

Gentrification in a World Heritage Site: The Strategy for Preserving the Hue Citadel in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

This article describes gentrification around the Hue citadel in central Vietnam, which is now designated as World Heritage. Gentrification occurs across almost all urban areas and is taking place in Hue through the relocation of residents from the heritage area by the government in order to preserve cultural heritage against the pressures of urbanization. Based on qualitative methods with in-depth interviews and document analysis, this research article examines the initiation and evolution of the gentrification process in Hue, where the state takes the lead and follows four stages: (1) compensation, (2) resettlement, (3) displacement, and (4) renovation. Gentrification of the area brings positive outcomes for the urban façade and provides benefits for the city; on the other hand, it impacts neighborhoods and residents in many ways. Gentrification not only depends on the activities and directions of the state, but also requires and influences the consent of the people. Hence, gentrification is a complicated and endless process which causes many social conflicts. However, it is a Western concept, so it is necessary to investigate and develop it appropriately in the context of Vietnam, an Asian country.

Keywords: Gentrification, World Heritage site, Strategy, Preservation, Hue citadel, Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

Hue is the capital city of Thua Thien Hue province in central Vietnam and is well-known for its beautiful landscapes and complex of monuments, recognized as a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1993. Of all the buildings in the complex, the citadel on the north bank of the Huong River is widely considered to be the most special. The citadel was constructed over 27 years (1805-1832) and has an area of over 500 hectares, with a circumference of ten kilometers. The Hue citadel is significant for

its historical and architectural value and was built to protect the administration offices and activities of the Nguyen Dynasty, the last feudal dynasty of Vietnam (Phan, 2009).

The citadel plays an important role as the greatest monument of the dynasty (Phan, 2015) and is a popular tourist destination. It is located in the center of the city and encompasses numerous other sites within it, such as the Imperial City, Forbidden Purple City, Royal Canal, palaces, moats, lakes, and an esplanade. Moreover, the citadel is also a residential area with public activities. Its residents are densely concentrated, with more than 65,000 people in only four wards (Thua Thien Hue Statistical Office, 2015). They embody and live the site's cultural heritage and apply it to their contemporary lives.

Under the pressure of urbanization, the value of real estate in Hue has increased, leading to concern about the damage and destruction of the heritage site. Not only is the area's cultural heritage under threat, but people's lives are becoming more cramped and difficult. People living in heritage zones are expanding their living space, and illegally renovating their houses despite building and heritage zoning laws. There is an increasingly acute conflict between urbanization processes and the protection of heritage. People living inside the citadel are proud of their city's heritage but still break zoning laws. The state has a policy of moving residences located on heritage land and compensating affected households, but some local people do not agree. On the other hand, the government's urban management policies on construction density, height of buildings, numbers of stories, etc. do not satisfy the needs of the area's inhabitants.

Encroachment on heritage comes about due to shifts in perception of the production and reproduction of space surrounding capital accumulation (Lefebvre, 1991; Luxemburg, 2003). Local authorities have tried several regulatory solutions to the problem but conflict continues between local residents, government, and other organizations. Each party to the conflict has their own thoughts and perspectives, and ways of practicing heritage; there are many questions around what heritage is. Most local people do not want to leave their homes. They want a stable life in the place where they were born and are uncertain about leaving. They do not want to be moved far away from opportunities for work and life in the city center. Meanwhile, heritage protection organizations want to preserve and protect historical monuments. Then, the government has to balance resident's lives with material heritage preservation: they try to move people out of designated heritage areas, change those areas to better preserve that heritage and primarily aim to develop tourism revenue. A potential result of this work is gentrification by the auspices and management of the state. This article focuses on the initiation and evolution of gentrification in Hue, tracing its characteristics, as well as the details and consequences of the government's preservation strategy.

Figure 1

A view of the Hue citadel.



LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of gentrification was created by Ruth Glass in the 1960s and originally related to the influx of middle-class residents displacing working class ones in urban London (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005; Glass, 1964). Since then it has been recognized as occurring in four waves (Hackworth & Smith, 2002; Lees et al., 2008; 2010) and sometimes a fifth (Aalbers, 2019). The first-wave was sporadic gentrification mainly in small neighborhoods in Europe and the United States in the 1970s. The second was a scaled gentrification from the mid-1980s where a more laissez-faire form extended geographically across a larger part of more cities internationally. Gentrification expanded into cultural and commercial spheres. The third wave happened from early on in the 1990s, more linked to large-scale capital than ever, as large developers reworked entire neighborhoods, often with state support. Aalbers (2019) argues that this fourth wave was “simply a continuation or even intensification of third-wave gentrification” (Aalbers, 2019: 6) and that many nations were in crisis in the late 1990s (e.g., the 1997 Asian financial crisis) or in the early 2000s (e.g., the 2001 dot-com crash). They describe fifth-wave gentrification as where the state plays a leading role, supplemented – rather than displacing – the private sector. Aalbers (2019) notes that contemporary gentrification includes the rise of corporate landlords, highly leveraged housing, platform capitalism, and transnational wealth elites using urban property as safety deposit boxes, a deepened naturalization of state-sponsored gentrification. Contemporary gentrification is also imagined as the urban materialization of financialized or finance-led capitalism. It is a continuation or intensification of fourth-wave gentrification and third-wave gentrification centering on the role of the (local) state as instigator, catalyst or sponsor of the socio-spatial restructuring of the urban.

