenants often observed that "neighbors with economic opportunity have long left Quang Trung." For those left behind, soaring property values across the city are a blunt reminder that current dreams of land and a spacious nhà riêng (single home) remain far beyond their reach. As the welfare state recedes and the burden of care transfers to individuals and families, postsocialist affect materializes as a "constant bargaining with normalcy in the face of conditions that can barely support even the memory of the fantasy" (Berlant 2007:278). And because Quang Trung residents live in the city center on valuable urban property—đất vàng (golden land) sought by investors from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City—the future of their social housing looks equally bleak.

TO RENOVATE OR REBUILD? TOWARD A POSTSOCIALIST URBAN AFFECT

For many, the decay of Quang Trung necessitates its razing and reconstruction to phù hợp hơn (better fit) with today's market economy and consumer-oriented society, as occurred with building C1. And this appears a likely possibility. In early 2011 city officials approved a plan by PetroVietnam to redevelop Area A into a multifunctional office and apartment complex, one of 50 high-rise projects currently underway in Vinh. Yet there is little consensus among tenants on the future of their neighborhood. Contrasting views reflect different historical and social connections to the buildings, as well as the ideals and sentiments they evoke: on one side is the desire to renovate and preserve, while on the other is the call to demolish and rebuild.

Residents in Quang Trung represent a diverse group of citizens that defy easy categorization. One can differentiate, however, between two general populations based on length of residency and mode of acquisition of housing, which shape distinct attachments to place. The first group consists of original residents who were allocated housing through their work units in recognition of their contribution to the nation as workers and revolutionaries. They comprise approximately 55 percent of the current occupants. The second group is composed of more recent arrivals, who purchased or acquired through kinship ties the user rights to an apartment,

269

that is, the right to inhabit state property. There are also clear political and socioeconomic divisions between these generations of tenants that are indicative of differing relationships to the state. In the former one finds retirees and their families with continuous civil service, who are active in mass organizations, such as the Women's Union or the Veterans Association. The latter tend to be nonstate workers in the private sector, who are more disaffected from the state on account of their morally questionable status as traders and small business owners (Leshkowich 2011). These tenants typically do not participate in activities under the umbrella of the Fatherland Front, largely owing to "time constraints," many claim.

In surveys and interviews, this later wave of tenants was more likely to advocate for demolition and reconstruction of the housing blocks. Devoid of optimistic attachments formed in the immediate postwar period (given their younger age or lack of priority status), they saw the buildings as *cũ* (old), *xuống cấp* (degraded), *nguy hiểm* (dangerous), and *chất lượng kém* (low quality). New apartments in high-rise developments were considered more *hiện đại* (modern), *rộng rãi* (spacious), *tiện* (convenient), and *đẹp* (beautiful), all qualities they considered missing from their current dwellings. Their vision of contemporary urban living fit soundly with neoliberal imaginaries of urban futurity; many praised, for example, the new twin towers that were inaugurated in January 2011 just across from Quang Trung. First-wave residents, on the other hand, viewed the towers with suspicion and reserve: "They are not harmonious with the environment," one retired architect who lives across the street declared (see Figure 4). Five stories are more aesthetic and practical in his view (especially given frequent power cuts). Other tenants maintained that the quality of the new construction was low, not just for the towers, but for all contemporary high-rise projects that are "locally managed." In the words of another retiree:

> Quang Trung was built by the Germans with German equipment and German technology. After 30 years our homes are still *kiên cố* (solid) and *kết cấu vẫn chắc chắn* (structurally sound). These new high-rises are built by Vietnamese companies. In a few years they will be in worse condition than Quang Trung. [Interview with author, Vinh City, May 27, 2011]

In a reversal of contemporary measures of value that attach aesthetic and architectural worth to scale, size, and newness, first-generation residents—the priority cadres and labor heroes who cling, not to socialism itself, but to the values, sentiments, and promises of social transformation and betterment—have rejected capitalist redevelopment and the newest brick buildings in Vinh as *chất lượng thấp*

FIGURE 4. "Twin Towers" of PetroVietnam across from Building A5 in Quang Trung, 2011. (Photo by the author.)

hơn (inferior in quality). The bricks and cement of today, still produced by women in the same German-built factories, are now associated with changing technologies that evoke new political passions and powerful nationalist sentiments. In industry across the city, Chinese machinery—the spread of which symbolically suggests a threat to Vietnamese economic and political sovereignty—has replaced outdated East German technology. From French modernism to East German internationalism to Chinese market socialism, foreign technological interventions have shaped the political and economic histories of urban space and the built environment based on radically different urbanisms and aesthetics of state (and market) power.

