

Tropical Metropolis Hanoi, projects, fragments and processes

Appendix I A story in pictures: plans

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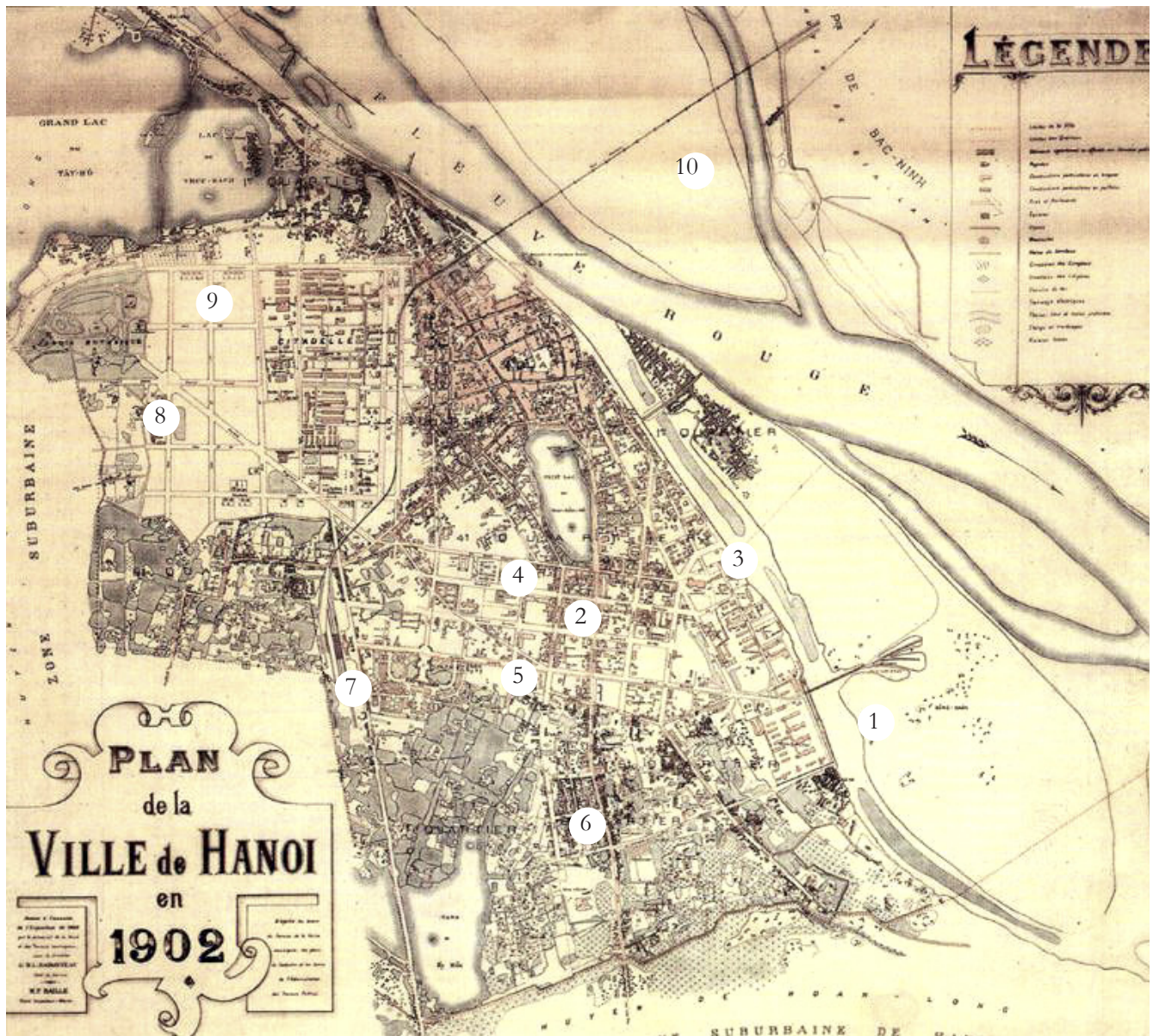
¹ Matteo Aimini is an adjunct professor at Politecnico di Milano and a fellowship researcher at Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia.