Through gentrification, urban areas seem to change externally and internally with “the definition of gentrification itself in order to include other/new forms of

social upgrading, other/new actors and other/new spaces” (Rérat et al, 2010: 336). These traditional definitions of gentrification are most relevant to the direct displacement of low-income earners from their homes (Hackworth & Smith, 2002). Currently gentrification is substantially supported by state or local governments based on urban restructuring policies aimed at dispersing lower-income residents out of the inner city and into the suburbs, as well as the redevelopment of the city to foster mobility between the center and suburbia (Lees et al., 2010). Due to this process three crucial effects emerge, causing contestation: displacement, social changes, and economic shifts. Gentrification is happening in heritage cities across the world including Hue in Vietnam.

STUDIES OF GENTRIFICATION IN HERITAGE CONTEXTS OF ASIA

According to Yip & Tran (2015), gentrification is still being debated in different contexts. This goes farther than urban regeneration (Maloutas, 2011) but includes discussion of socio-cultural background (Lees et al., 2008). Gentrification was created in a Western context then went on to pervade widely elsewhere. In Asian countries, especially Vietnam, gentrification is a new concept and there is no exact translation or definition of it (Dao & Nguyen, 2018). For the cities of east Asia, the most common form of gentrification discussed in the academic literature is new-build gentrification, considered to be part of third-wave gentrification: examples have been discussed in Japan (Fujitsuka, 2005; Lutzeler, 2008), Singapore (Wong, 2006), South Korea (Kyung & Kim, 2011; Shin, 2007), and China (He, 2010). These studies’ discussions of third-wave contemporary gentrification is not like the classic concept of Ruth Glass, as those doing the gentrifying are already wealthy (Moore, 2013), and the process is abetted by private developers and/or the state, “rather than spearheaded by the households investing their ‘sweat equity’ into rehabilitating run-down houses” (Moore, 2013: 119-120).

Some of the research on gentrification in east Asia also focuses on gentrification at heritage sites. Through a study on Rattanakosin Island in Bangkok, Thailand, which is where the original capital was founded in the year 1782, Herzfeld (2010) notes that gentrification is also associated with issues of “beautification” and the improvement of the area, which was marked as a historic preservation zone by the government. The process began at Rachadamoen Road at Pom Mahakan with the building of a park, where a community of 300 people already existed. This community’s potential displacement led to arguments about the preservation of national history, environmental protectionism and economic development (Bristol, 2007). As with other literature on new-build gentrification, states the political ideologies behind such plans: “It is no coincidence that heritage has also gained great prominence as neoliberal forces ... have seized upon the commercial value with which it invests what had hitherto been treated as dilapidated old properties” (Herzfeld, 2010: 262). In this case study, due to the support of local and international organizations, and the work of the community itself, displacement was avoided and “new plans were drawn up in consultation with the community that would ensure they could remain” (Moore, 2013: 122).

Displacement issues also exist at other heritage sites in Southeast Asia countries as shown in “The Global Survey on Forced Evictions No.8” (Center on Housing Rights

and Evictions, 2002), which considers gentrification, redevelopment and urban beautification. This project highlights similar cases in countries including the Philippines, Malaysia and Myanmar, where evictions have taken place in order to facilitate various development projects. Around and in the heritage sites, especially areas which are listed as World Heritage, such as George Town (Malaysia), Angkor Wat (Cambodia), Hoi An (Vietnam), and Luang Prabang (Laos), there are many hotels, galleries, coffee shops, souvenir shops opening. In Luang Prabang, according to Suntikul & Jachna (2013), gentrification has led to contestation among entrepreneurs and with Heritage House, the heritage regulation body that determines how they can use and modify the buildings they use. For Suntikul & Jachna (2013), “understanding heritage in terms of collaborative, rather than adversarial, processes, could contribute to more socially sustainable conservation practices, and makes recommendations for institutional and organizational changes that could support such a culture of negotiation and collaboration in heritage conservation in Luang Prabang” (Suntikul & Jachna, 2013: 57).

In Vietnam gentrification has taken place for more than half a century but has seen little scholarly attention (it can be argued gentrification occurs in almost all urban areas globally, regardless of whether it is identified as such). This article focuses on the case of Hue citadel and efforts to protect the World Heritage area under the pressure of urbanization and the issues surrounding this phenomenon and associated displacement of residents.

RESEARCH METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION

This study was conducted in the Hue citadel area over a period of almost three years. The research design was primarily qualitative (Monette et al., 2005). According to Alasuutari (1998) and Ospina (2004), this is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning-meaning, that is, how actors practice and react to processes of gentrification. Structured data was collected from primary documents (governmental policies on conservation and urban management, heritage laws, statistics, and planning maps) and from organization sources (government organs such as the People Committee, Division of Urban Management, Department of Construction, Institute of Construction and Planning, Monuments Conservation Center, as well as other related organizations such as educational organizations and an urban research center). Data was also generated from the inhabitants of the citadel heritage zones themselves. Gentrification in the Hue citadel is a long and complicated process. Accordingly, this study focuses on three main groups of stakeholders: residents who are not yet in conflict, those that are already in some form of conflict; and those who have already resolved or been affected by gentrification-related conflict. These people have directly witnessed and confronted not only gentrification but also other changes to the citadel area.