A rival urban imaginary that advocates renovation of Quang Trung ascribes important social, historical, and commemorative value to the apartment blocks, despite their decay. Priority occupants allocated flats in the postwar years typically expressed a deeper attachment to place, memory, and meaning, and to the social responsibilities of the state. In interviews, anxieties about the destruction of Quang Trung were expressed in terms of loss of home, history, and community, and abandonment by local authorities. In the words of one woman: "I've lived here for much of my life and am quite fond of the neighborhood. This is all I know. There is a strong sense of village community here, and the buildings hold many

271

kỷ niệm (memories) and *tình cảm* (sentiments) for me." For some, demolition threatens to undermine the very identity of the city, which is closely tied to its quasi-cosmopolitan status as "German-made." According to a retired journalist who has worked to halt redevelopment by sending letters and petitions to government officials: "Quang Trung needs to be preserved, not rebuilt. Reconstruction will destroy the *bản sắc* (character) of our city and the *tình hữu nghị* (spirit of friendship) between Vietnam and Germany."

But how and what to preserve, and for what intent and purpose? As David Lowenthal once queried: "What kind of relics make the past most vivid? Those that are bright and clean, some insist, full of the sparkle of youth they had when new. For others the marks of use and time are crucial to living continuity" (1999:181). On one hand restoring Quang Trung to its original form—that is, renovating the salvageable blocks—might stand as a monument to a particular moment of global socialism, to an era of deeply felt idealism, optimism, and solidarity between GDR experts and residents of Vinh as co-participants in the reconstruction of the city, a history that is forgotten in reunified Germany and now threatens to disappear from Vinh's memoryscape. Preserving the blocks in their current state of ruinous disrepair, on the other hand, where the object of memory is both spatial and temporal—that is, the architectural form and its everyday use over time—would complicate this nostalgic account of the history of building socialism. Beyond the hope, romance, and dreams of a new world that the iconic red brick once embodied, Quang Trung tenants also remember postwar recovery as a time of much struggle, sorrow, and hardship, with critical shortages of food, water, and electricity. Borrowing from Berlant, we might understand the affective attachment to the brick as an instance of cruel optimism to the extent that the promising object could not guarantee that "the habits of a history might *not* be reproduced" (Berlant 2006:31) and in the end failed to deliver ordinariness and the desired "good life" (2006:35).

Ruins of modernity inspire a deep sense of ambivalence, Andreas Huyssen (2010) has argued, not least of which because of the kinds of memory and trauma they invoke. Likewise, there is much ambivalence about preserving Quang Trung in its current dystopic state and about including ruination—the graduated process of decay—as part of the historical narrative. This would require more probing questions and explanations as to why the buildings deteriorated so quickly and why tenants had little choice in the postwar years of rations and scarcity but to engage in "destructive" practices such bricking up balconies in order to raise pigs and chickens. Like the bricks that gave shape to their form and again leave their

traces on the landscape, socialist ruins and capitalist debris are entwined in a dialectical relationship of ambiguous duality —creation and demolition, dwelling and displacement, permanence and instability, hope and despair. Changes in affect and in the meaning of bricks are perhaps most symbolic of the ways in which postsocialist urban planning has profoundly reshaped the city and the lives of its inhabitants: the piles of bricks that once offered the promise of care, renewal, and inclusion in a global socialist polity, now point to a future of exclusion and uncertainty.

ABSTRACT

This article explores the engineering of affect in socialist urban design and subsequent changes in the affective register of a rapidly growing city in late socialist Vietnam. The setting is the north central city of Vinh, destroyed by aerial bombing during the American War and rebuilt with assistance from East Germany. A primary focus of urban reconstruction was Quang Trung public housing that provided modern, European-style apartments and facilities for more than eight thousand residents left homeless from the war. Drawing from interviews, images, poems, and archival materials that document urban reconstruction, the article foregrounds the complex historical, ideological, social, and gendered meanings and sentiments attached to a particular construction material: bricks. It argues that bricks have figured prominently in radical and recurring urban transformations in Vinh, both in the creation and the destruction of urban spaces and architectural forms. As utopic objects of desire, bricks gave shape to an engaged politics of hope and belief in future betterment, as construction technologies once reserved for the elite were made available to the masses. In Quang Trung public housing, bricks harnessed political passions and utopian sentiments that over time, as Vinh's urban identity shifted from a model socialist city to a regional center of commercial trade and industry, came to signify unfulfilled promises of the socialist state and dystopic ruins that today stand in the way of capitalist redevelopment. [war, affect, urban design, ruins, socialism-postsocialism, architecture, materiality, infrastructure]

NOTES

1. For example, centralized planning and mass urban housing that espoused integrated and egalitarian living (Castells 1977).
2. Here I borrow from James Scott's (1998) use of "high modernism" to identify bureaucratic forms of urban planning that embrace technocratic notions of progress and advocate the need for "blank slate" development.