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1. | The liquid city

The year 1873 marks the first stage of contamination between the French models of urbanization and millennial urban structure of the Hanoi city. Some physical elements are easily recognizable : the ancient Chinese fortified citadel, the district of the 36 streets, the rhizomatic structure of the rural villages enclosed within the walls of the old city, the dissemination of religious and cultural buildings and finally the first embryo of the european urbanity: the colonial concession. Legend : 1. The Imperial city, 2. The district of 36th streets, 3. The sacred Hoam Kiem Lake, 4. The French colonial Concession, 5. Villages, 6. The area of Bau May, 7. The outer walls, 8. The Temple of Literature, 9. The lake Ho Tay, 10. The Hong Son River

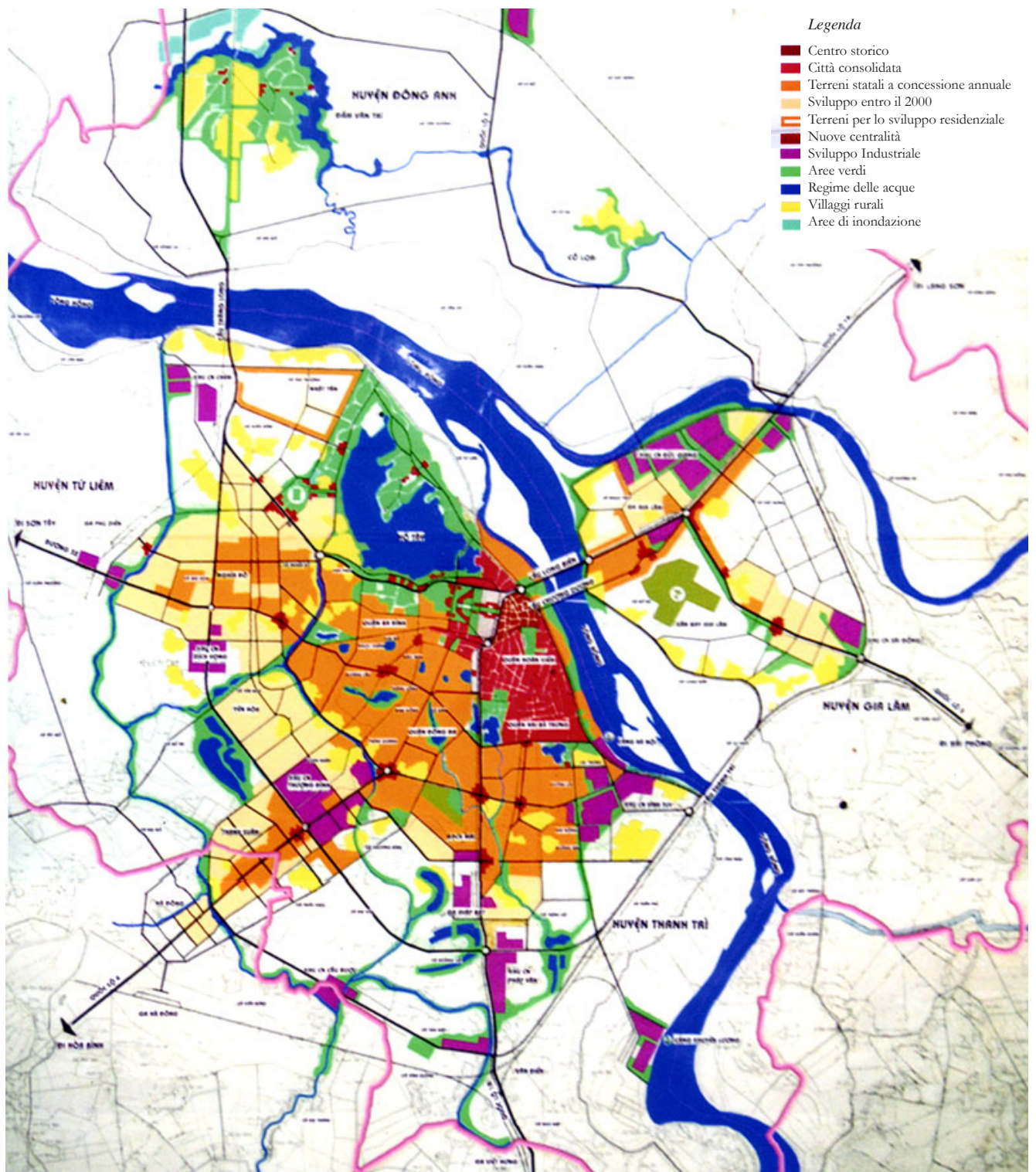


2 | The early french colonial period
 The urban plan of 1902 shows clearly the first step of the colonial process of redesigning the city. For example is well recognizable the act of graft of the colonial chessboard against the local urban fabrics or the development of the basic infrastructures as railways and bridges . Papin has defined this moment as “the period of buildings rainfall”. Legend : 1.The french concession, 2. The European district, 3.The opera house, 4.The palace of justice and the Central Prison, 5.The Expo Compound, 6.The European residential district, 7. The central station 8. The governor’s palace, 9. The botanical garden, 10. The bridge Doumer