Fieldwork involved dividing time between local people and policy makers and other stakeholders concerned with urban issues in Hue. The main period of fieldwork was from March 2019 to September 2019. I lived in the Hue citadel area for two months earlier in 2018 before writing the research proposal. As an architect with many years of experience in Hue in urban planning and heritage conservation, I was in a strong position to undertake the research. In order to be close with locals and understand

their lives, I stayed with a family right in the citadel area, where the gentrification process was ongoing. The family arranged a room for me and generously supported my stay even though they themselves are not wealthy. I quickly became acquainted with area and performed many interviews in people's homes, at coffee shops and beer shops, very popular for locals gathering in the evenings. I also had the opportunity to follow local people to meetings concerning gentrification.

I carried out in-depth interviews with a total of 67 people, following the form of unstructured interviews and semi-structured open-ended interviews (Kitchin & Tate, 2000), however, not all interviews generated data for this particular article. Interviews were limited to 60 minutes at a time. There were many cases when interviews ended early. The conversations were mostly audio recorded with the permission of the interviewees and I took notes in a notebook. There were some cases when I was not given consent to record. Because of the different styles of qualitative interview techniques conducted with respondents, I had to carefully screen and clarify the generated data to ensure it was useful for this research.

Approaching busy stakeholders such as policy makers, local government officers and political leaders was facilitated by the previous relationships I had with them. This was also an advantage for finding documents related to gentrification. Occasionally documents were issued too long ago and mislaid. During the course of my fieldwork I augmented my interviews by observing the behavior of residents and stakeholders. In addition, I reviewed what was released in the media on the topic. Overall, data was collected by the most appropriate methodological strategy to the aims of the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

INITIATION AND EVOLUTION OF GENTRIFICATION IN THE HUE CITADEL AREA

After reunification in 1975, Vietnam's economy had to be revived to overcome the consequences of a prolonged war. Although the issue of heritage was paid attention to at that time, it was not considered urgent. People had lived around heritage areas for a long time and some of those communities were still growing. The settlement of people at heritage sites is now legal at different levels: (1) granting heritage buildings as collective homes for government officials, (2) legal settlement (staying with a land certificate), and (3) illegal settlement (occupation, encroachment, and building brand new households). In addition, heritage areas can also host public and social welfare buildings (state agencies, hospitals, schools, community security office, family worship houses, etc.).

Since the early 1990s, conservation has been more attended to. Heritage sites in Hue city were graded into three zones to further protect them.

The zoning and protection of Hue citadel relics under management of Hue Monument Conservation Center have been implemented and the scope of protection at this time was in accordance with regulations of the Ordinance on the Protection and Use of Cultural and Historic Monuments, issued on April 4, 1984 by the State Council (Phan, 2015: 12).

According to UNESCO requirements, all inhabitations in zone 1 of a heritage area must be cleared. Displacement has become a strategy “with purposes as restoring the original status quo for the monuments, bringing the beauty for city, and attracting tourists, coming up with a profitable investment strategy in economic terms for those areas” (Phan, 2015: 1). When property owners begin to capitalize on such supposed public improvements, the local authorities, representing the state, become partner gentrifiers. Displacement and gentrification are linear and sequential, but either can happen first (Zuk & Chapple, 2015). In the case of the citadel, both have occurred simultaneously over a long period.

The third wave of gentrification in the 1990s was on a large global scale at and extended into the cultural and commercial spheres with strong state involvement (Aalbers, 2019; Hackworth & Smith, 2002; Moore, 2013). State-led gentrification began to take place in Hue at around the same time, originally aiming to use heritage as a conservation strategy. Mr. Phan Thanh Hai, former Director of the Hue Monument Conservation Center (HMCC), stated that “this work is really complicated because it involves people and neighborhood factors” (Phan, 2015: 2). Gentrification in the Hue citadel continued with the active support of the state, but faced many socio-economic challenges and resistance from the people. At the beginning, the conservation work mainly focused on the restoration of monuments. When the Law on Cultural Heritage came into being, and with the socio-economic development of Vietnam after the 2000s, the process was promoted more strongly and effectively. Gentrification was enforced strictly with the consensus of more people, but still encountered obstacles. Most of the population in the citadel area are low-income laborers and government officials, so living space for them is a big asset and generally difficult to obtain. During this process, according to Mr. Phan Thanh Hai, “displacement and resettlement are the most difficult because those are related to issues such as finance, resettlement land fund, policies to support job change, and relocation” (Phan, 2015: 8).

Hue’s heritage gentrification plan changed over time because it was not implemented on schedule and missed its deadlines. After a prolonged time it was still not complete. However, it can be seen that the promulgation of policies that are reasonable, coherent, and suitable with people’s aspirations is a great support to the process. Besides that, the initial capital factor is an important prerequisite. The more favorable the state economy is, the more drastic the state policies and guidelines are, and the more effective the process is.

Since the year 2010, gentrification has become a top strategic task in Vietnam, aiming to preserve and promote the value of heritage, while building Hue city (urban level 1) into a municipality. As a gentrifier, the state issued many supportive policies for capital and orientation for the task, like Decision No.1918/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People’s Committee, 2011) which approved VND 784.4 billion (approximately USD 35 million) for compensation, resettlement, and displacement, and VND 498 billion (approximately USD 25 million) for renovating heritage in the 2012-2015 period. The year 2018 marked an especially important milestone for this work. Gentrification in Hue citadel at this time was acclaimed by the press and media as a “historic migration” (Linh, 2018; Chau & Duong, 2018).