3. See also Zhang 2006 on the tensions between urban demolition, preservation, and development in Kunming, China. For an insightful analysis of demolition as a social process in Ho Chi Minh City, see Harms 2012a.

4. This notion of capitalist debris is inspired by Stoler's (2008) discussion of "imperial debris" and the material and affective ruins of empire.

5. See, for example, Caldwell 2004, Ries 2009, and Rivkin-Fish 2009. Thank you to Ann Marie Leshkowich for encouraging me to develop this point.

6. Between 1945 and 1964 the population of Vinh climbed from roughly 200 to 72 thousand before dropping again to a few hundred residents during U.S. aerial strikes, mainly civil servants and militia forces who defended the city (Phạm and Bùi 2003).

7. The first cement factory in Indochina was founded in Hải Phòng in 1899. Under the brand name "Dragon," the facility exported its modern construction technologies to wider Asian markets. The Hải Phòng factory, the only site of cement production in northern Vietnam at the time, was a target of repeated aerial strikes due to its industrial significance. After the war it was rebuilt with Romanian aid and remained in service until 1997.

8. Note one key difference in the context of Vinh: these were not *Plattenbau*, or prefabricated blocks (too expensive to produce and concrete was in short supply), but brick buildings with steel beams and reinforced concrete columns and floor plates.

9. During the war, many of these women served in the youth volunteer brigade in road construction or bomb disposal units.

10. During my fieldwork, apartments in Quang Trung were undergoing privatization as per Decree 61/CP. Given that the majority of residents were retirees on a monthly pension of 1.6–2 million đồng per month (US$80–100), the price per square meter (approximately 1 million đồng or US$50) was a source of much anxiety. Deductions based on length of public service were offered at a rate of 100 thousand đồng (US$5) per year of work (not including credits for "policy families," including families with martyrs, heroic mothers, or victims of Agent Orange). This woman will receive a credit of 4 million đồng (US$200) for her 40 years of government service.

REFERENCES CITED

Anderson, Ben
2006 'Transcending without Transcendence': Utopianism and an Ethos of Hope. Antipode 38(4):691–710.
Anderson, Ben, and Adam Holden
2008 Affective Urbanism and the Event of Hope. Space and Culture 11(2):142–159.
Bennett, Jane
2010 Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Berlant, Lauren
2006 Cruel Optimism. differences 17(3):20–36.
2007 Nearly Utopian, Nearly Normal: Post-Fordist Affect in *La Promesse* and *Rosetta*. Public Culture 19(2):273–301.
Bissell, William Cunningham
2011 Urban Design, Chaos, and Colonial Power in Zanzibar. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Buck-Morss, Susan
2002 Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West. Boston: MIT Press.
Caldwell, Melissa L.
2004 Not by Bread Alone: Social Support in the New Russia. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Castells, Manuel
    1977   The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach. Boston: MIT Press.
Castillo, Greg
    2007   Promoting Socialist Cities and Citizens: East Germany's National Building Pro-
            gram. *In* Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany. Pamela
            E. Swett, S. Jonathan Wiesen, and Jonathan R. Zatlin, eds. Pp. 287–306. Durham,
            NC: Duke University Press.
Crowley, David
    2008   Looking Down on Spaceship Earth: Cold War Landscapes. *In* Cold War Modern:
            Design 1945–1970. David Crowley and Jane Pavitt, eds. Pp. 249–267. London:
            V&A Publishing.
Fehérváry, Krisztina
    2012   From Socialist Modern to Super-Natural Organicism: Cosmological Transforma-
            tions Through Home Decor. Cultural Anthropology 27(4):615–641.
Feldman, Ilana, and Miriam Ticktin
    2010   Introduction: Government and Humanity. *In* In the Name of Humanity: The
            Government of Threat and Care. Ilana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin, eds. Pp.
            1–26. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Hardt, Michael
    1999   Affective Labor. Boundary 26(2):89–100.
Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri
    2000   Empire. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Harms, Erik
    2012a   Social Demolition: Creative Destruction and the Production of Value in Viet-
            namese Land Clearance. *In* State, Society and the Market in Contemporary Viet-
            nam. Hue-Tam Ho Tai and Mark Sidel, eds. Pp. 55–68. New York: Routledge.
    2012b   Beauty as Control in the New Saigon: Eviction, New Urban Zones, and Atomized
            Dissent in a Southeast Asian City. American Ethnologist 39(4):735–750.
Harvey, Penelope
    2010   Cementing Relations: The Materiality of Roads and Public Spaces in Provincial
            Peru. Social Analysis 54(2):28–46.
Humphrey, Caroline
    2005   Ideology in Infrastructure: Architecture and Soviet Imagination. Journal of the
            Royal Anthropological Institute 11(1):39–58.
Huyssen, Andreas
    2010   Authentic Ruins: Products of Modernity. *In* Ruins of Modernity. Julia Hell
            and Andreas Schönle, eds. Pp. 17–28. Durham, NC: Duke University
            Press.
Ihle, Astrid
    2002   Wandering the Streets of Socialism: A Discussion of the Street Photography of
            Arno Fischer and Ursula Arnold. *In* Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the
            Eastern Bloc. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds. Pp. 85–104. New York:
            Berg.
La Quán Miên
    1974   Ý nghĩa ban trưa trong sắc hồng viên gạch [The Meaning of Noontime among the
            Red Bricks]. Nghệ An Newspaper, April 9:3.
Le Corbusier
    1967   [1933] The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism to Be Used as the
            Basis of Our Machine-Age Civilization. Trans. Pamela Knight. New York: Orion
            Press.
Leshkowich, Ann Marie
    2011   Making Class and Gender: (Market) Socialist Enframing of Traders in Ho Chi
            Minh City. American Anthropologist 133(2):277–290.