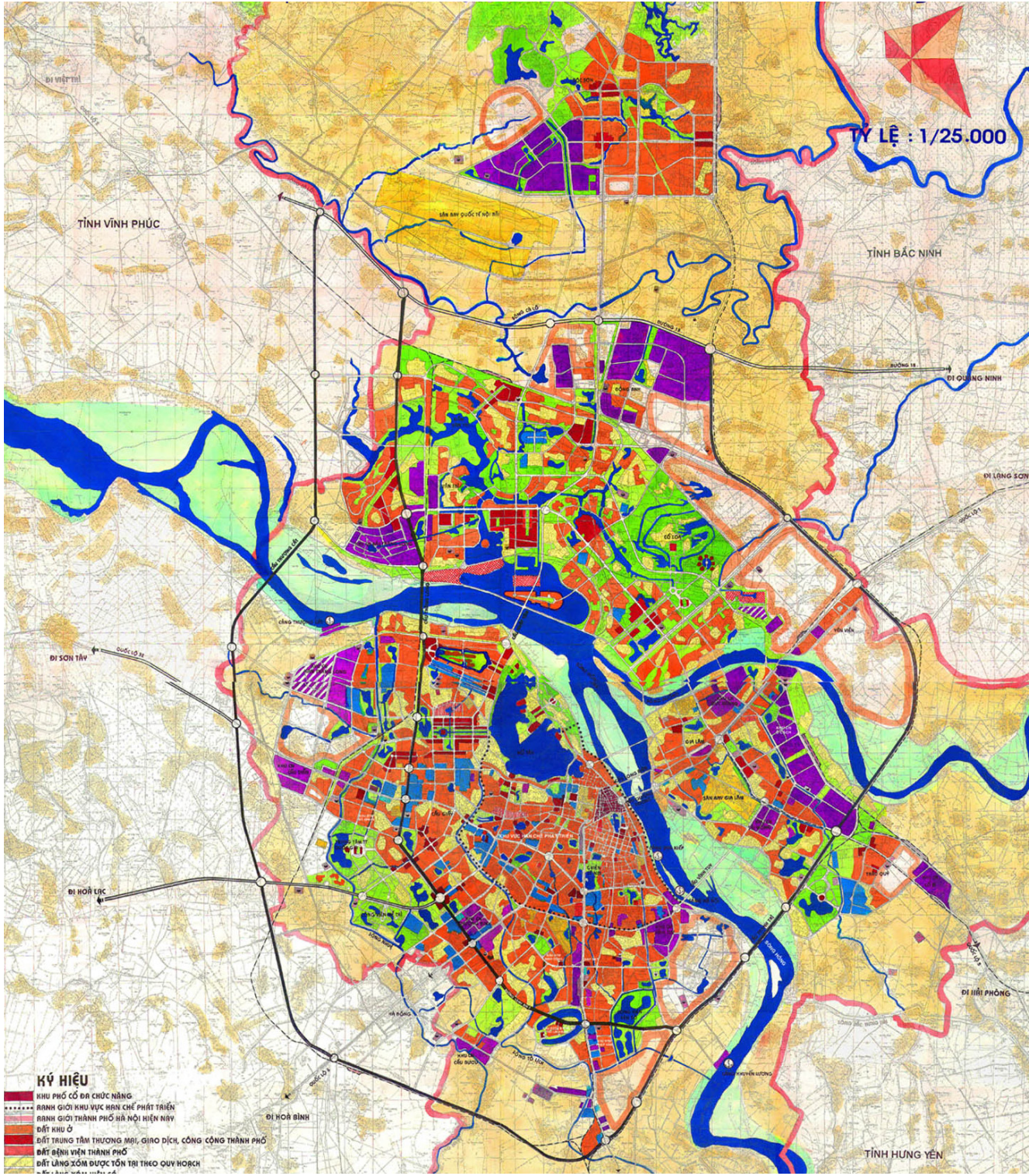


3 | The Paris of the Tonkin, Ist part

The arrival of the new governor M.Long and the successive call of the architect E.Hebrard, allowed Hanoi to start to dream of being the new capital of French Indochina. A sort of small miniature of Paris. The development plan is ambitious, but the economic crisis of 1929 decreed the failure and only few parts have been developed during the years. Legend : 1. The Axis of Nations, 2. The new industrial area, 3. The area for education, 4. The European trade district, 5. The railway station, 6. New residential neighborhoods, 7. The french concession, 8. New railway bridges, 9. New residential promenade, 10. Sector for Sport, 11. The Entertainment Area