Senior government officials and local authorities constantly visited and observed the site. The local government in conjunction with the HMCC was

determined to thoroughly implement the program according to the proposed plan. The head of local government (Chairman of the Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee) often directly approached people to listen, persuade and direct the gentrification process. Thereby, changes in conservation and site clearance were basically aimed at improving socio-economic capital as well as enhancing national cultural and historical values. A common opinion of most stakeholders I met with was: "This is necessary work". These included local government representatives, monument managers, architects, and cultural researchers; even from the many people who have suffered perceived disadvantage because of the work. In general, under the perspective of conservation and socio-economic development, gentrification is can be seen as right and reasonable, at least according to recent development trends.

So far, gentrification in the citadel area has resulted in many positive and clear changes. Many guidance policies came from the state to the local government and were implemented in a definitive, specific and detailed way. This shows the role of the state in the gentrification process. Yet it also causes troubled for some who were not satisfied with the benefits. The state has tried to build consensus in those cases and push their planned gentrification through. Currently, in parallel with the implementation of the plans up to 2020 (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2018; 2019b), the state is completing the "Tasks of Planning for the preservation and value development of Complex of Hue Monuments to 2030, vision 2050" with a final referendum. Once more, the process of gentrification in the Hue citadel area has been implemented under the close direction of the state. It is a process of state-led gentrification.

DOCUMENTING HUE HERITAGE GENTRIFICATION

Gentrification is a complicated process and in Hue it is often implemented by the state, aimed at maintaining heritage. There are many documents on regulation and policy at many levels, from the international community (organizations like UNESCO etc.) as well as national and local authorities. This article only presents the most important documents related to the case study, which are the main urban development policies on the gentrification issue at the heritage site.

The "Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage" (UNESCO, 1972) is a regulation that directs nation, provincial, and local governments to implement conservation tasks involving gentrification. It emphasizes the integrity and authenticity of heritage. This was reasserted in the Retrospective Statement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Complex of Hue monuments that was approved at the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee in Doha, Qatar on 15-25 June 2014. Accordingly, the phrase "re-zoning the protected area" emerged, considered to be "in order to control increasing urbanization and development of infrastructure, as recommended by the Advisory Body, ICOMOS" (Hue Monuments Conservation Center, 2015: 29). Central state and province authorities have thoroughly applied the regulations set in the international framework to which Vietnam committed to regarding the preservation of the Hue citadel, particularly the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. At the same time, the Government of Vietnam issued legal documents and regulations at

central and local levels in order to give strong protection to the Outstanding Universal Value of the heritage property (UNESCO, 2013).

Another important text is from the national level: the Law on Cultural Heritage No. 28/2001/QH10 (Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2001) and the Law on Amendment and Supplement of Law on Cultural Heritage No. 32/2009/QH12 (Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2009). Another is decree No. 98/2010/NĐ-CP of 21 September 2010 that details articles of the above two laws. Regarding gentrification in the heritage area of Hue citadel, the Law especially regulates the management and protection of the core zone and buffer zone of the heritage property (Article 32). This influenced the state's choice of physical territory to gentrify. Other important national documents are the Land Laws, which were issued in 1993 (revised in 1998), 2003, and 2013 (Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 1993; 2003; 2013).

Besides these, three years after the site's inclusion in the World Heritage List, the "Master Plan for the Preservation and Enhancement of the Complex of Hue Monuments' Values in the Period 1996-2010" was officially approved by the Government of Vietnam. Following this, the "Adjusted Master Plan for the Preservation and Enhancement of the Complex of Hue Monuments' Values in the Period 2010-2020" was also approved, allowing budgetary spending thousands of billion VND for the protection and promotion of the site, especially for compensation, displacement, and preservation. By Decision No.1918/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2011), the People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue Province approved the renovation and embellishment of the Hue citadel system.

In addition, in the spirit and atmosphere of the event considered a "historic migration" by the press and media in 2018, one extremely important state policy must be mentioned: the agreement to approve a policy framework for compensation, resettlement, clearance and conservation for the Hue monuments through Official Dispatch No.1771/TTg-CN (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2018). This policy served as a foundation for local authorities and relevant agencies to carry out gentrification in Hue citadel in recent years with many positive results. Currently, local authorities are also implementing new strategic goals in heritage conservation with a vision to 2050 (information from HMCC) due to Decision No.649/QĐ-TTg (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2015).

There are many other decisions, decrees, and documents regarding gentrification at the citadel. Moreover, assistance provided from many countries and international organizations have also been important. Nevertheless, all of the regulations in place are led by the laws mentioned above. While Hue citadel's gentrification has many actors involved, it is still government-sponsored, with elements of neoliberal urbanism, which also pays a great deal of attention to the role of local government.

GENTRIFICATION IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Through regulations and policies from all management levels, state-led gentrification in Vietnam has risen and fallen over time until the present work of heritage conservation. With a priority mission of 'returning to the original status quo', gentrification is associated with the removal of residences in heritage areas by capital

investment from the state, which aims to manage and develop heritage. In the citadel area's early period of gentrification, the socio-economic context was characterized by many difficulties, and particularly in the early *doi moi* period (the name given to the economic reforms initiated in 1986 aimed at creating a "socialist-oriented market economy"), conservation work focused on restoring monuments and relics damaged by time and war. At that time, displacements were not recognized with the same attention. After the fluctuations in the real estate market in 1995 and an historic flood in 1999, demand for residential space increased sharply, land became expensive, and living space became a valuable asset, complicating gentrification. The biggest problems were that there was no strict management mechanism in urban management and issues related to capital and finance (Phan, 2015). Since 2000, site clearance work has progressed; the results of relocation from 2002 to 2018 was 561 households.