275

Lowenthal, David
    1999   The Past Is a Foreign Country. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
Masco, Joseph
    2008   'Survival Is Your Business': Engineering Ruins and Affect in Nuclear America. Cultural Anthropology 23(2):361–398.
Massumi, Brian
    2002   Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Mazzarella, William
    2009   Affect: What Is It Good For? In Enchantments of Modernity: Empire, Nation, Globalization. Saurabh Dube, ed. Pp. 291–309. New York: Routledge.
Muehlebach, Andrea
    2011   On Affective Labor in Post-Fordist Italy. Cultural Anthropology 26(1):59–82.
Ong, Aihwa
    2006   Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Phạm Xuân Cần, and Bùi Đình Sâm
    2003   Lịch sử thành phố Vinh, 1945–1975 [History of Vinh City, 1945–1975]. Vinh: Nghệ An.
Quang Thành
    1978   Bàn tay người thợ xây [Hands of a Builder]. Nghệ An Newspaper, February 7:5.
Richard, Analiese, and Daromir Rudnyckyj
    2009   Economies of Affect. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 15(1): 57–77.
Ries, Nancy
    2009   Potato Ontology: Surviving Postsocialism in Russia. Cultural Anthropology 24(2):181–212.
Rivkin-Fish, Michele
    2009   Tracing Landscapes of the Past in Class Subjectivity: Practices of Memory and Distinction in Marketizing Russia. American Ethnologist 36(1):79–95.
Schwenkel, Christina
    2009   American War in Contemporary Vietnam: Transnational Remembrance and Reconciliation. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
    2012   Civilizing the City: Socialist Ruins and Urban Renewal in Central Vietnam. positions: asia critique 20(2):437–470.
Schwenkel, Christina, and Ann Marie Leshkowich
    2012   How Is Neoliberalism Good to Think Vietnam? How Is Vietnam Good to Think Neoliberalism? positions: asia critique 20(2):379–401.
Scott, James
    1998   Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
Sebald, W.G.
    2004   On the Natural History of Destruction. Anthea Bell, trans. New York: Modern Library.
Smith, David M.
    1996   The Socialist City. In Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies. Gregory Andrusz, Michael Harloe, and Ivan Szelenyi, eds. Pp. 70–99. New York: Blackwell.
Stenning, Alison
    2000   Placing (Post-)Socialism: The Making and Remaking of Nowa Huta, Poland. European Urban and Regional Studies 7(2):99–118.
Stoler, Ann Laura
    2004   Affective States. In A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics. David Nugent and Joan Vincent, eds. Pp. 4–20. New York: Blackwell.

2008   Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruinations. Cultural Anthropology 23(2):191–219.

Ten Dyke, Elizabeth
2001   Dresden: Paradoxes of Memory in History. London: Routledge.

Thrift, Nigel
2004   Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect. Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography 86(1):57–78.

UN Habitat – Localizing Agenda 21
2001   Revitalization of Quang Trung Housing Estate. Leuven: UN Habitat.

Zhang, Li
2006   Contesting Spatial Modernity in Late-Socialist China. Current Anthropology 47(3):461–484.