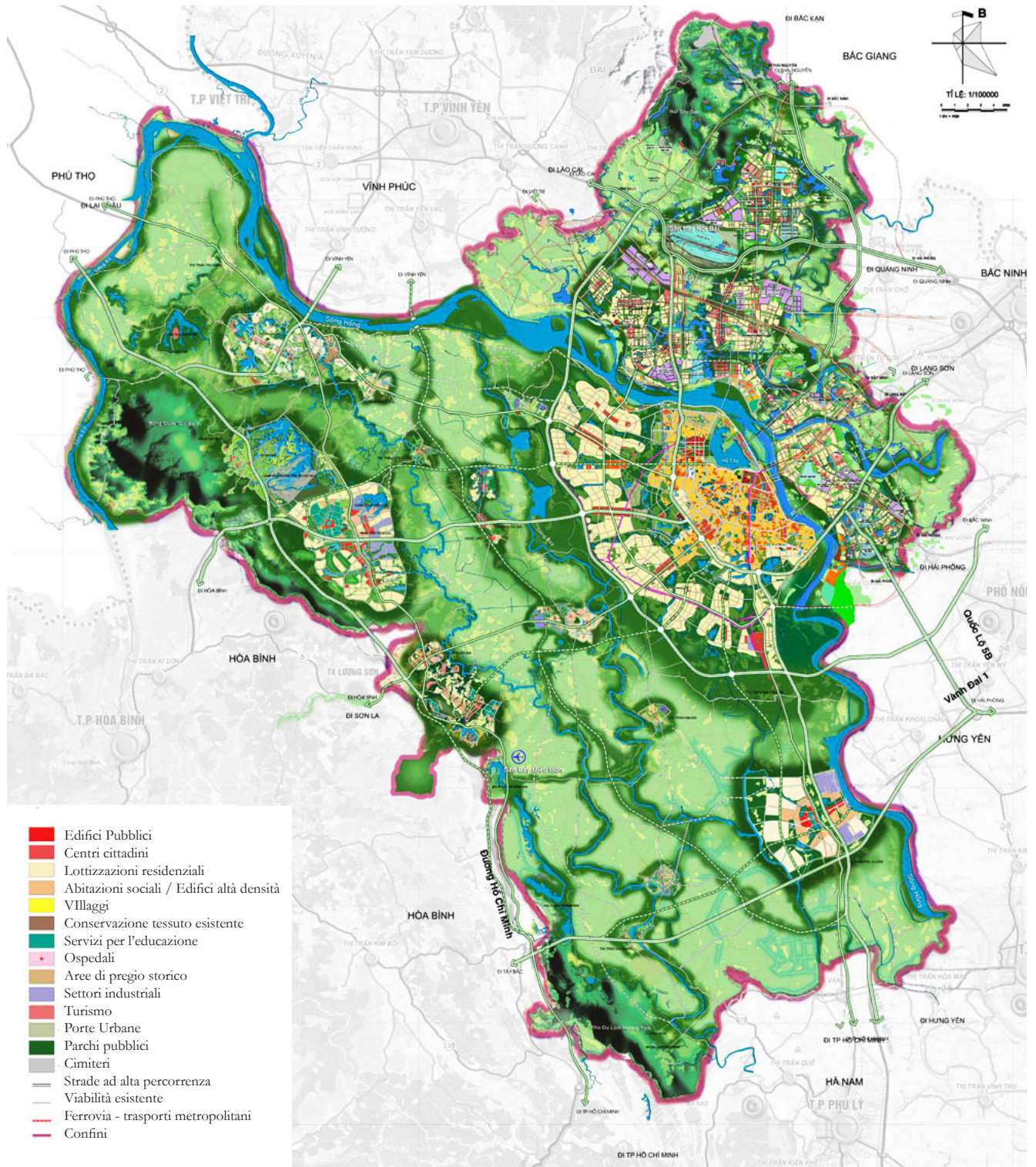


4 | The beginning of the neoliberal strategy
 The first post-Soviet experience of urban planning took place in 1992, in terms of form and urban shape, the Ministry of Construction (MOC) increased and developed the addresses of the previous plan. Anyway the strong system of deregulation adopted by the government, in order to facilitate the transition between the Soviet to the neo-liberal economic model, allowed to increase, around the whole city, a urban phenomenon of dense and informal agglomerations of housing, the so-called Bonsai city.