Thus, despite being focused, gentrification is still implemented in a long and fragmentary way. In a report by the Director of the HMCC in 2015, he admitted that "the issue of relocation and clearance of households in Hue citadel area has been concerned and implemented for many years, but the number of relocated households is only a small part" (Phan, 2015: 7). Obviously, heritage conservation through state-led gentrification confronts many internal difficulties where the human issue is important (Phan, 2015). Apart from its positive consequences, Vietnam's gentrification has still encountered disagreements, even resistance. Although it is from a minority, resistance shows the gaps in policy and regulation from the state, which is not satisfying all of its citizens' needs. This should be addressed and clarified. Gentrification in this way requires the coordination of all agencies, organizations and related individuals, to work decisively and systematically. During this period, responding to UNESCO, the Provincial People's Committee also issued a specific report and set a clear orientation for the above work (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2007).

Since 2018, the local government has launched its "historic migration" with great determination, persuading people with the help of its policy framework program and individual provincial leaders. According to Decision No.370/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019a), gentrification would end up displacing about 4,201 households in the citadel (2,188 main households, 2,013 secondary households) with a total investment of about VND 4,097 billion (approximately USD 200 million) from 2019 to 2025. The state is determined to pursue heritage to the extent of 'returning to the original status quo'. In addition, according to the tentative plan of "tasks of planning for the preservation and value development of Complex of Hue Monuments to 2030, vision 2050", conservation is divided into three phases, showing that the process of gentrification is clearly planned. Phase 1 (1996-2010) and phase 2 (2010-2020) have been and are being implemented, to be on schedule to enter phase 3 (after 2020) – the key of the main goal of gentrification: promoting heritage to create the most effective capital accumulation.

Evidently, the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Law and other construction management policies, in addition to the financial support from foreign organizations, have helped state-led gentrification work comply with the goals, strategies and visions set out by the state. On the one hand, heritage work protects and preserve heritage to benefit from heritage; on the other hand, it is to promote socio-economic development

for the locality in particular and the country in general. Obstacles encountered in the implementation process require consideration and the appropriate and reasonable adjustment of policies and mechanisms. State-led gentrification's advantages and disadvantages are influenced by the management policies of the authorities. However, gentrification also depends on the people. The consensus and support of the people is a prerequisite condition for successful gentrification. Gentrification and conservation is a complicated process, requiring the division of many steps to be performed in an orderly way, and sometimes concurrently.

THE FOUR STAGES OF STATE-LED GENTRIFICATION IN HUE CITADEL

Since the beginning of Hue citadel's gentrification, which is similar to the third-wave gentrification in Southeast and East Asia, the participation of the state has been strong (Moore, 2013). Local and national state agents use their regulatory and financial powers to enable – and indeed, to boost – profits made by private developers, and state assistance (or some other form of assistance) is increasingly necessary (Hackworth & Smith, 2002). Especially for Vietnam – a country with only one party that has been leading the nation – land is managed by the state (Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 1987; 1993; 2003; 2013) and the whole process is realized by government through guidance and policies (e.g. Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2018; 2019a; 2019b). Gentrification is more difficult and complicated because it concerns human and heritage factors. In Decision No.370/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019a), the first object was issued as follows:

Preserving and protecting the most intact historical values and the cultural preservation of Vietnam left by our predecessors for the future; relocating households living in zone 1 of the relic to new residential areas to stabilize and improve the quality of life of people; protecting the environment, embellishing the landscape; promoting the value of monuments, creating tourism products; creating a driving force for socio-economic development.

Accordingly, gentrification must be implemented scientifically, reasonably, and effectively (Phan, 2015). Four stages can be described in state-led gentrification: (1) compensation, (2) resettlement, (3) displacement, and (4) renovation.

COMPENSATION

Smith (1979) explained that gentrification revolves around factors of supply and demand and the movement of capital. Indeed, capital is a very important part of gentrification, concerning many factors. As mentioned, living space is a kind of capital for the residents in Hue citadel. Hence, when gentrification occurs in heritage areas, the local government pays special attention to compensation. "This is the first and foremost mission of the process", a governor said. This stage is extremely important and compensation should be derived from objective assessments done by the state on the prospective inconvenience afflicted on the people. During data collection, I

repeatedly participated in residential group meetings and heard their thoughts on displacement issues.

Our ancestors have a saying, “an cu lac nghiep” (Vietnamese idiom: living and working in peace and contentment). A change of residence is a difficult time. Leaving a familiar place to go to a new place, everything has to be acquainted to and adapted to once again from the beginning: from place to work, household registration, and transaction address... A move is a loss... How could we not worry?

That was the opinion of a representative in the citadel area that received the consent of many people at a spontaneous group meeting. Local residents worry when confronted by gentrification. They want a stable life without abrupt change. Most are free laborers and for them accommodation is a grand asset which is not only valued according to the market, but also by spiritual value, the value of place. The location they live in is the city center, which gives them the opportunity to make a better and more active living than they could in the surrounding areas (at least according to their thinking). They worried about trading away their homes to the state and thought it would bring them many troubles and disorder. In traditional conceptions of the Vietnamese people, a desirable life is one with continued stability and changelessness. My research participants were skeptical about a new life in a new place. Citadel area residents weighed the gains and losses in the compensation offer presented to them; or more precisely, the justice in the exchange. From this perspective, compensation had to not only provide money based on land value, but also compensate potential career and life complications caused by moving.

According to a Vietnamese dictionary, compensation is “a full return, commensurate with loss, or strenuous effort” (Hoang, 2003). Fairness is decided by consensus between the parties involved in a compensation process. In the citadel case study, agreement occurred between the people and the state and the basis of asset valuation was national law. However, here, if we also consider land assets as homes, places with cultural and spiritual value, then compensation justice becomes abstract and difficult. This is an issue that requires a high degree of consistency in finding a satisfactory compromise between the displaced receiving side (people) and the displacing compensating side (state).

On the government side, in addition to clear regulations in the relevant laws (Article 74, 83, 114 of the Land Law, 2013), local government has issued clear policies and mechanisms to assess people’s property in order that compensation offers are carried out as objectively as possible, ensuring fairness and satisfaction (according to a city government representative interviewed). For residential space, almost households legally located in the citadel area have the option to be compensated with cash or with land in neighboring wards within the city (for instance in Kim Long, An Hoa, or Huong So wards). In addition, the state also supports people with other costs such as loss of physical assets, transportation and renting costs when building new houses. In particular, through the direction of the Prime Minister, the previously mentioned policy framework has framed the compensation mechanism. This policy has brought many advantages not only for the local authorities and related organizations but also to the consensus and satisfaction of the majority of people in this area. Accordingly, Decision No.370/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial

People's Committee, 2019a) specifies the state's compensation fund for the period 2019-2025 must total VND 2,735 billion (approximately USD 130 million). This is largest ever compensation fund in Vietnam. Thus, capital is an important factor in the gentrification process.

Since the implementation of the policy framework, gentrification has generally proceeded smoothly. In order to ensure accurate and just compensation, the government conducted surveys on households in the citadel area. The number of houses affected by gentrification was found to be 2,938 households, with 10,955 people, including 4,600 unskilled labors, accounting for 42 percent of the total, 304 business households, and 1,208 people without a job, 11 percent of the total (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019a). The government has also estimated the disruption to people's lives: "the relocation of households approximately 3-5 kilometers away to Huong So ward, should not significantly affect the employment of households with unskilled laborers such as masons, carpenters, cyclo drivers, bike taxi drivers" (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019a). The also state plans to support the livelihoods of relocaed people with concrete policy. The government has stated they plan to provide the most advantages for relocated people as possible, in terms of logistics, compensation, and employment.

The reality of compensation work for Hue citadel was done well with effort put in by the authorities and the people, especially after implementing the policy framework. Most locals interviewed said something like: "This time, seeing how the government is working decisively, the provincial chairman himself came to campaign, we believe in it and are excited". However, there were still some cases of disapproval of the compensation mechanism and struggles to reach consent. This has somewhat hindered the gentrification process in the city, affecting conservation according to the government strategy.

Hence, given compensation relates to the living conditions of the people, and the goal of satisfaction of the people, it was prioritized on the basis of equality and democracy. The basis of its implementation is state laws and policies. During implementation, economic and capital issues are still an important issue for managers. Given limited finances, the management of capital to meet the work is very important. If the compensation work is not resolved completely, it will be a serious obstacle to further steps. For assets that can be clearly assessed, the compensation process is well-grounded; but on abstract matters, the compromise between the stakeholders, namely the state and the people, is very sensitive. There is always the problem of justice and social order, and that is also the basis of social conflicts, sometimes serious ones. However, under the strict management mechanism of Vietnamese society today, compliance and respect for the law are always top priority. In this case study of state-led gentrification, the state directs and sometimes imposes its powers and responsibilities, forcing the people to comply.

RESETTLEMENT

People live in the citadel area due to a long process of migration and settlement throughout history, which has created Hue city today. Gentrification, or in this case, "reclaiming zone one of heritage", is an important preservation task, requiring the removal of settlements that have existed for decades. Resettlement is the step

following compensation: preparing a new place for people to live after relocating. According to one government representative, “the state appoints representatives many times to consult with the people about the location of the resettlement area and understand their needs”. Finding land for resettlement is challenging in the city center, so most of the selected land is only in the vicinity of the city, mainly vacant space and agricultural land. In this regard, the province government assigns the city government the task of preparing and building infrastructure to welcome new residents.

Only sporadic displacements occurred before 2018 and households were returned living space with a mixed land fund in wards around the city such as Kim Long and Phu Hau wards. The state prepared specific infrastructure in Huong So ward and people could buy land at preferential prices. After 2018, the policy framework allowed gentrification to be carried out on a large scale throughout the city; resettlement is specifically planned for by the state up to 2025 with a total investment of VND 1,362 billion for 105 hectares in two phases. Funds are borrowed from the state treasury; from selling tickets to visit monuments and tourism services; and from the provincial budget and other lawful sources (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People’s Committee, 2019a).

Although the government has issued specific mechanisms and policies to support resettlement (thorough consideration of the location of resettlement sites through consultation with residents and the analyses of planning experts; preventing resettlements at too great a distance; not negatively affecting people’s lives), it is always a difficult task. It requires consensus from many sides, by people with different statuses, occupations, lives and social needs. Resettlement is not only about capital and human resources but also land. To have new land meeting the criteria of all stakeholders requires the state to be careful. When new land is acquired for planning, the state tries to minimize compensation for the owners of the land, especially the impact on living space. Compensation work that the state must carry out at new planning sites for infrastructure mainly relates to compensating for previous agricultural land and cemeteries (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People’s Committee, 2018; 2019b). After obtaining suitable land, the state proceeds with planning and building infrastructure. For some areas, the state not only allocates land but also pre-builds houses to shorten the time and effort for relocating people. In new planning areas, the state has built a full range of social welfare projects to serve people in health care, education, etc. The province government directs the city government to support legal procedures on land and housing for the people as much as possible (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People’s Committee, 2019a).