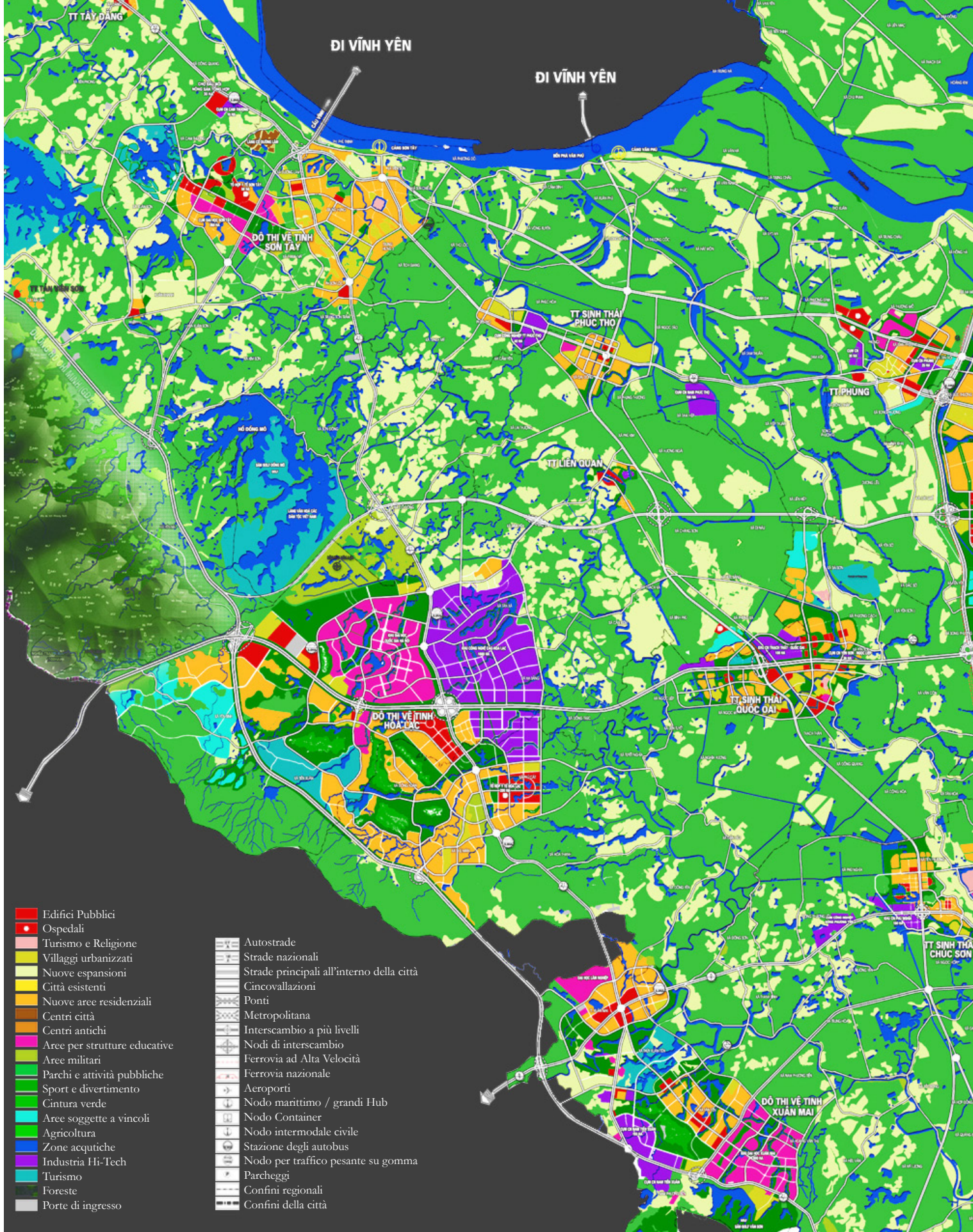
5 | The neoliberal regionalism

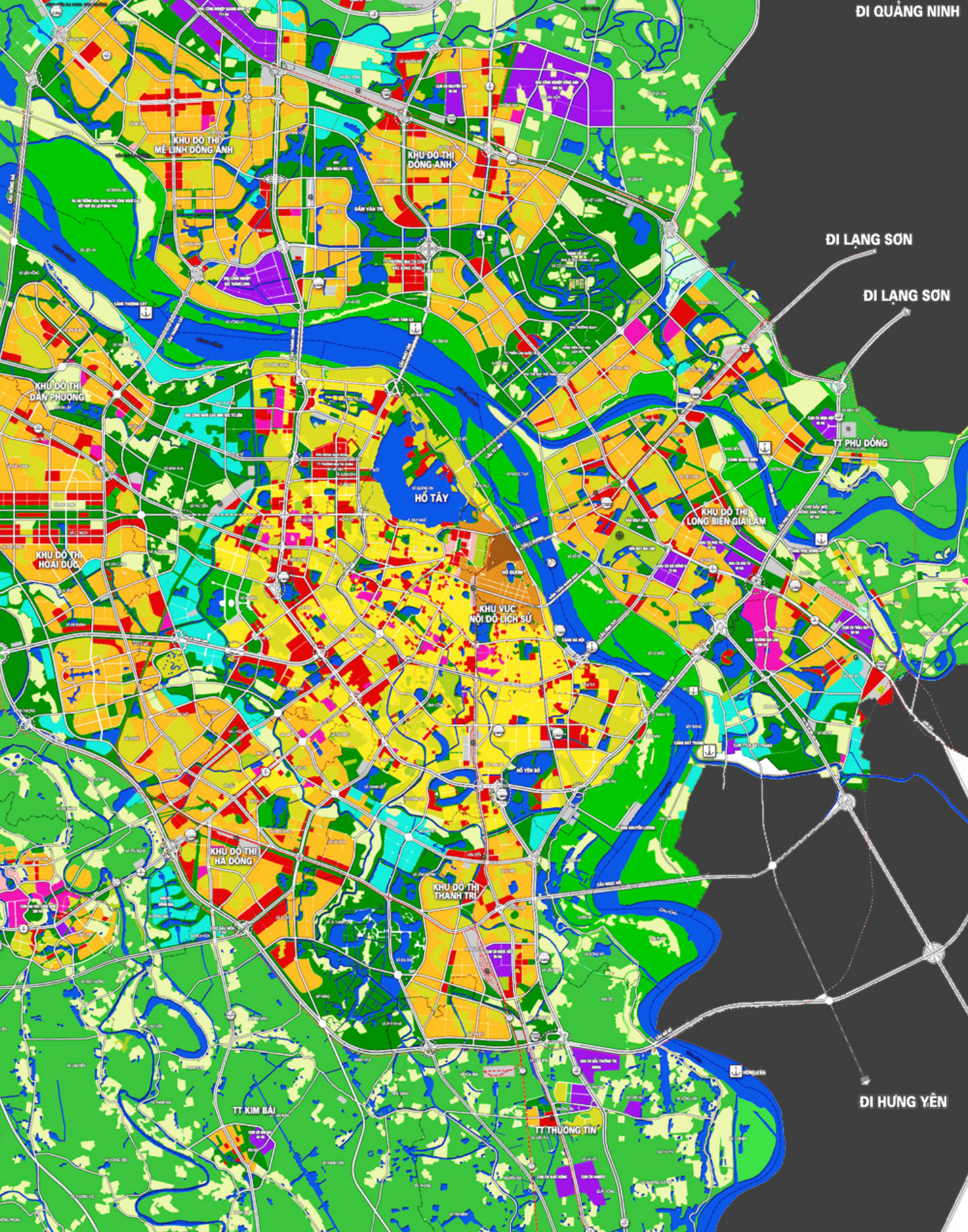
In 1998 it was made a second version of the masterplan, which marks definitively the Neoliberal development of the city. Infrastructures are well marked and in the other side of the Red River, emerged a new mirrored city. It was connected with the industrial district of Gia Lam and the airport of Noi Bai. The new design of the city it was thought in a regional scale, ready to accommodate the morphotypes of the new economic system: the Central Business District, the Leisure and the turistic District and area of Weak land-regulations. This mix of peculiar conditions set up the frame for define the beginning of a massive urban development of Hanoi city both in the core and suburbs. At that time, the city council had released building permits for 12 to 18 million of m³, decreeing definitively the future development of the city.



6 | The neoliberal regionalism

In 2008, Perkins Eastman (US) + Posco E & C (KO) + Jica (KO) won an international competition against other firms for the design of the master plan of Hanoi in 2030 with strategic visions for 2050. The project was chosen primarily for its environmental vision and for the ability to respond to the processes of transformation in active and past history. The development plan is ambitious and includes the construction of: 1. Strong Environmental Strategy, 2. Development of Infrastructure at any levels, 3. Hi rise garden city, 4. Buffer expansion zone, 5. Ecotown, 6. Satellite town, 7. Industrial districts.







8 | Comparison between urban fabric - Hanoi - Barcelona - Milan



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Appendix II A story in pictures: photos

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1 | Discontinuities of the building environment

Image to follow at the end of the day, the street vendors, rigorously riding a motorbike in the traffic of Hanoi. We'll probably sprawl in many different points, all located on the edge of the city. If we'll have to trace a path in a map, it would surely be an intricate and uneven design, but in this way we would be able to know the multiple living conditions of the inhabitants. Moving out from the rural villages, soaking in the Bonsai city, coasting the French villas, diving again in the Soviets informal neighborhood unit and finally reaching the large towers at the edge of the metropolis.