At the time of fieldwork, while new infrastructure has not yet been established, the authorities regularly urge people to “return the monuments” and promise to “prepare new facilities carefully for the people”. As mentioned above, many residents were nervous and skeptical. “Having nice land to build whatever we want on it would make me very happy”, one man told me. “Yet we don’t know whether to eat ‘drawing cake’ or not ... They talked about us being displaced a very long time ago, but we did not know when it would happen. To stay is impossible; to move is also not possible... We hope that this time they do it definitively.”

Previous gentrification took too long, resulting in reduced confidence level by the people. Once again, the people’s desire for *an cu lac nghiep* (living and working in

peace and contentment) is emphasized, they want a life associated with *an cu* (living in peace). Thus, credibility is important: people want to see resettlement in the actual actions of the state, with their own eyesight, not by words or documents on paper.

From the perspective of urban planning and urbanization, relocating people from the citadel area to the surrounding areas is reasonable for the city's urban aesthetic and identity, and reducing overcrowding. But individuals shared more ambivalent feelings with me: "They force us to leave, we have to move, but we have been familiar with this place for a long time. Here is the city center, we earn money from our small shop, if we move there what we would do." Another respondent told me that "this area is very good for our children with the education environment, and all living activities are comfortable". Relocating sometimes means agreeing with the government and sometimes being forced to accept.

State-led gentrification, on the one hand, convinces people to comply with the state's intentions and plans by the words and actions of authorities, and the power of state organizations; on the other hand, it creates pressure to comply with the law. Indirect intermediary means including guidelines and documents try to reach a consensus with the people. The appearance of the policy framework of the Prime Minister shows the interest and active support from the government, and bodes well for smoother and clearer resettlement and gentrification progress. Resettlement from the gentrification process of the Hue citadel is important and required for people when they are displaced.

DISPLACEMENT

The relationship between displacement and gentrification may appear linear and sequential but in many cases displacement precedes gentrification and sometimes they occur simultaneously (Zuk & Chapple, 2015). Contemporary ideas of gentrification (Aalbers, 2019; Hackworth & Smith, 2002; Moore, 2013; Rérat et al., 2010) concern land issues to do with investment, reinvestment and the movement of people to be replaced by another group. Reinvestment brings a new face to a place with advantages for urban areas.

In this case study, displacement is one stage of state-led gentrification aimed at preserving heritage. More precisely, displacement is the most important step of gentrification. It aims to open space up for reinvestment for developing and promoting heritage to better benefit from it.

It can be said that displacement is the idea of evicting people from their current living space. However, in Vietnam, state land acquisition is completely reasonable under the land law that has existed for decades (see Article 62 of Land Law, 2013). In the state-led gentrification process for the Hue citadel area, the government justifies its acquisitions with supposedly positive results such as implementing heritage laws, protecting monuments, beautifying urban areas, and promoting social development. To accomplish displacement, the state needs to first perform compensation and resettlement. More than 1,000 households had been displaced from the heritage area by 2019 according to Dr. Phan Tien Dung, Director of Thua Thien Hue Department of Sport and Culture (via the *Nguoi Do Thi* Newspaper (Thong, 2018)).

During the first phase of gentrification from 2000-2010 displacement only took place in a few key sites of the monument area. After 2010, with special support from

Decision No.1918/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2011), displacement was larger. After 2018, the process has still been going smoothly.

Displacement has recently been referred to as an historic migration with images of "leadership near the people". The government gives extra cash rewards to households that move from the heritage area early, trying to entice displacement and create a positive climate. The press and media constantly report on the work of clearing the Hue citadel area with spirit. Most people are happy to move only due to improved compensation and resettlement through investment policies and large capital support. The more thorough and quick the clearance, the more effective the gentrification process is (Phan, 2015). The electronic information portal of Thua Thien Hue province has an article "Moving as Soon as Beneficial for Locals"; this was also a quote from the provincial chairman at a meeting on April 9, 2020.

Some people have not responded to the call to leave the area, due to personal reasons. The illegal settlements in the citadel area also pose a difficult problem for the government. Households that lack legal status have no legal basis in which to be compensated, so moving them on from the area is complicated. Moreover, according to Mr. Phan Thanh Hai (2015), the state planned to retain 30 percent of cases in some areas in accordance with the planning, ensuring the preservation and promotion of the value of the relic (in the Ty Ba Trang area). This is considered a suitable orientation for developing the strength of the monument, but also a sensitive issue when conducting this gentrification work.

The main job of displacement is clearing the heritage area and returning it to its original setting. It is the third step of state-led gentrification and a premise for the final step of reinvestment; or more exactly, it is the restoration and beautification of a heritage area to develop economic benefits through beautifying a urban space. This is a participatory step to accumulate capital, the essence of gentrification and an important task of the heritage preservation strategy.

RENOVATION

The ultimate goal of gentrification is to create value and capital accumulation through urban renewal. The state-led heritage gentrification of Hue citadel aims to restore the site to its past heritage the Cultural Heritage Act (2001 and 2009) and at the request of UNESCO. This work is part of the heritage preservation strategy for Hue city. After populations are displaced, the area needs to be accurately restored to its former heritage status. When people move from the area, they often leave disorder behind. A key job of the state-led gentrification is to deal with this disorder through renovation. Renovation reclaims the site's heritage, returning its soul, through the restoration of monuments and landscaping, then using and exploiting the area to maximize its "outstanding universal value" (UNESCO, 2013).

Local authorities highlighted renovation objectives in the Plan No.218/KH-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2018) and Plan No.275/KH-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019b):

- Accelerating the urban embellishment of heritage urban areas and stabilizing life, ensuring social security for households living in the Thuong Thanh, Eo Bau, Defense Canal, and the defense line in the Hue citadel.

- *Strengthening and promoting conservation work; promoting the value of the Hue Ancient Capital City; preserving the treasure of unique tangible culture resources of Vietnamese national culture; contributing to create new and attractive tourism products to serve tourists to promote socio-economic development.*

- *Improving the natural environment landscape of the heritage area; improving the cultural landscape, Hue urban heritage architecture; contributing to the implementation of the policy of population relaxation, reducing pressure of increasing traffic density and congestion in the Hue citadel area.*

These jobs are in order to renovate the heritage after displacement people on that. It is not only beautification for the city but also a strategy to manage heritage urban area. To balance a city which includes both heritage and modern living space, gentrification is required to preserve the monument and control the urbanization. The overarching task, accompanied by restoration work, is urban management in the heritage area. Gentrification here not only revolves around migration, but also controls the disruption of landscapes and damage to monuments through urban management sanctions. The city has controlled the height, construction density, setback of architectural buildings, and at the same time specified colors, materials, architectural forms in order to not break the landscape of a heritage city through the policies that issued in 1999 (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 1999a; 1999b). Through many minor amendments and practical bases, the local government has continued to adjust more in appropriate with the reality since 2017 (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2017).

Regarding the heritage management, explaining about renovation step, the vice director of HMCC, Mr. Phan Van Tuan said:

HMCC will coordinate with the People's Committee of Hue City and related wards inside the citadel to develop a regulation on coordination in the management and protection of the displacement area; the Center will plan to hire specialized service units (private security companies) to participate in the maintenance and protection of the site of the displacement area, absolutely not allowing re-encroachment.

In the last stage of state-led gentrification in the Hue citadel, renovation relies on two main types of investment: (1) state investment to beautify the landscape and restore it to the use functions of the historical monarchy periods; or (2) let enterprises invest to retain and promote the area's heritage, to benefit the economy, strengthen services for tourism development (e.g., Binh An Duong cafe). The present leader of HMCC, director Vo Le Nhat said:

Up until now, most of the service activities in the Hue citadel area have been organized toward socialization or joint ventures, association ... coordinating with relevant organizations and units to research and develop a plan to exploit services to serve visitors to this area ... the Center will continue implementing plans to effectively exploit the Hue monument complex; at the same time implementing projects on restoration, conservation and promotion of heritage values; implementing activities in the Hue Festival chain.

Decision No.370/QĐ-UBND (Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee, 2019a) of the Thua Thien Hue Provincial People Committee additionally pointed out:

The plan to promote heritage value after displacement (is): after population relocation, preserving, restoring, rehabilitating, and embellishing the original elements of the monuments based on historical documents and records. To improve effectiveness and promote the value of the monument, we will find solutions with community participation and socialization resources.

Thus, renovating the citadel is the last major step in the state-led gentrification process. Renovation requires reinvestment to maintain and protect heritage, in addition to creating opportunities to maximize the value of the heritage, mainly in tourism and services. This is also the basis to create capital for continuous reinvestment in the next phases.

The basic steps of state-led gentrification happen mostly in an orderly manner according to the direction of the state. However, the actual situation is more complicated, as it takes place on a large area, over a long time, and in places with different conservation characteristics; the main and most important factor is that people come from different backgrounds. So the stages of gentrification happen sometimes in order and sometimes together. The state's interest and attention in leading the implementation of each step is extremely important. Gentrification is a process not an end point (Zuk & Chapple, 2015). Leadership must be exercised on an ongoing basis through reasonable policies developed on the basis of the consensus of stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

This article addresses the gentrification of Hue citadel as a strategy of heritage preservation under the direct management of the local government. The government aims to remove residences and people from the citadel area to preserve and restore the area (Law on Cultural Heritage, 2001 and 2009) and manage urban development. The process started in the 1990s and continues today through the guiding documents of various heritage management levels. With the close direction of the socialist state, the gentrification of Hue citadel brings positive outcomes for the urban façade and benefits (capital accumulation) for the city; on the other hand, it impacts neighborhoods and residents in many ways, such as property values, home-ownership rates, real estate development, business and tax revenues, and community beautification increases (Atkinson, 2000; 2003; Atkinson & Bridge, 2005; Barton, 2016; Freeman, 2005; Lees, 2008; Smith, 1996; Yoon & Currid-Halkett, 2015).

The development of gentrification not only depends on the activity and direction of the state, but also influences the consensus of the people. In a socialist regime like Vietnam, most things are led by the state. Gentrification is a complicated and endless process which causes many social conflicts. It was coined in the West, so it is necessary to investigate and develop it appropriately in an Asian, especially Vietnamese, context. This article aims to further spread and develop research on gentrification in Vietnam.

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