2 | Paris of the Tonkin

An image of the road Trang Tien, located in the center of the city, in the 30s, during the French colonial period. You may notice the Opera House down the road, in the foreground the Bank of Indochina and shopping mall on the left.





3 | Tropical Leningrad

The largest parade ground in front of the Mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh is called Ba Dinh square . The design of public space and the funerary monument was design by professional from Russians in joint venture with the Vietnamese architects. The area was not chosen randomly but coincides with the site of the first independence declaration did by Uncle Ho in 1945.





4 | Hanoi Hilton: the first short circuit of the neoliberal metropolis

In the early 90s, the city appears to be frozen, its skyline is homogeneous and regular. The buildings around the city did not exceed ten floors. What the B52 and the I^o and II^o Indochina War against the French failed to do, it was done by the global market.

A Sino-Singaporean construction company demolished one of the symbols of the Vietnamese resistance against the oppressor, the famous Maison Centrale (so-called Hanoi Hilton). Of its trapezoidal plant, organized in solid and heavy fabrics, remains only the main facing the street. The Twin Towers of Hanoi, replaced with tennis courts the famous courtyards, nicknamed by the American pilots in captivity with the names of some famous hotels in Las Vegas.



5 | Bonsai city

The last decade of the twentieth century marks the definitive affirmation of a very peculiar situation, which will inevitably affect all the urban fabric of the city. In the period between October '92 and December '94 the public administration released only 2,741 building permits, nothing compared with the 13.000 new homes built by private citizens in a state of completely anarchy and illegal condition under the motto "fine and let it be". The phenomenon described here is defined as Bonsai City or informal city, for the obvious reason of a miniaturized and forced urban growth. The result of this policy is clearly visible in the orthophotos of the city that appears to us as a dynamic set of multicolored pixels.



6 | KTT and informal mutations

After 1984 the controls by the government offices on the social housing became more soft and liberal, this lack of governance agreed a substantial modification of the monotonous and charming neighborhood units design during the Soviet period. Similar in meaning to the phenomenon of the Bonsai City, on the block buildings began to appear verandas, protrusions, cantilevered rooms, superfetations of any sizes and dimensions, from 0.3 to 10 square meters everything was possible. The informal transformation of KTT was and is still today, an unbelievable situation, for the variety of types, for use of everykind of materials and for the total disregard of the gravity law. The interpretive analysis of these mutations allows to identify the enormous vitality of adaptation that a rural society show us in the city context, practicing patterns derived by implementing a mix between a strong spatial culture and construction techniques of popular origin.



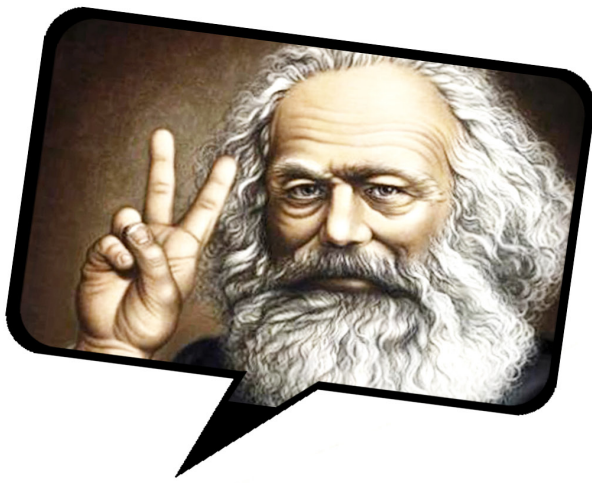
7 | City Explosion

In 1998 it was approved a second development plan for Hanoi city, which leaves the previous visions beyond the Red River and focused on the inland territories of the metropolis. In this period were released more than 744 building permits, for a total of 16 million square meters.



8 | Villas, condos and so on

The Foreign typologies as high density towers and terraced houses fell rapidly in the soft tissue of the metropolis, generating alienating paradoxes that open the doors permanently to the communist model of the capitalism. The result was the massive erosion of the rural villages and the countryside, which until now had been preserved.





9 | MetroRurality

The result is the typical hybrid condition of the booming metropolis, the so-called MetroRurality, where everything is possible and the edge of the city is blurred away but real, in a state of constant evolution.





10 | Stratification and Heterotopias

The strong heterotopia generated, understood as the possible coexistence of several and totally different reality coexisting in the same context at same time, it generates an extreme Pachtwork of urban fabric, as iceberg, drifting, lapping and sometimes colliding in search of a precarious balance or possible derives.





10 | Stratification and Heterotopias





11 | Two opposite condition

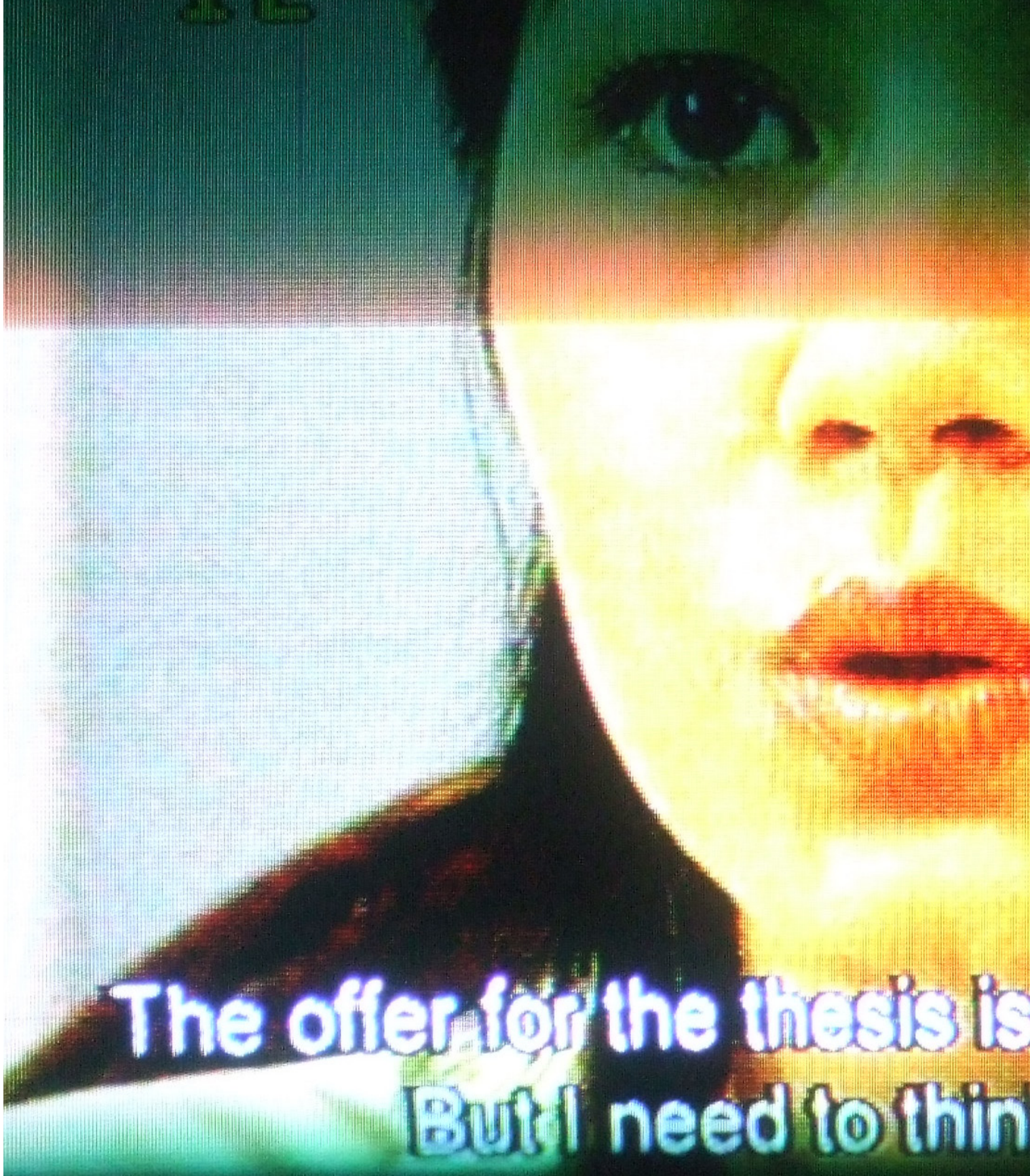
This is a micro story that consists about two opposite images of the same city, one is the huge mass of the Red River that represent one of the main element : the water....





12 | Two opposite condition
..... and on the other hand is the concrete. It portrait by the urban superblocks, generator of new density , capable of offering other types of
visions, almost antithetical to the real nature of the metropolis.





13 | Criticality

Ironically, I might conclude with this still image regarding a Vietnamese soap opera of ten years ago, which invite to reflect on a offer for a thesis, but if we shif this assumption on the meaning of the future for the city in 2050...well....yes...we have to think a little bit more...



